

## **CEPF Final Completion and Impact Report**

<b>Organization's Legal Name:</b>	Society for Sustainability and Conservation Education for Rural Areas
<b>Project Title:</b>	Building Capacity and Sustainable Partnerships for Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Nigeria
<b>Grant Number:</b>	CEPF-110574
<b>Hotspot:</b>	Guinean Forests of West Africa
<b>Strategic Direction:</b>	2 Mainstream biodiversity conservation into public policy and private sector practice in the nine conservation corridors, at local, sub-national and national levels
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	\$180,000.00
<b>Project Dates:</b>	February 01, 2021 - July 31, 2022
<b>Date of Report:</b>	January 24, 2023

### **IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS**

1. Okomu National Park (ONP) Management: Provided an office space and security for SCERA's team in the field. Chairs the Okomu Biodiversity Stakeholders Platform (OBSP) meetings. Actively participated in all site-level project activities and the National Policy Dialogue (NPD) workshop in Abuja.
2. Nigerian National Park Service (NNPS): Gave SCERA permission to engage ONP and mandated the park management to cooperate fully with SCERA on the project. Trained in Ecosystem Services Valuation (ESV). Participated in the NPD workshop.
3. National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA): Were engaged during the review of the Nigerian EIA regulations and reviewed SCERA's recommendations for improved compliance monitoring and enforcement. Trained in ESV, participated in NPD workshop.
4. Forestry Department of the Federal Ministry of Environment (FMEnv): Has been part of the project since inception. Represent the FMEnv on the OBSP. Trained in the ESV, participated in the NPD.
5. Coalition for Biodiversity Conservationists of Nigeria (CBCN): collaborated with SCERA in organizing the NPD workshop.
6. Leventis Foundation Nigeria: member of OBSP. Participated in NPD workshop
7. Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF): Attended the inception meeting. Member of the OBSP. Partnered with SCERA in organizing the NPD workshop.
8. Steering committee Okomu National Park Management Plan: Has been part of the project since inception. Member of the OBSP.
9. The 12 support zone Communities: All, 12 communities are members of the OBSP. Co-chairs the OBSP. Main beneficiaries of this project. Actively participated in all site-level activities. Trainees from the communities participated in the Rapid Biodiversity Assessment,

carried out the final KAP Survey, awareness raising and support logistics during OBSP meetings

10. Okomu Oil Palm Company (OOPC) PLC: Member of the OBSP. Participated in the NPD workshop

## CONSERVATION IMPACTS

Planned Long-Term Impacts: 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
Stable or increasing populations of two globally threatened species at Okomu National Park by 2025	<p>The Rapid Biodiversity Assessments carried out during the project have provided the baseline data for several of the globally threatened species in ONP. Subsequent projects will include monitoring programmes for this species, using the established database.</p> <p>The trained community volunteers are to be part of the subsequent monitoring programmes and eventually will ensure regular monitoring of these globally threatened species.</p>

Planned Short-Term Impacts: 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
More than 90% of men and women trained in biodiversity monitoring are independently collecting data across at least three taxa, leading to up-to-date biodiversity information available for the sustainable management of Okomu NP by the end of 2021.	The training of community volunteers in Biodiversity monitoring was carried out between 29 November and 2 December, 2021. 80% of the trained community volunteers participated in data collection during the rapid assessment on insects, birds and mammals.
Information on forest cover change provides an indication of the status of Okomu NP, feeds into management plans and leads to improvement in at least three environmental guidelines for effective management of the park by the end of the project	The forest cover assessment has been completed. Results show that the ONP has lost about 30% of its natural forest within the last 20 years. The Okomu Forest Reserve on the other hand has lost more than 70% of natural forest to concessions (logging, agriculture) and subsistence farming. The Okomu production-protection landscape is therefore in a deplorable state and urgent action is needed to transition from a purely unsustainable and ineffective management regime to a thriving sustainable landscape.
One national agency has approved and adopted one environmental compliance monitoring framework or guideline resulting in one agriculture company implementing at least three biodiversity-friendly practices by the end of the project.	Recommendations for the review of EIA regulations for improved compliance monitoring and enforcement has been submitted to NESREA for their input, and possible inclusion in the EIA policy presently being reviewed
One stakeholder coordination platform with at least 30% women representation established at Okomu NP resulting in improved	One stakeholder coordination platform (Okomu Biodiversity Stakeholders' Platform, OBSP) has been established. Four meetings have been held so far.

Impact Description	Impact Summary
communication and collaboration between park management, communities and private sector to promote agricultural best practices.	The TOR has been adopted, the draft MOU has been shared with the members of the OBSP for their input. Members of the OBSP were represented at the National Policy Dialogue.
Minimum of four trained government personnel (50% men and 50% women) are uploading data on a centralised database hosted at the FMEnv, making environmental and biodiversity information 100% available and accessible by the end of the project	This activity was delayed due to the lack of interest of the Department of Environmental Assessment, who is in charge of authorizing and approving EIAs. We are now working to host the database with the Nigerian National Parks Service, who have shown great interest. The information to be stored on the database will be for biodiversity and forest cover and other information such as concessions around protected areas. Once the database is set-up, the training of database managers will be carried out in July 2022.
Minimum of one policy brief on mainstreaming biodiversity into national policies and private sector practice agreed and signed by government, private sector and civil society organizations by end of 2021.	One policy brief has been developed as a result of a 3-day National Policy Dialogue Workshop on Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Government policies and Private Sector practice organised by SCERA in Abuja from the 15th to the 17th of June 2022. A communique was signed by all participants, including government officials, private sector and civil society organisations. Signed communique and policy brief are uploaded.
Biodiversity information disseminated through at least three mediums (print, audio-visual and social media), resulting in at least 50% of men and women reporting improved knowledge of the importance of biodiversity by the end of the project.	<p>SCERA presented a radio program to mark the International Day of Biological diversity 2021. During the program, the importance of biodiversity, the need for biodiversity mainstreaming, awareness on ONP communicated.</p> <p>An Initial KAP was carried out to collect baseline information on communities' knowledge and perception of the park and biodiversity in general. The Final KAP has also been carried out to evaluate the impact of our activities.</p> <p>10 community volunteers have been educated on the importance of conservation.</p> <p>SCERA also conducted an awareness raising activity in a secondary school in Udo to mark the International Day of Biological diversity 2022. Using posters, 150 students were taught the value and importance of biodiversity, protecting ONP and the wildlife around them. Pamphlets carrying messages on protecting our biodiversity were also distributed</p>

**Unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?**

Engagement with some of the government institutions involved in the project began during the proposal writing stages. These include the Federal Ministry of Environment (FMEnv) and Okomu National Park. These institutions were very cooperative and played their roles

effectively during the implementation stage of the project. Presently, ONP is playing a major role in the OBSP as the chair while the FMEnv has consistently sent a representative to attend all the OBSP meetings. This has contributed immensely to the OBSP as communities easily embraced the concept and are confident that their views are being channeled to the appropriate quarters.

The FMEnv linked us to the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), after we sent them a letter informing them of the success of our grant application to CEPF. NESREA then invited us to give a presentation of our proposed activities on the project. After our presentation to NESREA, they showed willingness to collaborate with us. They agreed to review our recommendations on the Nigerian Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidelines for improved compliance monitoring and enforcement and informing us that the National Assembly is presently reviewing the EIA regulations and our recommendation can feed into the review.

All these government institutions also participated actively in the three-Day National Policy Dialogue Workshop on Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Government policies and Private Sector practice organized in Abuja. They made presentations, were involved in the discussions, made input in developing an action plan and at the end of the workshop, signed a communiqué. The level of participation and interest of these government institution has been very impressive, we strongly believe our relationship will continue to grow stronger and we are quickly attracting the right attention, from the government.

Department of Environmental Assessment, however, was unwilling to collaborate with us on the project even after series of engagements, including the presentation of our work plan to clarify their role and discuss areas of collaboration. Discussions with the Department on accessing their data and hosting the database were unsuccessful. This has led to delays in hosting the database and training of government staff that will manage it. As a result, we are now modifying the developed database system and application prototype to suit the requirements for hosting with the Nigerian National Park Service (NNPS). The NNPS have been very cooperative throughout the project

## **PROJECT RESULTS/DELIVERABLES**

### **Overall results of the project:**

Inception Meeting: held on the 2nd of July 2021. At the meeting, the National Programme Coordinator (NPC), SCERA made a presentation of the project to the stakeholders to intimate them of the activities lined up under the project. Some results from the KAP Survey were also presented. The stakeholders present included Federal Ministry of Environment (FMEnv), National Park Service, the Steering Committee ONP Management Plan (SCONPMP), Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), and Leventis Foundation Nigeria (LFN). At the meeting, after which Some stakeholders (LFN, NCF and SCONPMP) were given the opportunity to present their activities in ONP. All present were also given opportunity to make inputs to the CEPF project.

Forest Cover Assessment: has been completed. Report and maps submitted with previous reports. Results show that ONP has lost about 30% of its natural forest within the last 20 years.

International Day of Biological Diversity (IDB), May 22, 2021: SCERA organized a radio program in conjunction with ONP Management to mark the day. SCERA's Project Coordinator for ONP, John Nnebechukwu was on air with former Conservator of Parks (CP), ONP Mr. Kareem Adeniyi and former head of research, ONP Officer Innocent Attah, to create

awareness about the importance of biodiversity, biodiversity mainstreaming, and Okomu National Park. This was aired on VIBES FM Radio station in Benin City, Edo state. Recording is available.

Community Entry Meetings (CEM) were carried out between 16 August and 1 September 2021. 12 SZC were visited. The communities were consulted on the selection of volunteers for the Biodiversity Assessment. They were also educated on the importance of their role in the conservation of the National Park. They were informed on the plan to establish the OBSP, where they are expected to participate. They were educated on the advantages the OBSP will bring, especially, giving them the opportunity to air their views and channel their grievances properly.

Biodiversity Assessment: Ten volunteers from the Support Zone Communities (SZC; 6 males and 4 females) were trained on Biodiversity Assessment. Data collection on insects, plants, mammals and birds have been carried out. Baseline data for the four taxa are available. All four assessments recognized the presence of species of conservation importance in ONP.

Centralized National Biodiversity Database: Department of Environmental Assessment (DEA) showed no interest in our project. We could not access their database and hosting. The already developed prototype of the database system and application program for this purpose is presently being upgraded to include information on concessions, wildlife and forest cover. We are now planning to host the database with the Nigerian National Park Service (NNPS).

Review of the Nigerian Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidelines: Review of the EIA regulations, recommendations for improved compliance monitoring and enforcement has been completed. Through the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA) recommendations will feed into the review of the Nigerian EIA Act presently ongoing at the National Assembly.

Okomu Biodiversity Stakeholders Platform (OBSP): inaugurated on the 17th of December, 2021, is made up of the Park Management, 12 SZC (including traditional leaders, men, women, youth and resource users), NGOs, civil society, private sector, the FMEnv and the state government security outfits. The platform is now up and running with ONP management as the Chair, a representative of communities as the co-chair and SCERA as the secretary. Four meetings have been held so far during which a Grievance Redress Mechanism document was adopted, the Term of Reference was adopted and a draft of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been shared with members for their inputs and consent.

Pre and post KAP and socio-economic Survey: has been carried out in five ONP SZC namely: Ugolo Community, Iguowan Community, Iguafole Community, Udo Community and Maroghinoba (AT&P) Community. More than 800 respondents in total were interviewed. Some results from the pre KAP and socio-economic Survey were presented during the inception meeting. They were also used to tailor awareness raising messages.

International Day of Biological Diversity (IDB), 2022: Awareness raising was carried out in a secondary school in Udo to commemorate the day. Using posters as instructional material, 150 children were taught the value and importance of biodiversity, protecting ONP and the wildlife around them. Pamphlets and paper caps carrying messages on conservation were distributed to the children.

International Day of Forests (IDF), 2022: SCERA supported the Department of Forestry, FMEnv in commemorating the day which was marked by the launching of the revised National Forest Policy (2020), replacing the 2006 policy. The document indicates improved ways of pursuing sustainable management of Nigeria's forest resources, which will increase the nation's total forest cover.

National Policy Dialogue (NPD) Workshop: A Three-Day workshop on Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Government policies and Private Sector practice was organized by SCERA in partnership with the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) and the Coalition of Biodiversity Conservationists of Nigeria (CBCN). There were series of presentations from participants, including final presentation on SCERA's achievements on the project, lessons learnt and next steps. At the end of the workshop, a communiqué with recommendations was produced and an action plan was developed. All these fed into the development of a policy brief draft. The communiqué, action plan and draft policy brief are available.

Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) Assessment: was carried out both at the beginning and end of the project. Both documents have been submitted to CEPF.

Civil Society Tracking Tool and Gender Tracking Tool (CSTT & GTT): The CSTT and GTT at the beginning and end of the project have been completed and submitted to CEPF.

Information sharing with the RIT: Photos, video and audio recordings have been shared with the RIT. She also participated in the NPD and made a presentation to the participants.

The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM): The GRM document, with input from members of the OBSP and approval from our Trustees, is now available. Posters and fliers carrying information on the GRM have been printed and distributed among stakeholders. The GRM posters have been placed on the notice boards in SCERA offices.

Establishment of new SCERA offices:

- New SCERA offices: SCERA now have two well equip and fully functional offices (1 in Udo and 1 in Abuja) as a result of this project. Two motorcycles and a Toyota Hilux double cabin four-wheel drive were procured during this project. They were very helpful in easing transportation throughout the project. They will also be useful in follow-up activities after the project.
- Employment of additional staff: 4 full-time staff, one intern and one volunteer (technical support) staff were recruited during this project. The full-time staff include: a Project Coordinator for ONP, a Finance and Admin officer, a Logistics and Procurement Officer and a Driver

**Results for each deliverable:**

<b>Component</b>		<b>Deliverable</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Results for Deliverable</b>
1.0	Capacity Building, Social and Environmental Research at local/site level for effective biodiversity conservation and management	1.1	Biodiversity and environmental monitoring training manual, photos, training report, participant attendance sheets, pre- and post-training assessment forms	Community volunteers have been trained. Bird, insect, mammal and plant Rapid Assessments have all been carried out. Datasheets, photos, training schedule, PPT presentations, sampling methodologies, and Rapid Biodiversity Assessment reports are available.
1.0	Capacity Building, Social and Environmental Research at local/site level for effective biodiversity conservation and management	1.2	Forest cover map, distribution maps of key threatened species, biodiversity reports and data sheets,	Forest cover assessment is completed. Forest cover maps and forest cover assessment report are available.
1.0	Capacity Building, Social and Environmental Research at local/site level for effective biodiversity conservation and management	1.3	Technical report including a proposed framework for effective EIA compliance monitoring and enforcement	The framework for effective EIA compliance monitoring and enforcement is ready. Report on review of EIAs of companies, including challenges and gaps in the EIA processes is available
1.0	Capacity Building, Social and Environmental Research at local/site level for effective biodiversity conservation and management	1.4	Approved EIA compliance monitoring and enforcement framework, conference proceedings of the AEIAN, photos	An online AEIAN conference took place on 15th and 16th December 2021. The national EIA consultant was in attendance. However, the compliance monitoring and enforcement framework was not ready, so could not be discussed at the conference.
2.0	Network establishment for Participatory and Sustainable Management	2.1	Signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) and Terms of reference (TOR) of	Four meetings have been held so far during which the Terms of Reference was adopted and a draft of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been shared with

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
	of KBA (Okomu National Park)		the Okomu biodiversity stakeholders' platform (BSP) reflect activities and role of the BSP in biodiversity and environmental monitoring	members for their inputs and subsequent consent.
3.0	Database management, Information dissemination, and awareness raising for biodiversity mainstreaming	3.1	Centralized database, data compilation template, data management training manual	Discussions with the Department of Environmental Assessment was unsuccessful as we could not get access to their data and hosting. The prototype developed is presently been upgraded to include information on concessions, Wildlife and forest cover. We are now planning to host the Database with the National Park Service.
3.0	Database management, Information dissemination, and awareness raising for biodiversity mainstreaming	3.2	Participants signing up and agreeing to adherence to international best practice evident from a signed policy brief on integrating biodiversity into government policy and private sector practice	A 3-day National Policy Dialogue workshop on Mainstreaming Biodiversity into government policies and private practice was organized. The participants signed a communique at the of the workshop. An action plan was also developed during the workshop. A policy brief was also drafted after the workshop. The signed communique, developed action plan, drafted policy brief, attendance sheets, photos, PPT presentations are available.
3.0	Database management, Information dissemination, and awareness raising for biodiversity mainstreaming	3.3	Pre- and Post- Knowledge, Attitude and Perception (KAP) reports showing attitude and perception of men and women towards biodiversity and protected area	A draft of the KAP report showing the attitude and perception of men and women towards biodiversity and protected areas has been uploaded.



Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
3.0	Database management, Information dissemination, and awareness raising for biodiversity mainstreaming	3.4	Communities (men and women), including the government agencies and private sectors with increased awareness as evidence from the pre and post project assessments or KAP report.	<p>During the final KAP survey, SCERA actively sought to increase the number of women respondents, with a percentage of 43% women in the final KAP versus 31% of women in the initial KAP survey.</p> <p>A significant improvement was observed in the final KAP regarding the familiarity of community men and women with the terms – conservation (75.9% and 67.8% in final vs 47.2% and 28.1% in initial respectively), sustainability (97.8 and 88.7% in final vs 30.7% and 18.0% in initial respectively) and biodiversity (73.0% and 64.5% in final vs 18.2 and 8.6% in initial respectively).</p> <p>Majority of the community men (42.3% in final and 55.1% in initial) insist that there has to be more effective laws and complementary enforcement strategies to discourage illegal activities especially illegal logging which has been fingered as the single most important threat to the park.</p>
3.0	Database management, Information dissemination, and awareness raising for biodiversity mainstreaming	3.5	Report of final presentation including agreed next steps, attendance sheets, photos, PPT presentations	The final presentation was made on the last day of the National Policy Dialogue Workshop on the 17th of June, 2022. The presentation was given by the National Program Coordinator. She elaborated on SCERA's achievements, challenges, lessons learnt during the project and next steps. Our

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				partners ONP, Department of Forestry (FMEvn), NESREA, NNPS, CBCN, NCF, Leventis Foundation, APLORI and community representative were in attendance during the presentation. Others present include FMARD and National REDD+. The attendance sheets, photos, PPT presentations are available.
4.0	Project Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	4.1	Institutional capacity and understanding of gender issues within SSCERA, effectively monitored as evidenced by the submission of Tracking Tools' at project start and end	Both initial and final CSTT and GTT have been completed. The final CSTT and GTT have been submitted.
4.0	Project Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	4.2	Process Framework effectively implemented and monitored as evidenced by the programmatic report every January and July to CEPF	2 technical reports were submitted in July, 2021 and January, 2022. 5 financial reports were submitted in April, July and October, 2021, and January and April, 2022
4.0	Project Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	4.3	Project impacts monitored and reported online at project end as evidenced by the Final Completion and Impact Reports	Final completion and impact report is now submitted.
4.0	Project Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	4.4	Communication materials are shared with the RIT per email or other online data transfer software	Photos, video and audio recordings from various activities were shared with the RIT throughout the grant period.
4.0	Project Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	4.5	Management effectiveness of Okumu NP improved as	The METT Assessment at the start and end of the project have been completed and

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			demonstrated by comparison of the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool scores at project start and end	submitted to CEPF. The increased score (+11 points) demonstrates an improvement over one year.
5.0	Strengthen SCERA's organisational and logistical capacity	5.1	Project offices established and equipped, and management systems put in place enabling high level of efficiency within the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abuja Office is a 4-room office space located at Gwarinpa. It is equip with 4 Office desks, 4 office chairs, 1 conference table with 10 chairs, 3 visitor's chairs, 1 office filing cabinet and 1 generator. 3 laptops and 1 printer. The office is fully functional.</li> <li>• Udo Office is a 1-room office space in Okomu NP Head Quarters in Udo. The office is equipped with a generator, 2 office desks, 2 office chairs, 2 visitor's chairs, 1 laptop, 1 desktop computer, 1 printer, 1 office Safe and 1 office filing cabinet. Two motorcycles were procured to support the activities of the project and biodiversity monitoring at ONP.</li> <li>•Policies: SCERA's Financial policy, procurement manual, office policy, Timesheet template are available. Quickbooks is now the accounting software package currently used by SCERA.</li> <li>•Procurement of Project Vehicle: A Toyota Hilux double cabin four wheel drive, was procured to ease transportation during the project activities. It will also support out follow-up activities after the grant period has ended.</li> </ul>

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				Staff Employment: Four staff were recruited to support the activities of the project. An intern and a volunteer also supported the activities of the project
5.0	Strengthen SCERA's organisational and logistical capacity	5.2	Effective grant and financial management evidenced by the introduction of a robust financial and risk management system	Quickbook is currently in use. Financial policy, Per Diem policy, office policy and Procurement manual are all available.

### Tools, products or methodologies that resulted from the project or contributed to the results:

While implementing the CEPF project, SCERA received the BIOPAMA Small Grant for Technical Assessments to carry out assessments in ONP and Amurum Forest Reserve in Nigeria. A Site-level Assessment for Governance Equity (SAGE) was carried out in Okomu National Park. The SAGE activities in ONP, included a 2-day workshop. This created an avenue for engaging the communities on important matters about the park. Although the establishment of a multi stakeholder platform was already one of the planned activities under SCERA's CEPF funded project, during the SAGE workshop, the need for communities to voice their concerns was made even more obvious, such that the need the establishment of a forum where stakeholders, including communities can discuss important issues concerning the park, was further emphasized. Through the recommendations of the stakeholders themselves during this assessment, they all took ownership of the idea for the creation of the forum. The SAGE workshop was therefore an important factor for the successful establishment of the OBSP.

## PORTFOLIO INDICATORS

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
1	Number of Key Biodiversity Areas targeted by CEPF grants have new or strengthened protection and	1	Okomu National Park (a KBA) is effectively managed with the training of personnel and establishment of a biodiversity	1	Okomu Biodiversity Stakeholders' Platform has been established. Four meeting have been held so far. Training of Okomu National Park rangers

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	management (target: At least 20).		stakeholders platform.		during a series of seminars organised by US Forestry Service. Training of 10 community volunteers on biodiversity surveys
2a	Number of hectares within production landscapes are managed for biodiversity conservation or sustainable use (target: At least 100,000).	37,000	Effective management of Okomu National Park translates to more sustainable management of surrounding production landscape	37,000	The 37,000 ha is the area of Okomu Oil Palm concession. Okomo Oil Palm Company, the largest users of the production landscape around ONP is part of the OBSP. They are also signatory to the recommendations agreed upon at the National Policy Dialogue
2b	Number of conservation corridors with public policies and/or private sector business practices incorporating provisions for biodiversity conservation (target: at least 6).	1	Improved government policies, effective enforcement of environmental guidelines and increased local awareness of the value of biodiversity lead to better environmental practices of at least three natural resource companies in the Lower Niger Delta	1	During the National Policy dialogue, recommendations and an action plan for mainstreaming biodiversity into government policies and private sector practice were agreed upon by participants. It is anticipated that the recommendations agreed at the national level will be rolled out at ONP and other protected areas.
2.1	Number of conservation-related policies of national governments are	2	Analysis of one EIA guideline produces an environmental compliance	1	One Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulation and guidelines reviewed and a Framework

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	informed or influenced by research, analysis and outreach supported by CEPF grants (target: At least 5).		monitoring framework; one national oil palm research policy incorporates biodiversity considerations based on biodiversity research and targeted outreach on the value of biodiversity		for improved compliance monitoring and enforcement has been developed. This will feed into the review of the Nigerian EIA Act presently ongoing at the Nigerian National Assembly. One oil palm research policy has been reviewed with recommendations
2.2	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 (target: for at least 20).	1	Information on forest cover change provides an indication of the status of Okomu NP/KBA, feeds into management plans and leads to improvement in environmental guideline for effective management of the KBA	1	A forest cover assessment of ONP has been carried out. This will feed into the ongoing review of Okomu National Park Management plan.
2.3	Number of partnerships are formed or strengthened among civil society, government, private sector and communities to promote best practices in mining,	1	One biodiversity stakeholder coordination platform formed and partnership strengthened between government, communities, civil society and private sector to promote	1	Okomu Biodiversity Stakeholders' Platform was established. Members include 12 communities, Okomu National Park, Federal Ministry of Environment, Nigerian Conservation Foundation, Leventis Foundation, government security

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	sustainable forestry and agriculture by private companies (target: At least 20).		best practices in oil palm production.		agencies, Okomu Oil Palm Company.
2.4	Number of private companies adopt new management practices consistent with biodiversity conservation at operations in the conservation corridors (target: At least 5).	1	A framework for effective ESIA compliance monitoring enables government to improve enforcement of environmental compliance in at least one oil palm concession	1	Okomo Oil Palm Company, the largest users of the production landscape around ONP has signed up to the recommendations of the National Policy Dialogue which includes, but not limited to - Review of Nigerian EIA processes and guidelines, with explicit reference be made to the mitigating hierarchy as well as biodiversity offsets to ensure either no net loss or even net gain.
5a	Number of networks are formed among civil society, government and private sector actors to facilitate capacity building, avoid duplication of effort and maximize impact (target: At least 15).	1	By end of the project, a platform gathering all the Okomu National Park stakeholders (local communities – men and women, civil society, park authorities and natural resource companies) is established	1	The Okomu Biodiversity Stakeholders Platform (OBSP) was formed thanks to the project to enable effective communication at site level and foster constructive dialogue among Okomu National Park stakeholders (local communities – men and women, civil society, park authorities and natural resource companies)
3.1	Number of Critically Endangered and Endangered species	2	More than 90% of men and women trained in biodiversity	2	The training of community volunteers in Biodiversity monitoring was carried out

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	with priority actions identified in Conservation Action Plans being implemented (target: for at least 15).		monitoring are independently collecting data across at least two taxa, leading to up-to-date biodiversity information available for the sustainable management of Okomu NP by the end of 2021.		between 29 November and 2 December 2021. 80% of the trained community volunteers participated in data collection during the rapid assessment on insects, birds and mammals. This helped established baseline data for future monitoring programmes in the park for Cercopithecus erythrogaster (EN) and Psittacus erithacus (EN) both having conservation action plans highlighting the need for population trend monitoring.
4a	Number of local communities are empowered to engage in the sustainable management of priority sites and/or consolidate ecological connectivity at the landscape scale (target: At least 60).	11	More than 90% of men and women trained in biodiversity monitoring are independently collecting data across at least three taxa, leading to up-to-date biodiversity information available for the sustainable management of Okomu NP by the end of 2021.	11	80% of the trained community volunteers participated in data collection during the rapid assessment on insects, birds and mammals. Also, although 12 communities were engaged in all activities related to the communities, only 11 of them were involved in the OBS Platform which is the forum that gave the communities the opportunity to interact with the national park management and



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					<p>participate in decision making in conservation of the national park.</p> <p>The OBS Platform has also built some level of confidence and trust among all stakeholders, providing a step by step process through which complaints can be channeled (Grievance Redress Mechanism) rather than resulting to confrontational means. With this process for grievance mechanism put into use, it will discourage the resort to agitation which has been a common occurrence in the area, with unpleasant outcomes. Instead, issues can now be resolved peacefully with proper consultations and engagements following a structured system, which will be acceptable to all parties.</p>

## GLOBAL INDICATORS

### Protected Areas

Protected areas that have been created and/or expanded as a result of the project. Protected areas may include private or community reserves, municipal or provincial parks, or other designations where biodiversity conservation is an official management goal.

<b>Name of Protected Area</b>	<b>WDPA ID*</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Longitude</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Original Total Size (Hectares) **</b>	<b>New Protected Hectares ***</b>	<b>Year of Legal Declaration or Expansion</b>
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\*World Database of Protected Areas

\*\*If this is a new protected area, 0 should appear in this column

\*\*\* This column excludes the original total size of the protected area.

## Key Biodiversity Area Management

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) under improved management—where tangible results have been achieved to support conservation—as a result of the project.

KBA Name	KBA Code	Size of KBA	Number of Hectares with Improved Management
Okomu National Park	NGA10		18,100

## Production Landscapes

Production landscapes with strengthened management of biodiversity as a result of the project.

A production landscape is defined as a site outside a protected area where commercial agriculture, forestry or natural product exploitation occurs.

Name of Production Landscape	Latitude	Longitude	Hectares Strengthened	Intervention
Okomu Oil Palm concession (Okomu NP surrounding production landscape)	0	0	37,000	Okomo Oil Palm Company, the largest users of the production landscape around ONP is part of the Okomu Biodiversity Stakeholders Platform (OBSP.) They are also signatory to the recommendations agreed upon at the National Policy Dialogue

## Benefits to Individuals

- **Structured Training:**

Number of Men Trained	Number of Women Trained	Topics of Training
20	8	1) Biodiversity survey (insects, birds, plants and mammals) 2) Protected Areas For All Webinar Series 3) Introduction to Ecosystem Services Valuation

- **Cash Benefits:**

<b>Number of Men – Cash Benefits</b>	<b>Number of Women – Cash Benefits</b>	<b>Description of Benefits</b>
6	4	Daily payment to community volunteers who participated in data collection during Rapid Biodiversity Assessment, KAP Survey, logistical support during OBSP meetings and awareness raising activity

## Benefits to Communities

View the <b>characteristics</b> column below with the following corresponding codes:	View the <b>benefits</b> column below with the following corresponding codes:
1- Small Landowners	a. Increased Access to Clean Water
2- Subsistence Economy	b. Increased Food Security
3- Indigenous/ Ethnic Peoples	c. Increased Access to Energy
4- Pastoralists / Nomadic Peoples	d. Increased Access to Public Services
5- Recent Migrants	e. Increased Resilience to Climate Change
6- Urban Communities	f. Improved Land Tenure
7- Other	g. Improved Use of Traditional Knowledge
	h. Improved Decision-Making
	i. Improved Access to Ecosystem Services

Community Name	Community Characteristics							Type of Benefit									Country	Number of Males Benefitting	Number of Females Benefitting
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i			
Udo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	2	2
Ugolo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	2	2
Iguafole	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	2	1
Iguowan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	1	3
Maroghinoba (A T & P)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	1	0
Inikorowa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	2	0
Ofunama	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	1	1
Okomu Ijaw	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	2	0
Ajakurama	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	2	0
Utesi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	2	1
Ugbo - II	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nigeria	2	0

**Characteristics of “Other” Communities:**

**Policies, Laws and Regulations**

View the <b>topics</b> column below with the following corresponding codes:			
A- Agriculture	E- Energy	I- Planning/Zoning	M- Tourism
B- Climate	F- Fisheries	J- Pollution	N- Transportation
C- Ecosystem Management	G- Forestry	K- Protected Areas	O- Wildlife Trade
D- Education	H- Mining and Quarrying	L- Species Protection	P- Other

No.	Name of Law	Scope	Topics															
			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	The Nigerian EIA Act	National	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**“Other” Topics Addressed by the Policy, Law or Regulation:**

No.	Country/ Countries	Date Enacted/ Amended	Expected impact	Action Performed to Achieve the Enactment/ Amendment
1	Nigeria	January 07, 2018	Analysis of one EIA guideline produces an environmental compliance monitoring framework; one national oil palm	One Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulation and guidelines reviewed and a Framework for improved compliance monitoring and enforcement has been developed. This was to feed into

No.	Country/ Countries	Date Enacted/ Amended	Expected impact	Action Performed to Achieve the Enactment/ Amendment
			research policy incorporates biodiversity considerations based on biodiversity research and targeted outreach on the value of biodiversity	the review of the Nigerian EIA Act presently ongoing at the Nigerian National Assembly, however, we could not get across to the National Assembly on time for this to be considered in their review. The new Director of EA has received a copy of the document and assured us that it make useful contributions to the review of other policies being considered for review.

### Companies Adopting Biodiversity-friendly Practices

A company is defined as a for-profit business entity. A biodiversity-friendly practice is one that conserves or uses natural resources in a sustainable manner.

Name of Company	Description of Biodiversity-Friendly Practice	Country/Countries where Practice was Adopted
Okomu Oil Palm Company Plc	The company has signed up to the recommendations of the National Policy Dialogue which includes, but not limited to - Review of Nigerian EIA processes and guidelines, with explicit reference be made to the mitigating hierachy as well as biodiversity offsets to ensure either no net loss or even net gain.	Nigeria

### Networks and Partnerships

Networks/partnerships should have some lasting benefit beyond immediate project implementation. Informal networks/partnerships are acceptable.

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
Okomu Biodiversity Stakeholders Platform (OBSP)	2021	Nigeria	Yes	To enable effective communication at site level and foster constructive dialogue among Okomu National Park stakeholders (local communities – men and women, civil society, park authorities and natural resource companies)

### Sustainable Financing

Sustainable financing mechanisms generate funding for the long-term (generally five or more years). These include, but are not limited to, conservation trust funds, debt-for-nature swaps, payment for ecosystem services (PES) schemes, and other revenue, fee or tax schemes that generate long-term funding for conservation.

Name of Mechanism	Purpose	Date Established	Description	Country/Countries	Project Intervention	Delivery of Funds?
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### Globally Threatened Species

Globally threatened species (CR, EN, VU) on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, benefitting from the project.

Genus	Species	Common Name (English)	Status	Intervention	Population Trend at Site
Loxodonta	africana	African Elephant	VU	Establishing baseline data for future monitoring programmes	Unknown
Cercopithecus	erythrogastrer	Red-bellied Guenon	EN	Establishing baseline data for future monitoring programmes	Unknown
Ceratogymna	elata	Yellow-casqued Wattled Hornbill	VU	Establishing baseline data for future monitoring programmes	Unknown



<b>Genus</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Common Name (English)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Population Trend at Site</b>
Psittacus	erithacus	Grey Parrot	EN	Establishing baseline data for future monitoring programmes	Unknown

## LESSONS LEARNED

During the project implementation, we gained more experience that will allow us make some recommendations for more lasting outcomes for projects of this sort:

1) Success in conservation projects will need a long-term process that demands several years to achieve its goal. The long-term nature of influencing policies, laws and regulations, and changing the perception of people can be considered for projects of this sort. We believe years of intensive work will be needed to sustain this momentum. Consistent interventions and support holds the key to consolidating and sustaining the gains made during this project.

2) For projects that will involve the establishment of a stakeholders coordination platform, where issues affecting the communities and the management of the Protected Areas (PA), as a result of the environmental, social or cultural impact due to the activities of either the government or private sector, will be discussed, we recommend that an assessment on governance and management of the protected area be carried out first. This will create an opportunity for more engagement where communities, PA management and other stakeholders will air their views and collectively agree on recommendations on how to improve the situation. This will also give them the opportunity to claim ownership of the idea and as a result, work for its success. The success of the assessment will reduce the challenges of establishing the stakeholder coordination platform.

3) Work with communities requires patience and dedication, as well as a budget for community engagement (see last point). Communities seemed to have little understanding of the kind of project we had come to execute. Their expectation of what they stand to benefit was rather towards livelihood and community development. However, we kept engaging them to get them to understand the benefits of our project beyond what they have always known and expected from NGOs. We did not succumb to pressure and begin to make promises on what we will not deliver, rather we were able to manage their expectations by clarifying the scope of our project, which was to improve the relationship between communities and park management and to enable community involvement in decision making with regards to management of the park and surrounding forests where they reside. The initial Knowledge, Attitude and Perception (KAP) survey gave us an understanding of the extent of the conflict between the communities and the PA management and some of the grievance of the communities. In order to resolve the situation and be able to establish the OBSP, we had to make a change of plan. We started by having further community engagement by conducting community entry meetings in the 12 target communities. During these meetings, we were able to provide further detail on our project and the role they were expected to play. After the community entry meetings, we received signed consent from each community for their willingness to participate in the project.

4) Staff turn over within partner organizations requires additional engagement, but can pay off. Just a few months into our project, the Conservator of Parks (CP) of the Okomu National Park, whom we have engaged from the proposal stage and had been very supportive of our project was replaced. The new CP seemed to have limited knowledge of working with communities and was almost a hindrance to the success of our project. Seeking approval from the Nigerian National Park Service Head Quarters, which oversees the management of all national parks in Nigeria before commencing our activities in Okomu National Park gave us a major advantage, which meant that he did not have the authority to stop the progress of our work. This also gave us time to win him over as the project activities progressed and the visit of the CEPF RIT at this point helped a lot in getting his

buy-in. In order to build his capacity in community engagement, SCERA has therefore included an activity under this project to support the CP of Okomu National Park to attend the African Protected Area Congress (APAC) holding in Rwanda in July, where he will have the opportunity to interact with other park managers across Africa and listen to success stories of community-park collaboration in PA management.

5) Adaptive management may be required when activities are repeatedly not moving forward. Activities 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 of this project have been delayed due to lack of interest of the Department of Environmental Assessment (DEA), who is in charge of authorizing and approving EIAs. First, they delayed in responding to us on our first attempt to engage them and secondly, they were unwilling to give us access into their website for integration of the database we were working on. Although they claim to have a complicated bureaucratic process before any collaboration could commence, we expected to be able to make progress with time. However, after two meetings to present the plans for the database and reaching out to them several times, it was evident they were not interested in working with us. They also did not respond to our invitation to the National Policy Dialogue (NPD) neither did they show up, further confirming our suspicion of their lack of interest. We used adaptive management and are now working to host the database with the Nigerian National Parks Service, who have shown great interest. The information to be stored on the database will be for biodiversity and forest cover and other information such as concessions around protected areas. Once the database is set-up, the training of database managers will be carried out in July.

On a similar note, activities 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.3.1, 1.4.1 and 1.4.2 were also delayed due to the international EIA consultant falling ill as a result of pregnancy-related complications. Soon after we signed the contract with her in July 2021, she was put on bed rest. At that point we started to look for a replacement, but we could not find one. The only person who we found suitable at that time was not available to take up the task. Although she recovered and was ready to start, she put to bed shortly after and had to go on maternity leave. She then recommended a co-consultant who carried out almost 70% of the contract, mostly reviews and development of the compliance monitoring and enforcement framework. She was however not able to complete the remaining part of her work, which was the development of a biodiversity and environmental monitoring training manual. To progress with this activity, our team of biodiversity experts from SCERA and APLORI were able to put together a training plan for the training of community volunteers on biodiversity survey methods for four taxa (insects, birds, mammals and plants) as part of the Rapid Biodiversity Assessment. We are now developing a training manual based off the training plan to make up for this activity.

6) Lastly, while implementing the project, we came to realize that some activities not budgeted for, needed to be included. The community entry meetings, although not initially planned in the proposal became a necessary activity for the success of the project. So, although not budgeted for, had to be carried out. This made our finances really tight. We have learnt from this and will ensure in the future to put in sufficient funds in the budget for community engagement, which can be a long-drawn and expensive process.

## **SUSTAINABILITY/REPLICATION**

The establishment of the OBSP was challenging at first but was made easier after further engagement with communities through the community entry meetings under this project, and the SAGE assessment funded by BIOPAMA, a grant we secured as a result of the CEPF

project. The benefit of the OBSP in the long-term is that it provides a forum for communities and park management and other stakeholders to continue to dialogue. It will make communities feel that they are being listened to and are able to contribute meaningfully in important discussions or any new development in relation to the park. Communities previously had the impression that the Park management lacked respect and regard for communities and were not involved in park management activities. This had put a strain on the relationship between communities and ONP management, however this impression is beginning to change as a result of the OBSP. The presence of this platform is gradually replacing their almost total dissatisfaction with increasing confidence in the system. This will have far-reaching consequences and a long-term effect.

The platform has also built some level of confidence and trust among all stakeholders, providing a step by step process through which complaints can be channelled (Grievance Redress Mechanism) rather than resulting to confrontational means. Once this process for grievance mechanism is continuously put into use, it will discourage the resort to agitation which has been a common occurrence in the area, with unpleasant outcomes. With the grievance mechanism in place, issues can now be resolved peacefully with proper consultations and engagements following a structured system, which will be acceptable to all parties.

The METT assessment has helped ONP staff to think through and provide recommendations for improving the management system presently in place. It was an opportunity for rangers to air their views on how things could be improved, especially in some areas of their work. Some of the rangers involved in the assessment have now moved higher in position, having all the recommendations and actions for improvement in mind which will serve as a guide for ONP management and NGOs supporting conservation within ONP.

SCERA's engagement with the relevant government institutions has been largely successful. Due to these consultations and engagements, they played active roles throughout the implementation of this project. This was evident in their attendance at the inception meeting, the OBSP meetings and their participation in the Ecosystem Services Valuation training session and their immense contributions during the National Policy Dialogue workshop. This project has added more steam to the commitment of these institutions to conserving the biodiversity of Nigeria. For example, NESREA has offered to share the recommendations from our review of the Nigerian Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidelines with the National Assembly EIA review committee/panel.

Capacity building activities for both community volunteers and government staff have also been rewarding. The biodiversity and socioeconomic/KBA data collection training for community volunteers has provided them the skills and tools that could be applied in future. It has also increased their chances of gaining employment with environmental institutions. Also, with these new acquired knowledge and skills, the volunteers can support their communities in environmental monitoring as needed.

Due to the CEPF grant, SCERA has been able to establish offices in both Abuja and Okomu, thereby providing the base to ensure continued engagement with government and stakeholders at both national and state/local levels, and with communities at site-level. SCERA has become a household name among the government partners, with more than one request for continued collaboration in not just Okomu but also other protected areas. We have also earned the trust of local communities.

The project office, risk management systems set up and vehicle, as well as the increase in our workforce has set the right conditions to enable us continue our work at ONP, ensuring

that our efforts continue to make the impact. All these have contributed in no small measure to the growth and development of our organisation, which has gained more capacity and confidence in the course of this project to influence the government and handle the challenges in the protection of Nigeria’s Biodiversity. Our approach and successes are replicable in other protected areas and recommendations have been shared with the government the necessary institutions.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS/STANDARDS**

Our project did not trigger any safeguards, however we ensured to engage with all relevant stakeholders as early as possible in the project.

We were in contact with the Okomu National Park Management during the proposal writing stage and when our application was successful, we informed the Nigerian National Parks Service Headquarters of our successful application and sought their permission to commence project activities in the park.

At the start of the project, community entry meetings were held to officially inform and seek the support of communities in the implementation of the project. All 12 communities gave their signed consent and commitment towards the success of the project.

For every aspect of the project where community and other stakeholders were invited to participate in meetings (e.g. community meetings, OBSP), workshops (e.g. NPD) and trainings (community volunteer training, ecosystem services valuation training), gender was emphasized. We also ensured that our team had a good gender representation.

One of the responsibilities of the OBSP which was set up in the course of this project is to come up with a proper channel via which grievances can be reported and addressed properly. This was successfully done and information on the grievance redress mechanism was widely disseminated among stakeholders.

## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

SCERA is grateful to CEPF for this funding and the technical support throughout the grant period. We specially want to appreciate our RIT, Ruth Akagu for being so supportive. This grant was instrumental to the success of our application to the BIOPAMA STGA. This contribution towards biodiversity conservation in Nigeria will surely create more awareness for CEPF’s work towards conservation.

## **ADDITIONAL FUNDING**

<b>Total Amount of Additional Funding Actually Secured (USD)</b>	\$21,106.00
<b>Breakdown of Additional Funding</b>	BIOPAMA: 21106

## **INFORMATION SHARING AND CEPF POLICY**

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. For more information about this project, you may contact the organization and/or individual listed below.

Society for Sustainability and Conservation Education for Rural Areas; [info@scera-ng.org](mailto:info@scera-ng.org)