

OPERATIONAL PHASE 8



GHANA SGP COUNTRY PROGRAMME STRATEGY

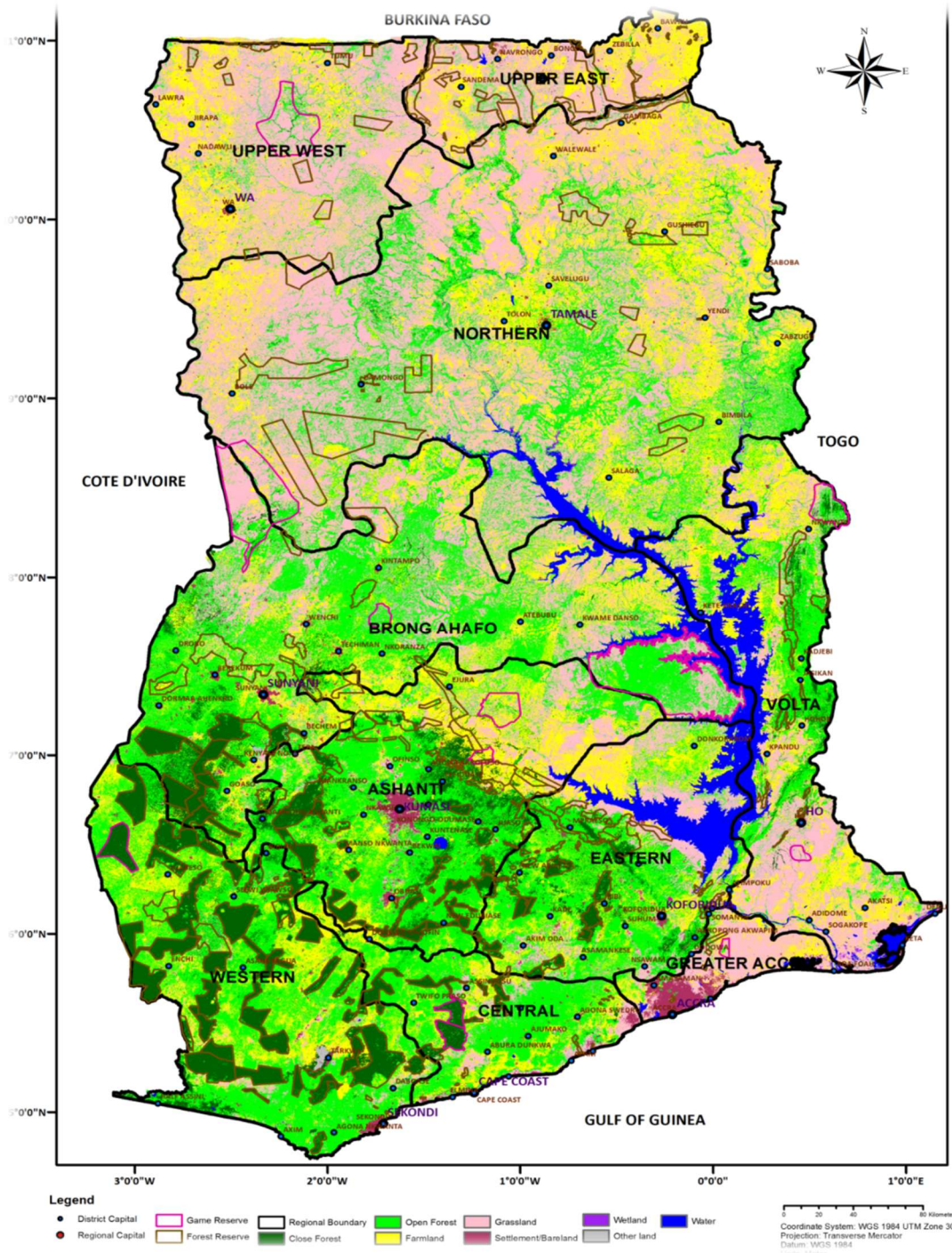


Figure 1: Protected Areas in Ghana

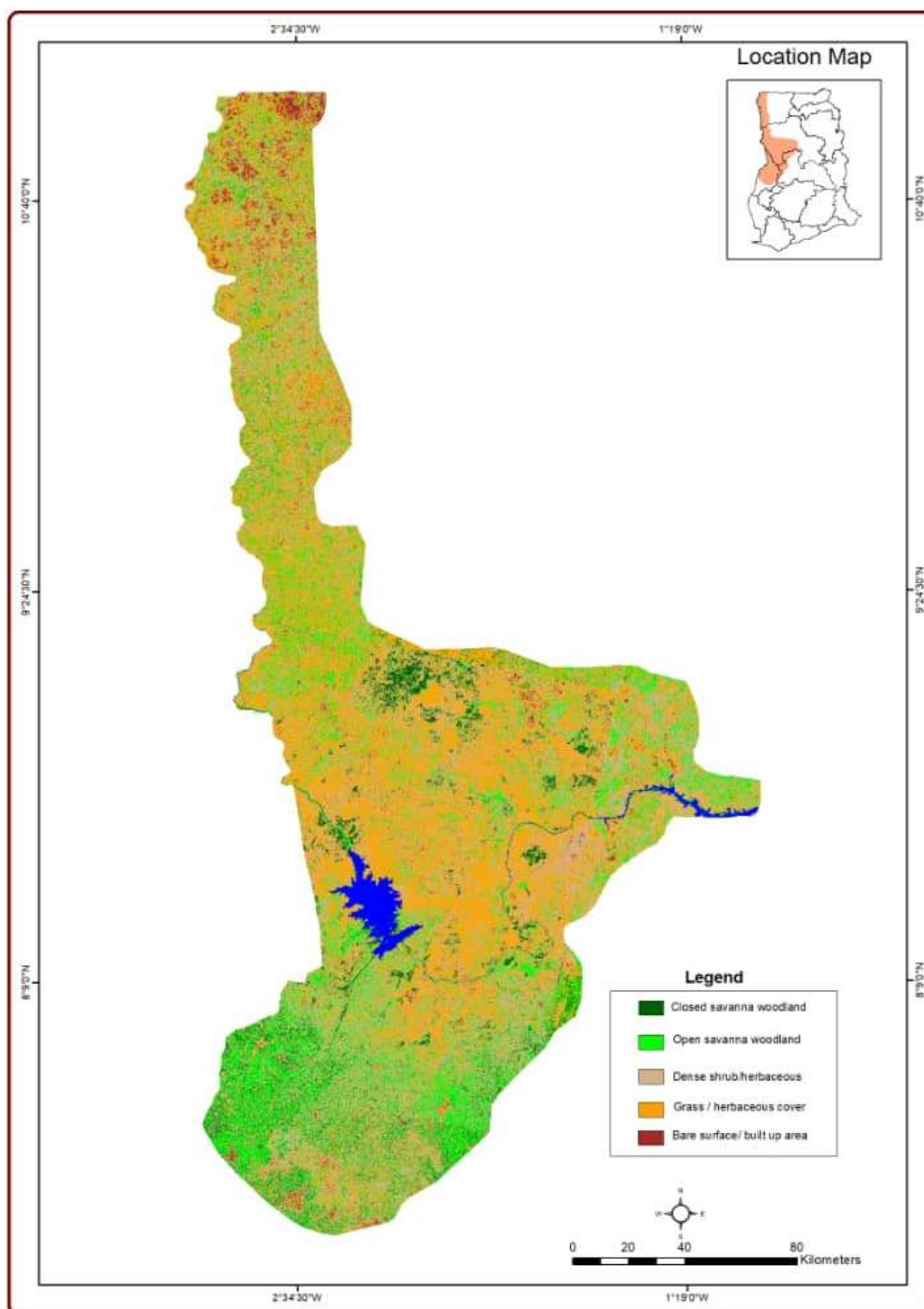


Figure 2: *Black Volta Basin Landscape*

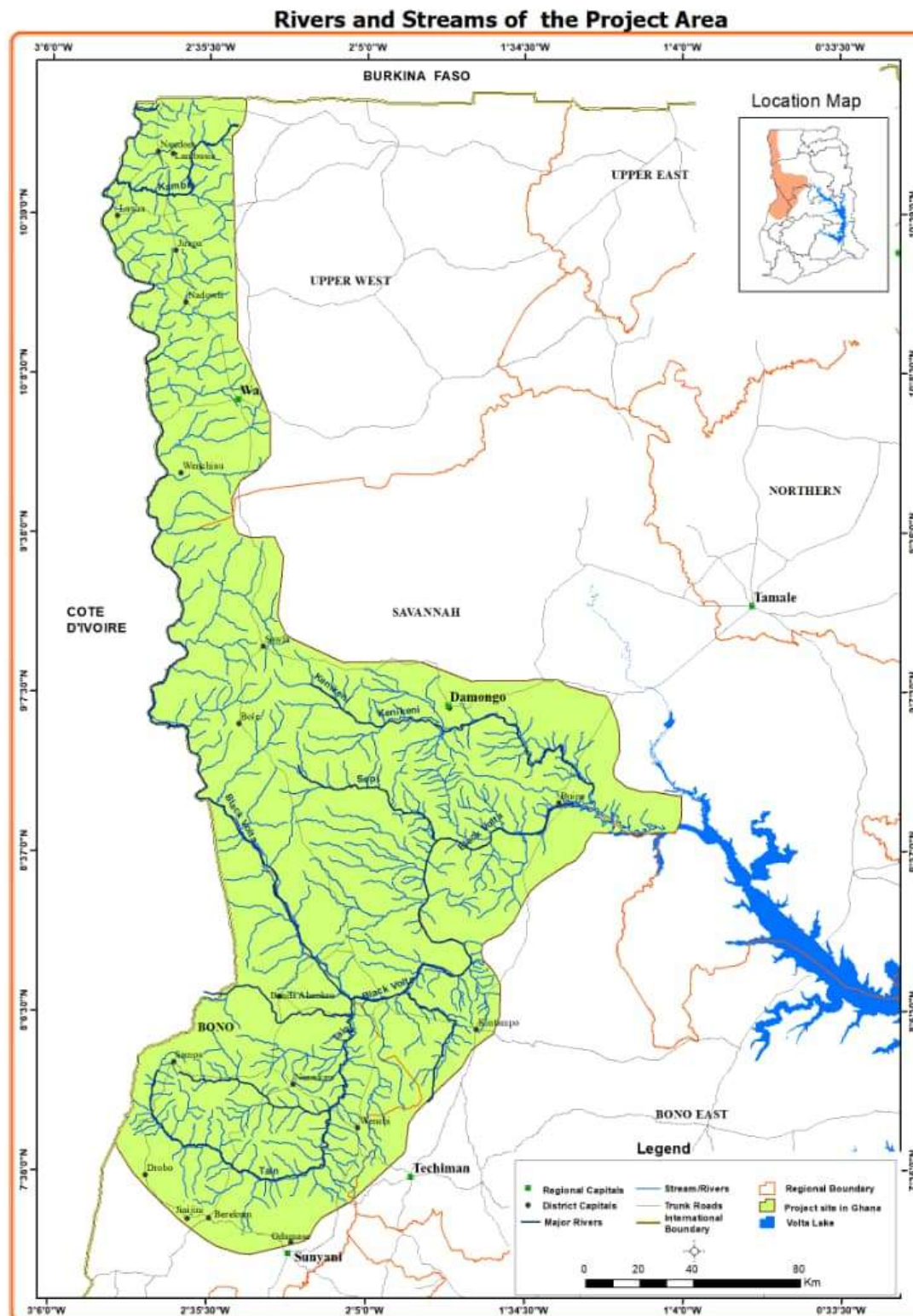


Figure 3: *Black Volta Landscape Rivers and Streams*

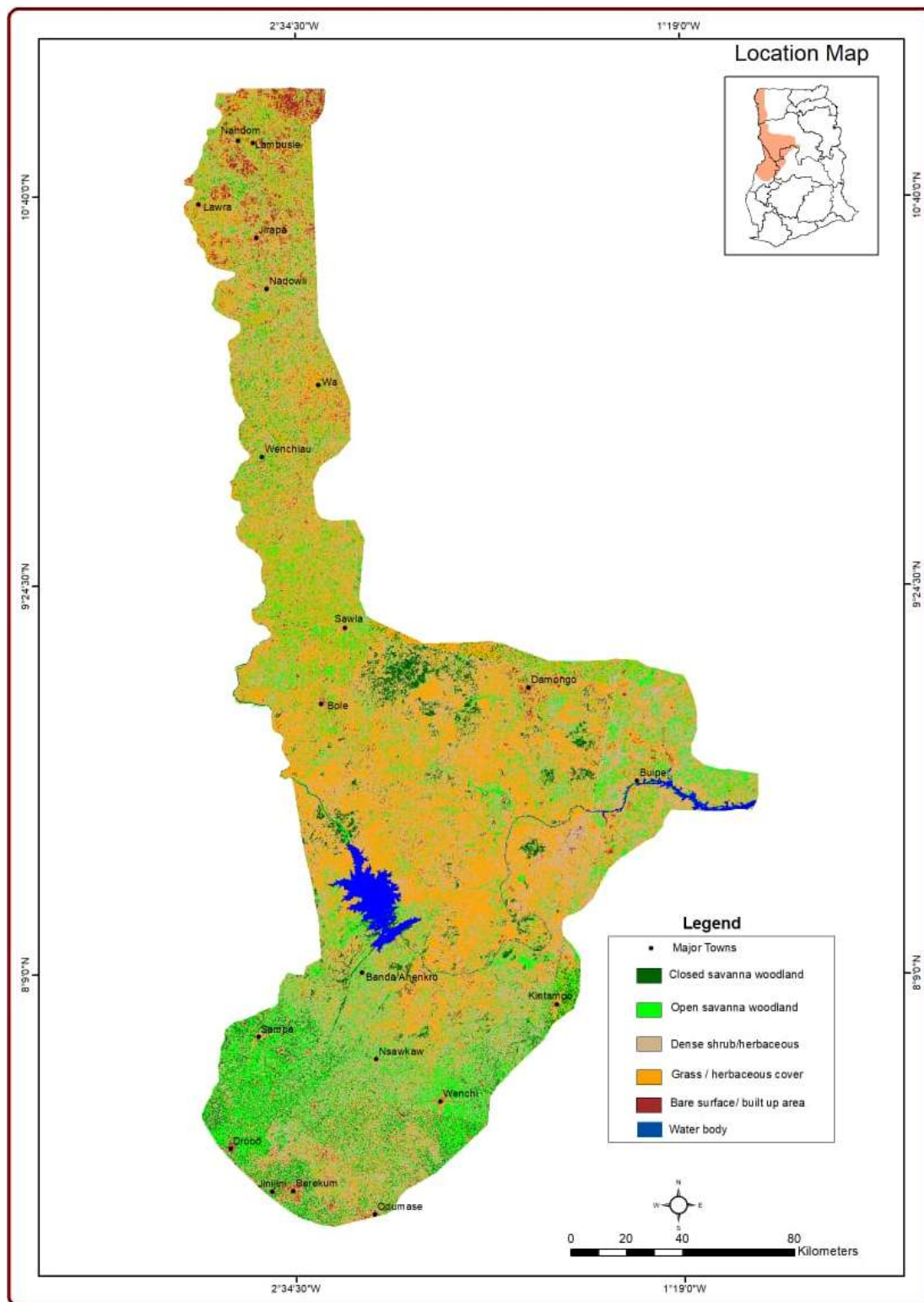


Figure 4: BVB Landuse and major settlements in the landscape.

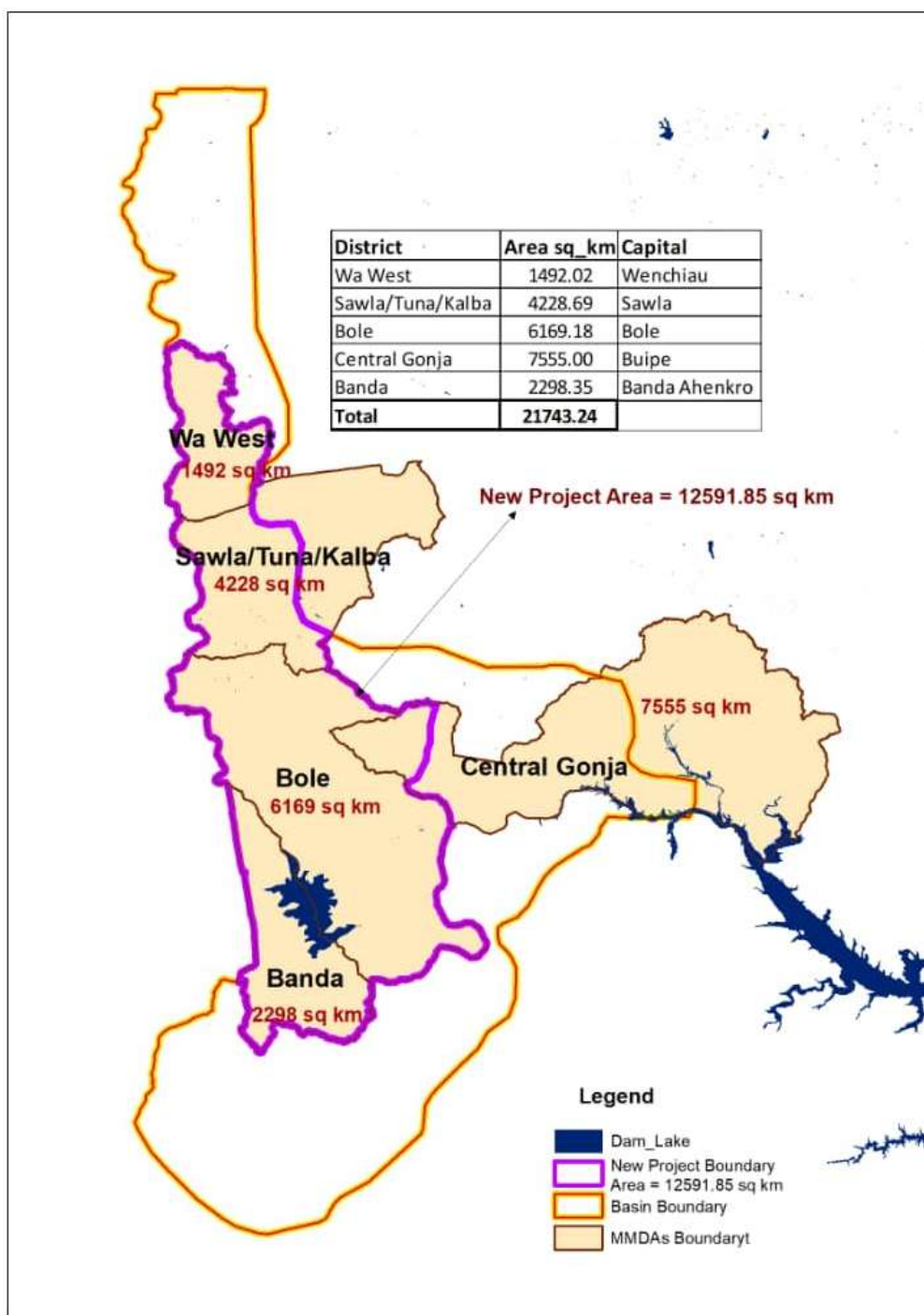


Figure 5: OP8 Socio-Ecological Production Landscape within the Black Volta Basin

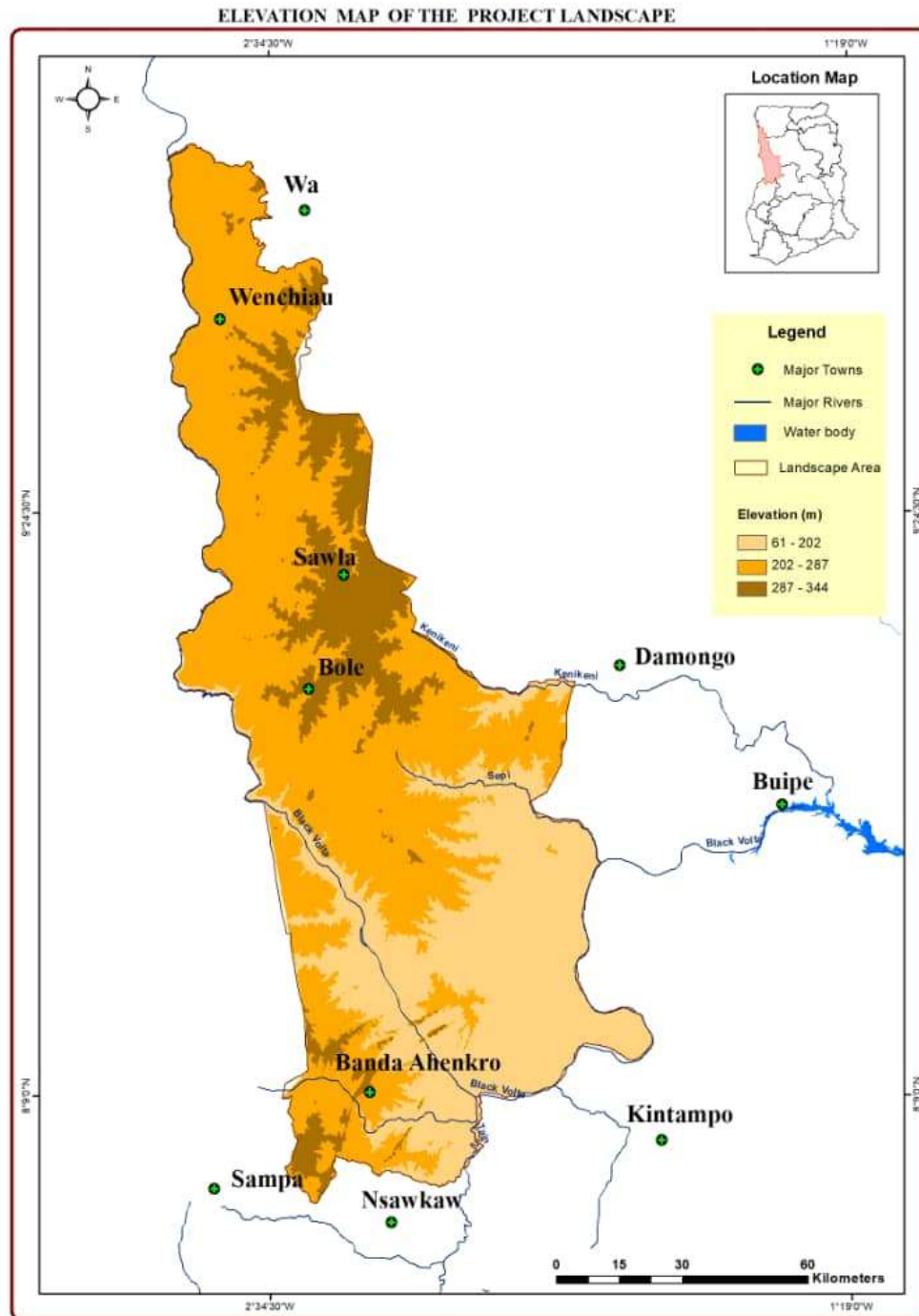


Figure 6:SGP OP8 Socio-Ecological Production Landscape



TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 COUNTRY PROGRAMME SUMMARY: Key Results and Achievements.....	1
3.0 COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT	3
3.1 Alignment with National Priorities	3
3.2 Gaps and Opportunities.....	4
3.3 OP8 Strategic Priorities of the SGP Country Programme	5
4.0 OP8 PRIORITY LANDSCAPES/SEASCAPES & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES.....	8
4.1 Grantmaking within the Priority Landscape	8
4.2 CSO-Government-Private Sector Dialogue Platform	14
4.3 Promoting Social Inclusion, Including Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment	14
4.4 Knowledge Management	15
5.0 COMMUNICATION PLAN.....	16
5.1 Communication Framework	16
5.2 Approaches to communications:.....	17
5.3 Communications tools.....	17
5.4 Communicating for resource mobilization, partnerships and donor recognition	17
6.0 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN	18
6.1 Resource Mobilization Strategy.....	18
6.2 Indicative funds to be mobilized.....	18
6.3 Matching funds from Grantees.....	18
6.4 In-kind contributions from applicants and other donors	19
6.5 Using sustainable livelihood	19
7.0 PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES	19
7.1 Dovetailing interventions into GEF Macro and Medium-size grants	19
7.2 Bilateral and multi-lateral donors.....	19
7.3 Private sector participation in SGP	19



8.0	RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN.....	20
8.1	Social and Environmental Risks (medium).....	20
8.2	Climate Risks (High)	20
8.3	Other Risks (Low).....	20
9.0	MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN	22
9.1	Monitoring Approaches at Project and Country levels.....	23
9.2	CPS Results Framework	26
10.0	NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT	30
ANNEXES		Error! Bookmark not defined.
ANNEX 1: LANDSCAPE BASELINE ASSESSMENT PROCESS		31
OP8 MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN- BLACK VOLTA BASIN SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE TARGETS		
42		
ANNEX 2: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY DESCRIPTION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE GLOBAL CO-FINANCING		
PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR THE SATOYAMA		
INITIATIVE (COMDEKS) PHASE 4 FUNDED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN (2023-2027).		47
COMDEKS 4 Goals.....		47
THE LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY		47
Conceptual Framework for Intervention		47
Vision		47
Project Development Objective		48
Specific objectives		48
Project development objective indicators.....		48
COMDEKS 4 PROGRAMME COMPONENTS		49
Component 1: Ensure the integrity, restoration, and sustainable management of landscape ecosystem		
by introducing more inclusive management practices and benefit sharing models, financial incentives,		
and investments		49
Component 2: Biodiversity restoration and improvement in forest cover in off-reserve areas		
(including agricultural biodiversity) by securing tree tenure and benefits, forest plantations and		
landscape restoration, and rehabilitation of degraded forest land.....		49
Component 3: Increase trees and enhance carbon stocks in the farming system by promoting		
innovative sustainable cocoa and agriculture practices.....		50
Component 4: Knowledge Management for capacity development, replication, and up-scaling.		51



Potential Activities to be Supported under the Programme	52
Conservation Outcomes	55
APPENDIX 1: Gender Analysis and Action Plan for North Black Volta Basin Socio-ecological; Production Landscape.....	56



OP8 FINANCIAL RESOURCES - SGP COUNTRY PROGRAMME (ESTIMATED US\$)

Total SGP Grants to date since Country Programme start date (1993)	USD 8,064,480
OP8 GEF Core Funds	USD 500,000 TBC
OP8 GEF STAR Funds	USD 0
Other funds (secured)	USD 0
Other funds (expected/to be mobilized)	USD 500,000



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Eighth Operational Phase of the Small Grants Programme (SGP OP8) builds on 30 years of successful experience in empowering local civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) in designing and leading community-driven initiatives that have enhanced household well-being, increased awareness and resilience regarding environmental threats, and generated global environmental benefits. With economic pressures intensifying in many parts of the developing world and the associated rising inequalities, local communities, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, are becoming increasingly marginalized, unable to cope with threats related to ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change. Lessons learned and experience gained in previous SGP Operational Phases have demonstrated that integrated landscape-seascape approaches effectively mobilize multiple stakeholder collaboration, link-local CSOs/CBOs with enabling partners, and achieve mutually supportive livelihood and environmental outcomes at scale.

The objectives of the SGP OP8 are to engage local CSOs/CBOs in landscape-seascape approaches across the world, providing them with access to knowledge and information, capacitating them through learning-by-doing, skills development, and delivering technical and grant assistance for interventions that enhance well-being and socioeconomic conditions and generate global environmental benefits.

The OP8 objectives reflect the key features of GEF Small Grants Programme 2.0, including new approaches to support youth, women, and Indigenous Peoples, linking up with complementary mechanisms, such as the Microfinance Initiative and CSO Challenge Programme, cooperating with other GEF Agencies, and leveraging opportunities with GEF strategies, including the delivery of the GEF-8 Integrated Programmes. In addition, OP8 will facilitate opportunities for innovation and scaling up, catalyze multi-stakeholder alliances to test new approaches through CSOs, and leverage its dialogue platforms toward greater impact. OP8 will also align and contribute to the UNDP Strategic Plan (2023-2025), the Country Programme Document (CPD) (2023-2027).

2.0 COUNTRY PROGRAMME SUMMARY: KEY RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The GEF Small Grants in Ghana has supported 432 projects and built the capacities of 334 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in five different socio-ecological production landscapes since its inception in 1993. With a total grant of US\$20.82 million (60% Cofinancing), the programme has been investing in five key thematic areas namely Biodiversity conservation (38%); Chemical and Waste management (10%); Sustainable Land Management (22%), Climate Change (14%); International Waters (1%) and Multifocal Area (5%). The significant key environmental benefits and the investment results achieved over the years include:

Biodiversity conservation. The programme implemented 156 community-based biodiversity projects improving the recognition, support, and effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in areas under the stewardship of local peoples and local communities (ICCAs) thereby contributing to the achievements of Aichi Targets 11, 14, and 18 of the CBD 2020 Global Biodiversity Strategy. Working with local communities in biological corridors, community-managed sacred landscapes (average size of 11 ha) in the coastal savannah and the transition zone ecosystem were surveyed,



mapped, inventoried, and digitized as part of a wider national biodiversity mapping programme. The intervention has promoted landscape-level conservation in five (5) Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas (GSBAs) in the coastal savannah ecosystem, restored six (6) watersheds in the Weto Landscape, and created six (6) Community Resource Management Areas (average size of 800ha each) in the transitional and forest ecosystem. The GEF/SGP interventions have improved the conservation status of critically endangered endemic species *Talbotiella gentii*, in the Bandai Hills landscape, the Pigmy hippopotamus (*Choeropsis liberiensis*), and the Senegal bushbaby (*Galago senegalensis*) in the Black Volta Basin. The programme created two biological corridors linking off-reserved landscapes to forest reserves in the savannah ecosystem of the White Volta landscape.

Sustainable land management. Within the northern savannah ecosystem, 1,500 ha of degraded agricultural lands were placed under sustainable land management involving 2,800 farm families and smallholder farmers. These farmers are practicing innovative climate-smart ecological farming through the adoption of organic agriculture with a minimal dependency on agrochemical inputs.

Local to global chemical coalitions. Integrated pest management and alternatives to the use of POP pesticides for controlling pests have been introduced to over 3,000 household farmers in the Black Volta landscape. Two (2) community waste compost enterprises employing 10 people each have been established at Forikrom (Techiman Municipality) and Osaekrodua (Awutu Senya District) communities.

Transfer of low carbon technologies at the community level. The programme has supported the upscaling of innovative low-carbon technologies including the use of improved kiln charcoal production technology and energy-saving wood stoves for domestic, institutional, and commercial use in the coastal and northern savanna areas. Over 5,500 improved and efficient cooking and fish-smoking stoves have been manufactured and distributed to institutions, commercial operators, cottage industries, and fish smokers. The programme is piloting eco-charcoal certification in selected wood fuel-producing areas within the Black Volta Basin landscape.

International recognition. Three (3) projects received two international recognitions, and one was adjudged 2nd Runner-up. The bamboo bicycle project received a 2013 award from the International Road Federation in ARoad Award on promoting an innovative transportation system, it also received the UN-Habitat/Dubai International Best Practice Award and the Dubai City Council/UN-Habitat award for innovation and judicious use of natural resources in 2013. The Ghanaian bamboo bicycle was celebrated at COP19 in Warsaw in 2013. The biodiesel project won the 2012 Seed Award whilst the Women in Dry land management project won the Equator 2014 Award.

South-South Exchange. The programme facilitated a South-South exchange of small-scale miners from Burkina Faso and Mali on the safe use of mercury and mercury-free processes for small-scale gold extraction. It shared knowledge of safe handling and use of mercury under the Minamata Convention, safe amalgamation, and retorting using innovative mercury-free direct smelting



methods, and distributed some retorts and direct smelting kits for sustained interest in the processes.

Broader Adoption. The implementation of the programme has formed social networks and strengthened community and civil society groups operating within a landscape to generate constructive dialogue with the government at the national and district levels in environmental planning and policy development. The landscape approach to natural resource management has been adopted in Ghana. This is increasing resource flow to communities and local CSOs through the effective use of local assets and innovative environmental financing mechanisms and has also been adopted by most donor agencies.

3.0 COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

3.1 Alignment with National Priorities

Table 1: List of relevant conventions and national/regional plans or programmes

Conventions + National Planning Frameworks	Date of ratification/completion
GEF-8 National Dialogues	
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)	August 29, 1994
CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)	August 29, 1994
Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS)	May 20, 2011
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	June 9, 1995
UNFCCC National Communications	May 1-2, 2001
UNFCCC Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA)	November, 2010
UNFCCC National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA)	April, 2002
Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the Paris Accord	September, 2015
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	December 27, 1996
UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAP)	April, 2002
Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	May 03, 2003
SC National Implementation Plan (NIP)	January 21, 2003
Minamata Convention (MC) on Mercury	September 24, 2014
UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	June 2019
Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the UN SDGs	June, 2019
Strategic Action Programmes (SAPs) for shared international waterbodies (IW)	November, 2013
Others (list)	
Minamata Convention on Mercury	September 24, 2014
Medium-term national development policy framework – Agenda for Jobs (2018-2021)	June 2018



3.2 Gaps and Opportunities

There have been several interventions and investments to restore the ecological integrity of the degraded landscapes in the distressed environmental areas of Ghana. Unfortunately, these past interventions have not yielded the desired impact. Habitat destruction and biodiversity loss due to illegal logging, illicit hunting, incessant wildfires, unsustainable farming practices, unsustainable charcoal production, inadequate livelihood support systems, and weak institutional capacity to support conservation. The rural landscapes are characterized by low land productivity, increasing food insecurity, loss of biodiversity, destruction of forest ecosystems and vegetation cover, dryness of water sources, land degradation, and widespread poverty. There is an increasing use of agrochemicals in farming and cultivation of lands along the steep slopes, and the water courses. The results of these have been a reduction in soil fertility, loss of flora and fauna, disappearance of Indigenous food species, and drying up of streams and rivers exacerbated by climate change. Natural resources management within production landscapes is unsustainable and the project approach to natural resource management is not yielding the desired impacts. There is a need for a programming and integrated landscape approach where synergies could be developed with the civil society groups playing critical roles. to create greater impact and mainstream best practices.

Notwithstanding the challenges, there are opportunities within the policies and current interventions in ecological production landscapes that can be utilized to promote sustainable environment management, which could reduce income by up to 40% for poor households by 2050 (World Bank, 2022). Ghana can pursue a development pathway that builds resilience to climate change and fosters a transition to low-carbon growth through a combination of policies and public and private investments.

Ghana has undertaken a climate-resilient and low-carbon development pathway that fosters more green, resilient, and inclusive growth in the country. The approach involves a) adopting an integrated approach to agriculture and environmental management by fostering integrated landscape management, promoting climate-smart agriculture, and supporting adaptation of coastal communities; b) building sustainable cities and resilient infrastructure systems through better urban development, enhancements in resilient mobility infrastructure and services, and improved waste management; c) boosting disaster risk preparedness through early warning systems, better national financial preparedness against climate shocks, and adaptive health and social protection systems; d) realizing new opportunities for managing forest resource as an asset for climate resilience, including for carbon sinks focusing on reversing deforestation and promoting cleaner cooking; e) promoting a transition to clean energy by scaling up renewable energy sources and strengthening regional energy markets; and f) modernizing transport systems by, among others, improving public transportation and updating vehicle standards.

The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) have the potential to maximize the synergies between adaptation and economic diversification, resulting in mitigation co-benefits, that will accelerate the sustainable energy transition, build resilient economies and societies, enhance early warning and disaster risk management, enhance landscape restoration, ensure responsible production and consumption, foster social inclusion focusing on youth and women, and develop smart and safe communities. The Ghana Vision 2057 and other relevant sectorial policies and strategies focus on tackling unsustainable mining practices, whilst promoting afforestation, sustainable land management, and food security. They also focused on assisting local authorities to mainstream the green economy in local development plans.



3.3 OP8 Strategic Priorities of the SGP Country Programme

The strategic priorities of the country programme under OP8 seek to promote community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems, sustainable agriculture, and food security, low-carbon energy access co-benefits, and local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management. The programme will enhance the capacities of CSOs, promote social inclusion, and support knowledge management. The planned activities to be undertaken will contribute to GEF, UNDP and other national programmes (Table 2).

Table 2: SGP Country Programme alignment with SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives and country priorities/projects/programme

1. SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives - Global	2. Ghana SGP OP8 Priorities	3. GEF/SGP Ghana's complementarity with GEF, UNDP, & other programmes
Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species 1) Improve the effectiveness of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and management through equitable governance systems by recognizing and respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. 2) Improve community-led biodiversity-friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy approaches (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.). 3) Enhance community-led actions for the protection of threatened species.	1.1 Country programme strategies developed and National Steering Committee in place for effective implementation. 1.2 Landscape strategy developed, and multistakeholder governance platforms established. 1.3 Promote effective ecosystems management through community landscape and waterscape strategies to conserve biodiversity, sustainably develop the ecosystem goods and services whilst enhancing sustainable utilization of biodiversity products for livelihood development. This will help achieve post-2020 Global Biodiversity Objectives. 1.4 Support the public-private partnership approach for the conservation and utilization of biodiversity products in the CREMAs and local community conserved areas (ICCAs). 1.5 Promote Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures" (OECMs) OECMs as a long-term approach to achieving large-scale conservation targets and mitigating biodiversity loss. 1.6 Enforce traditional rules and regulations that protect, and conserve threatened species within the landscape.	Contributes to SDGs Goal 15, Goal 13, Goal 1, CPD (2023-2017) Outputs 1.1/1.3/1.4 Related to ECC Thematic Area Green Economy/ Climate Action Thematic areas
2.0 Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security 1) Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in	2.1 Support climate-resilient agriculture and food systems incorporating in-situ conservation of genetic resources, smart climate agriculture, agroecological innovative farming, and land-based organic providers (i.e. bio-deposit) to	Contributes to: SDGs: Goal 1/ Goal 13/ Goal 15/ Goal 12 CPD (2023 – 2027):



1. SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives - Global	2. Ghana SGP OP8 Priorities	3. GEF/SGP Ghana's complementarity with GEF, UNDP, & other programmes
vulnerable ecosystems (mountains, island ecosystems, etc.). 2) Increase diversification and livelihood improvement. 3) Remove deforestation from the supply chain and expand the restoration of degraded lands.	<i>reduce the use of chemical-based fertilizers while also reducing emission from ozone-depleting substances such as nitrites and nitrates</i> 2.2 <i>Promote sustainable integrated aquaponic farming systems to ensure food security and organic farming.</i>	Outputs 1.3 and 1.4 Related to ECC Thematic Area: Green Economy
3.0 Low-carbon energy access co-benefits Support implementation of the Paris Agreement and the NDCs 1. Promote renewable and energy-efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods. 2. Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas.	3.1 <i>Support renewable agriculture and energy-efficient technologies in homes, commercial, and industrial sectors of the rural economies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods.</i> 3.2 <i>Support the mainstreaming of eco-certification sustainable woodfuel production and efficient renewable energy technologies within the Black Volta Basin socio-ecological production landscape for improved livelihood.</i>	Contribute to - SDGs: Goal 7/ Goal 8/ Goal 13/ Goal 1 CPD Outputs: Output 1.3/ 1.4 ECC Thematic Areas: Green Economy/ Climate Action
4.0 Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management 1. Reduce and promote alternatives to mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining. 2. Promote plastics/solid waste management and circular economy. 3. Reduce/remove use of chemicals in agriculture. 4. Enhance local to global coalitions on chemicals, waste, and mercury management	4.1 <i>Promote integrated plastics/solid waste management and circular economy in the urban centres</i> 4.2 <i>Establish systems of local certification of organic producers in vegetables through producer-consumer agreements and eventually graduating to national government policy that will influence markets.</i> 4.3 <i>Reduce and promote alternatives to mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining by popularizing the community mining concept as a model for small-scale gold mining in Ghana.</i>	Contributes to - SDGs: Goals 1/ Goal 12/ Goal 11 CDP Outputs: Output 1.4/ 1.5 Related to ECC Thematic Area: Circular Economy
5.0 CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms 1) Promote/enhance community voices and participation in global and national policy, strategy	5.1 <i>Promote/enhance community voices and participation in policy formulation and implementation towards the conservation of the Black Volta Basin landscape.</i>	Contributes to - SDGs: Goal 6/ Goal 16/ Goal 17 CPD Outputs: Output 1.4



1. SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives - Global	2. Ghana SGP OP8 Priorities	3. GEF/SGP Ghana's complementarity with GEF, UNDP, & other programmes
development related to global environment and sustainable development issues.		Related ECC Thematic Area: Climate Action
Enhancing social inclusion 1. Promote inclusive targeted initiatives. 2. Mainstream social inclusion in all projects. (e.g. women/girls, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities).	Enhancing social inclusion 6.1 Promote targeted initiatives that will involve creating wealth and empowerment for the Youth and Persons with disabilities. 6.2 Mainstream social inclusion in all projects to be approved.	Contributes to - SDGs: Goal 5/ Goal 8/ Goal 10 CPD Outputs: Output 1.1 ECC Related Thematic Area: Cross-cutting
Knowledge Management (KM) 1) <i>Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities</i> 2) <i>Improve capacities of CSOs/CBOs</i> 3) <i>Conduct South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices</i>	Knowledge Management 7.1 <i>Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities.</i> 7.2 <i>Support the capacity development of CSOs/CBOs.</i> 7.3 <i>Strengthen South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices, within the Sahelian countries of West Africa.</i>	Contributes to - SDGs: Goal 17/ Goal 16 CPD Outputs: Output 1.1 Related ECC Thematic Area: Cross-cutting
Results Management, Monitoring & Evaluation. 1) <i>Administer new M&E strategy in the country programme and project design, implementation, and overall decision-making using participatory mechanisms</i>	Results Management, Monitoring & Evaluation 8.1 <i>Participatory monitoring of project implementation, including digital means, developed to enable timely adaptive measures and codification of results and lessons.</i> 8.2 <i>CSOs/ CBOs and local communities are supported in continuous learnings and improvements in analyzing opportunities, risks and drivers of success and failures to achieve results within the landscapes.</i> 8.3 <i>Impact evaluation of local initiatives to address environmental and socio-economic concerns of communities and to generate an evidential basis to inform the project. development by CSOs/ CBOs.</i>	Part of the UNDP comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system.



4.0 OP8 PRIORITY LANDSCAPES/WATERSCAPES AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

4.1 Grantmaking within the Priority Landscape

4.1.1 *Process for selecting priority landscapes and Waterscapes*

The landscape selection and baseline assessment process were guided by the CPS consultation and scoping process (Tables 7 & 8) as approved and adopted by the National Steering Committee. The check listing process produced consensus for the selection of landscape, priority areas, and activities, and a plan for delivering OP8 outcomes in the country (Annex 1).

Landscape Delimitation and Baseline Assessment

Initial discussions were held with the National Steering Committee, past GEF/SGP Grantees, and coalitions of NGOs operating within the environment cluster, it was agreed that the geographical scope for implementing SGP OP8 objectives should be delimited to the northern section of the Black Volta River Basin. This was to consolidate the gains made under OP7 and to mainstream innovative technologies that will transform the landscape. Following this decision, the GEF/SGP Secretariat conducted a series of meetings and consultations with stakeholders. A technical meeting of the National Steering Committee was held on 30th October 2024 in Accra to kick start the strategy formulation process. This was followed by a stakeholder consultation workshop attended by 25 different stakeholders and organizations between November 21-22, 2024, to evaluate the qualification of the Black Volta Basin (BVB) as the landscape for the OP8.

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) made up of two National Steering Committee members, two past Grantees and a Spatial Mapping Volunteer was formed to support the NC in the plan formulation process. Subsequently, the NC and the TAG followed up with field visits to the proposed landscape between December 10-13, 2024.

The outcome of the consultations and the workshop unanimously confirmed the need to adopt the northern section of the Black Volta Basin as the OP8 Landscape based on the following reasons:

- a) the Black Volta Basin is an international water ecosystem drained by the Black Volta River. The landscape is inhabited by indigenous peoples, with Bui and Mole National Parks as the most important ecosystems of global importance.
- b) the landscape provides a haven for globally threatened species (Annex 1).
- c) Three (3) of the districts in the landscape are among the top 20 districts in Ghana with the highest multidimensional poverty rates (Annex 1). The multidimensional poverty in Ghana was based on the following domains: living conditions (electricity, housing, assets, overcrowding, cooking fuel, water, and toilet facility); education (attendance, attainment, and school lag), and health (insurance coverage and mortality). The districts with a very high poverty incidence were: (Central Gonja-68.4%; Wa West-66.3%; and Sawla Tuna Kalba-66%).

4.1.2 Delimiting the Socio-Ecological Production Landscape to Implement OP8 Objectives

The designated landscape was the *North Black Volta Basin Landscape* which forms part of the North-Western River System of Ghana and is geographically located between latitudes 7° 21' 0" and 11° 0' 0" North and longitudes 3° 0' 0" and 1° 0' 0" West (Figures 2-6).

Selecting Priority Districts within the Landscape

In selecting the priority districts within the landscape, the stakeholders scored all districts in the Black Volta Basin. On a scale of 5 – 1, stakeholders scored critical areas within the landscape for which OP8 can concentrate its investments to yield maximum results on the people and environment. The participants were grouped according to their place of work within the landscape to apply their personal experience over the years to select the districts (*5-very important; 4-important; 3-Average; 2-Not important; 1-Less important*). To qualify for selection, a district must score 70% and above. The outcome of the aggregated scoring is summarized in Table 8 (Annex 1).

Description of the OP8 Black Volta Socio-Ecological Production Landscape

The selected landscape is mainly a riparian savannah ecosystem covering the Wa West, part of Sawla/Tuna/Kalba, Central Gonja, Bole and Banda administrative districts of Ghana (Figure 7). It covers an area of 1,259,185 ha (Table 3). The landscape is in a semi-arid land, which has a resource-rich natural environment but has suffered resource exploitation resulting from illegal mining, unsustainable farming practices, incessant wildfires, uncontrolled hunting, and charcoal production.

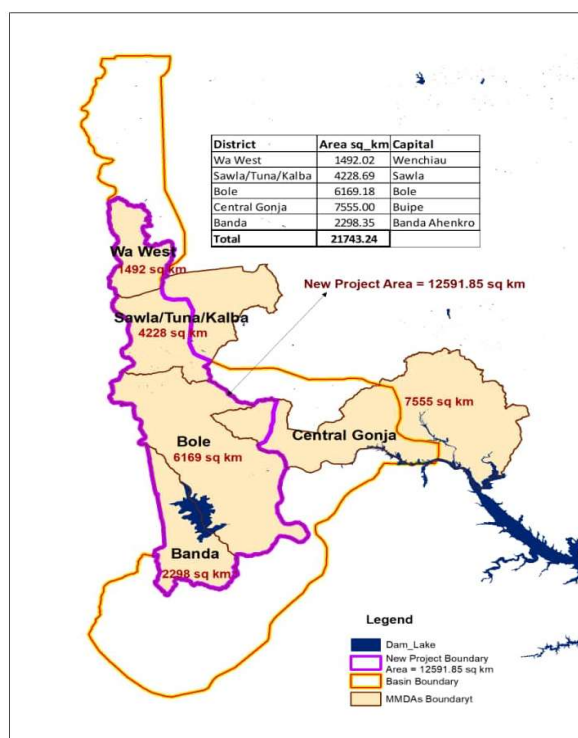


Figure 7: OP8 BVB Socio-Ecological Production Landscape in Ghana

Landuse Land Cover

The land use land cover (LULC) classes within the designated landscape were represented by six (6) classes, namely: closed savannah woodlands, open savannah woodland, dense Shrub/herbaceous, Grass/herbaceous cover, settlement/bare ground, and waterbody (Figure 8 and Table 3).

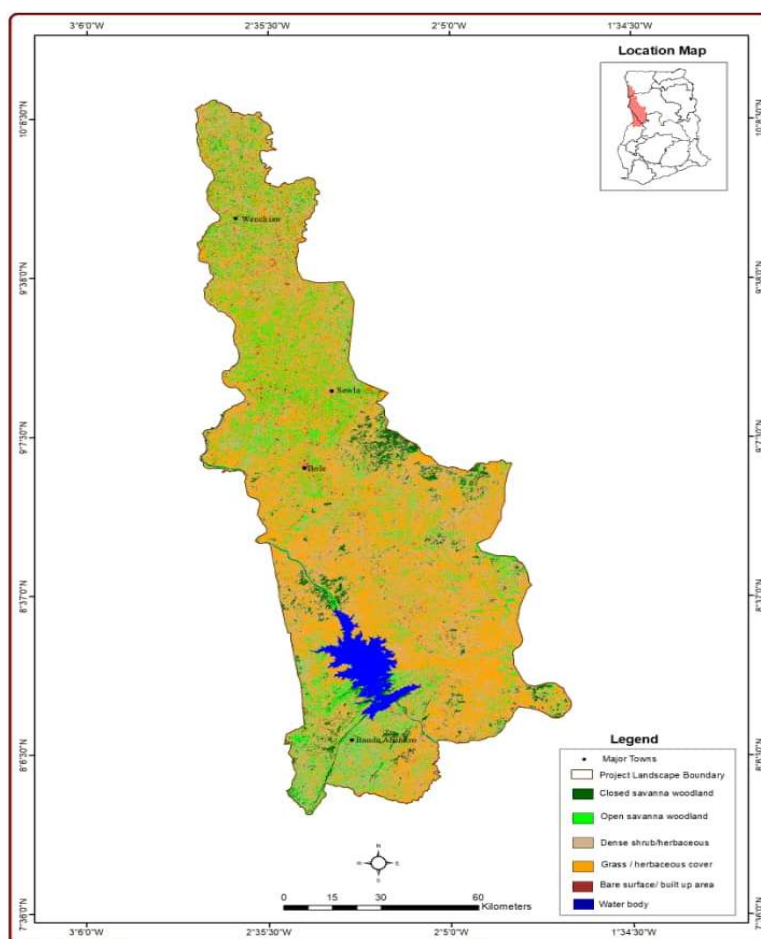


Figure 8: LULC of OP8 Socio-ecological Production Landscape

Table 3: Landcover Statistics of OP8 Socio-ecological Production Landscape

Class	Area ha
Closed savanna woodland	53,203.67
Open savanna woodland	174,708.80
Dense shrub/herbaceous	428,258.00
Grass/herbaceous cover	549,011.00
Bare surface/built up area	13,736.79
Water body	40,266.90
Total	1,259,185.16

Climate variability

Rainfall pattern

The rainfall pattern in the northern half of the Black Volta Basin is monomodal with the peak in August/September. The Annual rainfall within the landscape varies from about 1043mm to 1270mm. The minimum potential evaporation is about 1450mm/year to about 1800 mm/year and the average runoff is about 243m/year. The mean monthly runoff from the basin varies from a maximum of 623mm to a minimum of about 2mm. The annual potential evapotranspiration of the basin ranges from 1600mm to 1800mm. (<https://d3i71xaburhd42.cloudfront.net/5fa8a142aabbfa154c1970ed0db6ad1d57a15544/6-Figure5-1.png>)

Vegetation

The vegetation of the landscape consists of predominantly sub-humid savannah, mainly tall grasses interspersed with dominant trees like Sheanut (*Vitellaria paradoxa*), Dawadawa (*Parkia biglobosa*), Teak (*Tectona grandis*), Kapok (*Ceiba pentandra*), Cashew (*Anacardium occidentale*) and Mango (*Mangifera indica*). Vegetation is about 60% grass and 40% savannah woodland with a stretch of riparian forest along the river basin. Soils are susceptible to various forms of erosion during the rainy season. Most parts of the landscape fall within the Savannah zone (Figure 10). The southern portion falls within the moist semi-deciduous and transitional vegetation zone.

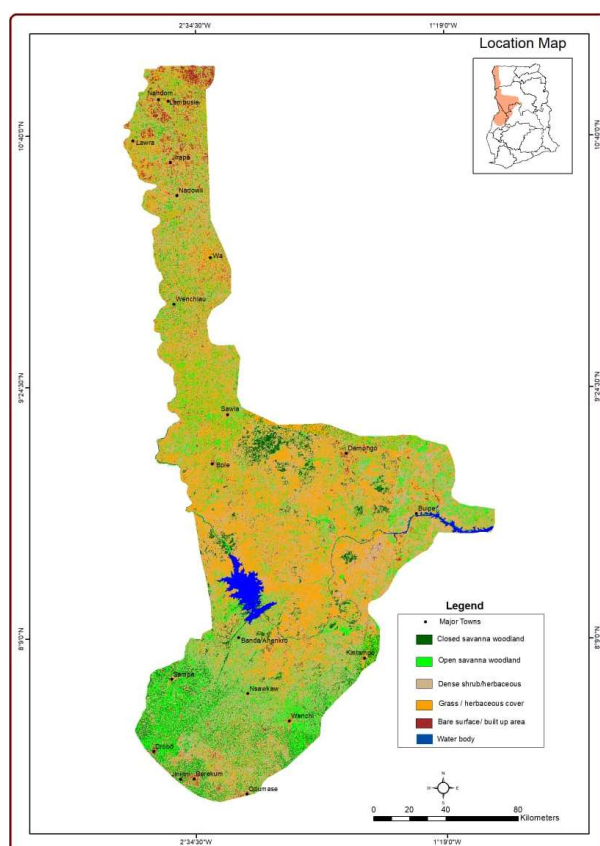


Figure 9 The Black Volta Landscape Soils and Landuse Cover



Landscape Landuse Occupancy, Cultural Belief, and Local Knowledge Practices

The OP8 Socio-ecological Production Landscape is a mosaic landscape of productive agricultural lands with towns, villages, and hamlets; farmlands with adjacent, cashew, teak, and mango plantations; natural forests/savannah woodlands; sacred groves; national park, fallow grasslands, wetlands, and water bodies (streams, rivers, ponds, and the Lake). Different traditional farming systems promote conservation of agriculture and biodiversity in the landscape. Local knowledge about agricultural biodiversity is strong, with farmers practicing shifting cultivation/bush fallow system, traditional slash and burn agriculture, and agroforestry that integrates trees on cocoa, cashew, and food crop farms. Cultural beliefs prohibit certain farming practices like farming close to river bodies, and sacred sites (groves, ancestral burial grounds). Crop production in the landscape contributes 37.5% of yam, 11.3% of cassava, 17.2% of maize, and 28.7% of rice for the national total. The fishing population along the banks of the north Black Volta River is small but increasing with adverse implications for the integrity of the emerging lake environment.

Biodiversity and Typology of the Landscape

Two distinct biomes can be found in the landscape. These are semi-natural terrestrial vegetation, woody and semi-natural terrestrial vegetation herbs (Figure 10). The woodland is mostly found in the southeastern parts of the basin and is densely wooded with tall to medium-tall grasses such as *Andropogon* and *Pennisetum spp.* Three typologies of landscape are distinguishable within the selected area as follows:

- a) Low-lying cultivated savannah landscape. This is the grass savannah, mostly found in the middle portion of the landscape. These areas are semi-natural terrestrial herb vegetation found mostly in the northern part of the landscape. It is mainly grassland interspersed with trees and shrubs in some areas. Tree species found in this type of savannah include *Acacia spp*, *Balanites aegytiaca*, *Leptadenia pyrotechnic*, *Aristida spp*, *Schoenfeldia gracillis*, *Cenchrus biflorus* and *Anogeissus leicarpus*.
- b) Wooded savannah landscape. These areas are the riverine forest around the Volta, River, the southern moist deciduous, and the banks of the Black Volta Lake. The woodland savannah, mostly found in the southern parts of the basin, is densely wooded with tall to medium-tall grasses such as *Andropogon* and *Pennisetum spp.* The main tree species associated with woodland savannah include *Adansonia digitata*, *Vitex paradoxa*, *Daniella oliveri*, *Mitragyna inermis*, *Butyrospermum parkii*, *Khaya senegalensis*, *Parkia biglobosa*, *Tamarindus indica*, *Terminalia macroptera* and *Faidherbia albida*.
- c) The Black Volta waterscape. The basin waterscape is between the Mole National Parks and the Bui wildlife reserves, and other protected areas. The Black Volta Basin is drained by the Bougouriba, Gbongbo, Grand Bale, Voun Hou, Sourou, Wenare, Bambassou, Bondami, Mouhoun (main Black Volta), Tain and Poni rivers as the main tributaries. The vegetation in these areas is green throughout the year, although some species do shed their leaves in the dry season. Common trees associated with the forest are *Cynometra ananta*, *Iopha alata*, *Tarrietia utilis*, *Antiaris africana* and *Chlorophora excelsa*. These tree species appear to have a higher rate of regeneration and are more resistant to the annual bushfires.



4.1.3 Description of SGP Strategic Initiatives in OP8

The strategic initiatives under OP8 will cover four (4) major thematic areas, namely community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species; b) Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, leading to food security; c) Low Carbon Energy Access Co-benefits; and d) Local to Global Coalitions for Chemicals and Waste Management.

a) Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species

The grants at the landscape levels will focus on the sustainability of savannah ecosystem, Indigenous and Communities Conserved Areas (ICCAs) (sacred groves), private protected areas, corridors and buffer zones around the BVB and major tributaries, and Community Reserved Management Areas (CREMAs). The programme will target the restoration of 500 ha of degraded landscape through planting of indigenous species to protect and improve the quality of water and other natural resources within the ecological corridors by reducing the amount of pollution through both natural and human activities. The programme will promote sustainable biodiversity by utilizing ecotourism, the processing of biodiversity products, food security, sustainable commodity value chain, and others. Support would be given towards making the existing CREMAs move beyond aid. It will facilitate partnership for effective utilization of the resources under the public-private sector partnership. The programme will support the restoration and management of sacred groves to enhance biodiversity and improve on ecosystem services.

b) Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, leading to food security

The programme will build on the innovative climate-smart agro-ecology to support sustainable and ecological agricultural production which provides food security, nutrition, and health benefits in addition to secure and sustainable livelihoods for smallholder farmers, cooperatives, and artisanal fishers. It will link local producers with better market (national and international) sources and promote the use of certification systems, and eco-labeling as the means. The programme will also contribute to the greening of supply chains for local products as well as the generation of value addition for local producers. These initiatives will contribute to increasing ecological connectivity, reducing forest fragmentation, and improving forest biodiversity values at landscape levels. It will promote good management practices in community smallholder forestry and farmlands and develop sound local-level land management policy to increase agriculture resilience to climate change.

c) Low Carbon Energy Access Co-benefits

The SGP will continue to focus on grassroots energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions that can help meet the increasing energy demand sustainably, while at the same time generating multiple co-benefits contributing to the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The programme will support the mainstreaming of eco-certification, sustainable wood fuel production and efficient renewable energy technologies within the landscape for improved livelihood. The approach in this initiative will be directed at providing access to affordable modern energy services necessary for development while safeguarding environmental and social benefits.

d) Local to Global Coalitions for Chemicals and Waste Management



The programme will focus its support on plastics/solid waste management and will establish systems of local certification of organic producers in vegetables through producer-consumer agreements and eventually graduate to national government policy that will influence markets. It will seek to promote alternatives to mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining by popularizing the community mining concept as a model for small-scale gold mining in Ghana. Activities will include support for innovative, affordable, and practical solutions to chemical and waste management in a joint effort with partners including government agencies, research institutions, private sector, and international agencies.

4.1.4 Grant-making outside the priority landscapes.

The OP8 programme will devote 30% of its grants outside the Landscape, targeting the following innovative initiatives.

- a. integrated landscape/seascape management measures; community-focused health and disease prevention measures to reduce and control trade and consumption of wildlife.
- b. Applying the concept of regional/local Circulating and Ecological Economy promotes low-carbon, self-reliant, and decentralized society living in harmony with nature.
- c. Assist local communities to initiate micro, small, and medium enterprises, and access new forms of innovative financing such as payment for ecosystem services, access to voluntary carbon market and impact investment, and others by developing partnerships with private sector entities.
- d. support identification and replication of practices to support biodiversity conservation and restoration through sustainable socio-ecological production activities across the existing mosaic of land uses within selected production landscapes/seascapes in participating countries.

4.2 CSO-Government-Private Sector Dialogue Platform

The programme will expand its CSO-Government Dialogue Platforms launched under GEF-7 towards a greater engagement with the private sector as a means of leveraging its potential to invest and support sustainability. These platforms will also provide opportunities to discuss possible shifts in relevant policies and practices to promote sustainability. A selected number of CSO-Government-Private Sector Dialogues would be launched to expand innovative local solutions and bring them to scale, as well as to promote an enabling environment and foster strategic coalitions and partnerships.

4.3 Promoting Social Inclusion, Including Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The programme will continue to promote social inclusion and equity by working and engaging with women, youth, indigenous peoples, and the disabled. The programme will target 60% of the beneficiaries as women and ensure that at least 30% of the projects approved and supported are women-led and will support women's participation in decision-making in natural resource governance. The programme will support at least four projects that promote equal access to and control of natural resources of women in the Black Volta Basin. The SGP will continue its work with Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities in plastic waste management to enhance and strengthen their organizational capacity and leadership to access dedicated resources. It will continue to champion and advocate for the involvement and active



participation of women and youth as key constituencies for environmental action and advocacy. At least 75% of the approved projects will target socio-economic benefits and services for women.

Under OP8, the SGP will take gender-specific actions by ensuring that every project undertakes gender impact and gender vulnerability assessments. The programme will provide gender competence training for all grantees and:

- promote equal access to and control over resources and information, such as gender and age-appropriate training and communication material;
- support equal voice and representation in decision-making, such as quotas for women in community resource management groups;
- contribute to reducing women's workload, such as introducing labor-saving technologies and tools; and
- engage at the policy level in women's empowerment activities.

The SGP will continue to empower indigenous peoples' leadership through its training and ICCA initiative. It will expand institutional capacities training to traditional health practitioners and natural resource management skills. The programme will promote women's networking for conservation management and enterprise development. Youth engagement and empowerment will continue to be a priority and focus on entrepreneurship. More recently, the SGP has been engaging with the disabled population in its Community-Based adaptation portfolio and will build on this experience to expand their inclusion across the portfolio.

4.4 Knowledge Management

The SGP Ghana's vision for OP8 is to become a major knowledge center for community-based initiatives that address environmental problems at the local level while achieving significant global environmental impacts. The key strategies to achieving this vision are to:

- develop a web platform that allows better knowledge capture and sharing, monitoring and evaluation of the use of new media;
- systematize processes and create templates that facilitate data collection at community level for publication;
- build capacity for knowledge management at the local level through training and learning;
- contribute to relevant knowledge base and fora by increasingly forming a constituency of CSOs with capacity, motivation and systematic information flow;
- establish partnerships to upscale and replicate successful projects and best practices;
- capture and disseminate the results, lessons learned and best practice from the SGP portfolio via different media by streamlining and strengthening the database, intranet and website to allow for knowledge exchange and sharing;
- provide guidance to the CSOs on how to capture and disseminate knowledge and conduct knowledge exchange at the local level to be aggregated at the global level.

At local and project levels the strategy is standardize, capture and disseminate the results, lessons learned and best practice; organize consultations, training and knowledge exchange between communities and other key stakeholders; support demonstration sites and knowledge centers around successful projects; inform, contribute and influence local, regional and national policy with the best practices of SGP projects



in the country; establish partnerships to upscale and replicate successful projects and best practices; participate in communities of practice; and maintain database updated with the latest information on the projects.

The knowledge management tools to be applied under OP8 are:

- Knowledge needs assessment, mapping, and audits: the programme will conduct a needs assessment to understand what information is the most valuable, how to capture it, and how to disseminate it.
- Best Practices: - The programme will continue to capture the best practices at the local and global level, conduct case studies, undertake publications and new media, and share them at key national and international events and conferences.
- Coaching, Mentorship, and Peer Assist Programme: - The programme will encourage mentorship as a way to capitalize on the knowledge of successful programmes to help train new grantees.
- Peer-to-peer learning: -The programme will facilitate peer-to-peer learning between local communities and past grantees as an effective method to share knowledge, help communities learn from each other, and as a tool for replication and upscaling of best practices.
- Centers of knowledge: - The programme will set up technology and systems demonstration sites or centers of knowledge at project sites where SGP communities have demonstrated technology or mastered a process, and become a place where other communities, government officials, and development practitioners can learn about it.
- Communities of Practice (CoPs): - Communities of practice allow the organization to pool the collective ideas and knowledge of its staff to help build and institutionalize SGP's corporate memory.

5.0 COMMUNICATION PLAN

5.1 Communication Framework

Communications play a significant role in informing and engaging people. Under OP8 the programme will develop a strategy for effective communication that provides direction and stimulates actions to help build relationships and boost partnership. The communication strategy envisions what should be achieved under the programme. The goal is to increase awareness and resilience towards environmental threats and generate global environmental benefits. It is to assist Ghana in becoming a socioeconomically resilient and socially cohesive nation. The following strategic communication framework will guide the OP8 communication efforts to achieve this goal:

- Increase public awareness and understanding of the three programmatic outcomes (green growth, governance, and climate action) and how they contribute to ecological restoration in the Black Volta Basin
- Communicate the importance of ecological restoration solutions and partnerships to accelerate green and inclusive structural transformation in the country
- Communicate UNDP's support for the country's priorities under the Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Montreal Protocol, and the green transition in general.



- Communicate OP8's contribution to fostering economic prosperity and social development and support sustainable management of water, energy, and other resources
- raise awareness of the importance of an enabling environment for private investment in green recovery and structural transformation
- ensure that all the lessons learned from the implementation of the projects are captured, analyzed, and shared with key stakeholders to promote learning within and across communities and countries.

5.2 Approaches to communications:

- Strong linkage with the UNDP Ghana office priorities, building on the experience in resilience building and financing for sustainable development and mainstreaming innovation and experimentation. These pillars have a direct link with the global
- Climate action, mobilizing the planet and protecting nature are top priorities for the UN and UNDP. Therefore, OP8 will showcase UNDP's initiative towards a greener and more sustainable future.
- Focus on policy-level impact and tell stories of impact on people's lives. Communications will focus especially on policy-level impact in knowledge and communication products as well as highlighting the changing lives of the people touched by OP8 interventions. The strategy is to use storytelling as a tool to showcase the positive impact of our work in people's lives, so they can take actions and bring positive changes in the society.
- Utilize innovative platforms to engage in and develop a communications approach which is innovative, open to new platforms (new media tools, as well as trending visibility platforms).

5.3 Communications tools

- Raising awareness and advocacy
- Building public image and brand recognition of communication channels and products in alignment with the global corporate branding guidelines, including in traditional print media, digital, mobile, broadcasting and social media.
- Publish e-magazines on the project activities and circulate them widely;
- publish annual case studies of best practices.

5.4 Communicating for resource mobilization, partnerships and donor recognition

Based on the office Resource Mobilization and Partnership Strategy, communication support aims to build partnerships and mobilize resources effectively. By highlighting results, reinforcing key messages, and giving credits and visibility to donors, UNDP can not only celebrate the successes of its programmes but also demonstrate the impact of its work. This approach is particularly effective in cultivating donor relationships, as it allows them to see firsthand how their contributions are making a positive difference in communities around the world. Moreover, UNDP's communication support system demonstrates a commitment to transparency and accountability, as it keeps donors informed about the progress of their investments. The overall focus on communication support will help build strong partnerships and mobilize resources, contributing to the mission to advance sustainable development countrywide.



6.0 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN

In the previous programmes, the GEF/SGP in Ghana has served as a catalytic financing platform, designed to crowd-in the public-private finance needed to scale development impact, donor small grants, philanthropic funds, and other donor funds. By leveraging a combination of concessional financing instruments, advisory services, and technical assistance, the SGP is strategically positioned in the UNDP to catalyze small public and private investment at the speed, agility, and scale needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

6.1 Resource Mobilization Strategy

The resource mobilization strategy will build on three pillars:

1. Seek increased core funding. This will involve
 - Expand and strengthen existing relationships with the core donors to increase the volume of resources and the share of multi-year contributions.
 - Link business case for core funding with development impact in country to secure and expand core partner base.
2. Drive capital growth through crowd funding techniques:
 - Initiate crowd funding for strategic projects. The programme will consolidate collaboration with Canadian and French Embassies, the Inter-ministerial Task Force on gold mining for institutional partnership in technology transfer and financial support. The programme will finalize initiatives with the *Exim Bank of Ghana* to provide micro and small loans for start-ups and small businesses under the SGP and within the northern BVB production landscape. The programme will upscale its microcredit and small loans scheme to grow and expand to more beneficiaries.
3. Anchored earmarked funding to flagship initiatives
 - Consolidate country portfolios under thematic strategic portfolios and amplifying thematic flagships to promote efficiencies and enhance economies of scale.

6.2 Indicative funds to be mobilized

The National Steering Committee (NSC) will continuously assist the SGP in mobilizing resources. By the end of each year, the NSC will estimate what proportion of non-GEF funds are needed by grantees to be able to forecast their needs into the future. This will help to define how much time and effort are needed to put into resource mobilization. Currently, at the project level, the programme is targeting a 1:1 ratio between GEF/SGP funding and co-financing from another source, including the grantees and local government.

6.3 Matching funds from Grantees

The programme will give priority to community-based projects that have secured matching funds for implementation. The programme will develop joint proposals with the other donors and identify which activities would be implemented by each donor. Most especially, the programme will secure co-financing and technical assistance for project complementation from the development partners. Currently, discussions have been held with several donors and an MOU will be signed to confirm the agreements on



the level of financial commitments. The programme will seek to encourage the District Assemblies to stake part of their Common funds for environmental projects and develop links to be able to secure or augment SGP grants whenever possible. A memorandum of understanding for cooperation with the donor and NGO will be signed before project implementation.

6.4 In-kind contributions from applicants and other donors

All projects to be approved would be expected to have in-kind contributions of not less than 50% of the total project cost. The in-kind contribution will cover direct labor, land, and use of office resources and NGO assets for the implementation of the project field activities. The man-hours that would be invested in the project would be carefully calculated and valued as part of the community contribution to the project implementation.

6.5 Using sustainable livelihood

The programme has learned that beneficial impact in the GEF focal areas comes about through sustainable livelihood strategies. Thus, an essential part of SGP projects is often an income-generation component linked to one of the GEF focal areas. The projects to be implemented as much as possible will buy into the ongoing poverty reduction programmes in the country.

7.0 PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The partnership opportunities available to the OP8 implementation will include:

7.1 Dovetailing interventions into GEF Macro and Medium-size grants

The programme is in discussion with the Operational Focal Point of dovetailing the project activities into the GE medium-size projects. The SGP may be used as a delivery mechanism for the implementation of the livelihood component of a large grants programme. Successful GEF/SGP projects can be replicated and expanded using the medium-sized GEF project mechanism. Country programmes will also seek to coordinate efforts with GEF projects, including providing support for successful community-based components to explore funding from medium and large-sized GEF.

7.2 Bilateral and multi-lateral donors

The various embassies in Ghana have been supporting and providing small grant windows that provide additional funding in some GEF operational areas. This has been seen in landscape restoration and afforestation programmes. For example, the French Embassy (FSD), Canadian Development Agency (CIDA), European Union, Tree Aid, Biolab Foundation and the World Bank have partnered with the SGP/SGP in the past and the relationship still exists. SGP will continue to collaborate actively with these sources of funding as well as link up with multi-lateral agencies in the country.

7.3 Private sector participation in SGP

Under the previous programmes, the SGP developed partnerships with the private sector to provide project-level financing for livelihood activities, “soft-soft” loans, and partnerships. It is hoped that NGO or donor partners would also look to the GEF/SGP when designing their projects to provide them with the



focus on global environmental concerns. The GEF/SGP could work with project participants to develop mechanisms for commercializing products yielded by project activities.

8.0 RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

8.1 Social and Environmental Risks (medium)

Social risks will arise from the multiple aspects of the programme. The programme will focus on community engagement and land/forest rehabilitation. While these will provide alternative livelihoods for some community members in the near term, other members engaged in illegal activities (logging and mining) may suffer losses and will oppose the implementation of the programme vehemently. However, it is expected that earnings in these alternative activities may be lower (though more sustainable) than what illegal miners can earn.

Mitigation Measures. Project activities will focus on a few ecologically critical areas based on some technical activities that can pilot-test steps toward improvement. Participatory and consultative approaches will be followed in conjunction with a functional dispute resolution mechanism that serves as an avenue for addressing any issues resulting from the project implementation.

8.2 Climate Risks (High)

The Black Volta Landscape is degraded, and this is attributed to the high incidence of annual wildfires, which has become a ritual and an unsustainable land use system. The wildfire occurs wildly and when it does, it spreads rapidly, especially during the dry season, to destroy plants. Thus, the restoration programme will suffer setbacks. Closely related to the issue of wildfire is an erratic rainfall pattern which will undermine plant growth.

Mitigation Measures: It is assumed that a reduction in the incidence of wildfire will require an intentional training programme to enhance the capacity of natural resource users in wildfire management in the landscape. It is also assumed that the improvement in the capacity of knowledge of farmers in improved technologies will improve yield and minimize the incidence of wildfires. Furthermore, the project will adhere to traditional norms on sustainable natural resource management, which would be maintained.

8.3 Other Risks (Low)

Political and Governance. The Government of Ghana's vision for reform and improved management of the natural resource sector is sound but complex and involves multiple levels of government and society, which need to work together to address key priorities. The project will need to deliver tangible results to communities to sustain support for the overall change process.

Mitigation Actions. The issues of governance, vested interests and distorted incentives will be addressed by using technical criteria and technically-sound established institutional frameworks for making decisions on allocation of project support at community level. Engagement will be increased with traditional authorities and will aim to be led by community demand and interest to the extent possible.

Environment. A key activity of the project is to design, consult, and implement interventions that can improve the environment around abandoned mining sites in the landscape through reclamation and replanting. However, beyond the project, there is a substantial risk of continuing environmental degradation related to the pace and scale of *galamsey* activities. There is also the potential for toxics (e.g., mercury) used in mineral processing to contaminate the soil in the reclamation areas or to make those areas unsuitable for certain agricultural uses, including food crops. In addition, there will be a significant risk of polluting surface and groundwater as well as impacting public health with heavy metals such as mercury.

Mitigation Measures. The project will introduce strong implementation guidelines on what kinds of crops can be considered on the degraded, polluted land. It may either be only timber or construction materials, such as bamboo. Proper monitoring and oversight of the reclamation process will be needed to ensure that project activities do not contribute to hazardous materials entering the environment or food chains. Participation, consultation, and communication will be promoted to ensure that the right messages go out to project participants and the affected communities. Training and communication components will aim to ensure that people understand the contamination risks and have the skills to conduct activities that exacerbate contamination through crops or livelihood activities (Table 4).

Table 4: Summary of risks identified in OP8 and Mitigation measures.

Describe identified risk	Degree of risk (low, medium, high)	Probability of risk (low, medium, high)	Risk mitigation measures foreseen
Social and Environmental Risks			
Local politics and poor governance in the natural resource sector	High	Low	• Formation, training, and empowerment of social groups for the implementation of project activities. • Community engagement at all levels of governance.
Political economy of the illegal logging, poaching, and mining business	High	Medium	Stakeholder engagement and consultation at all levels of governance.
Environment			
Wildfire management	Medium	Medium	• Comprehensive awareness creation among local communities in the landscape. • Formation of Wildfire management groups, supplied with equipment and empowerment to work.
Erratic Rainfall	High	Low	• Introduction of climate-smart agricultural practices, cultivation of short-duration, drought-resistant, and high-yielding crops. • Introduction of a diversified integrated system of farming to compensate for losses.

Describe identified risk	Degree of risk (low, medium, high)	Probability of risk (low, medium, high)	Risk mitigation measures foreseen
			• Training community volunteers to fight wildfires.
Illegal Mining	High	Low	• Implementation guidelines on what kinds of crops can be considered on the degraded polluted land. • Effective monitoring and oversight of the reclamation process • Strong participation, consultation, and communication. • Training and communication

9.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

The SGP Country Programme in Ghana will report quarterly to the National Steering Committee and annually to the UNDP and the CPMT on the progress in implementing this Strategy based on the approved monitoring sheet. Progress reports will include a gender perspective in the description of results and impacts, focusing on reflecting achievements, lessons learned, opportunities, and best practices. The country programme landscape-level indicators measured during the baseline assessment will be monitored on an annual basis. A final assessment of SEPL indicators will take place at a workshop financed by a grant. This will serve as a final evaluation of the Country Programme Strategy (CPS). Each project will identify the specific landscape strategy outcome to which it is contributing and will monitor the corresponding indicators. Progress towards the outcome will be updated using the grantees' progress reports.

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system (Figure 10) developed for OP8 involves four stages, namely defining the objective-specific indicators, baseline data collection, field monitoring and progress reporting. Each project will have an indicator system aligned with GEF SGP's OP8 system of indicators.

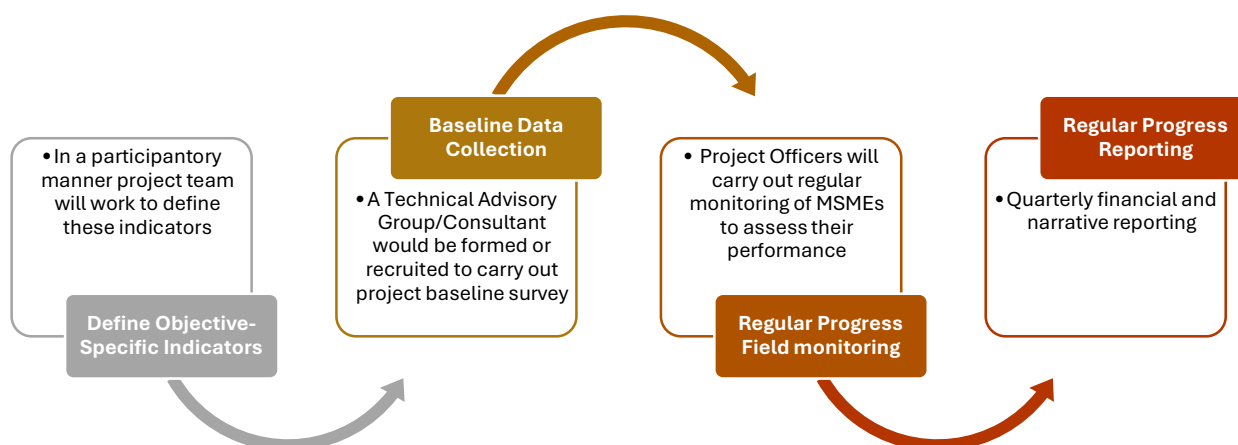


Figure 10: Project M & E Framework



The following minimum standards will be applied for individual grant monitoring and evaluation:

- a. Ex-ante Visits: The project team should undertake ex-ante visits on a risk basis to grant-requesting organizations upon grant approval by the NSC and before the signature of the MOA between the Implementing Partner and the grantee.
- b. Field monitoring visits: Every project should be visited at least twice in its lifetime, upon receipt of the first progress report from beneficiary organizations and during the following year. NSC members with relevant expertise in project-related technical areas may join the NC during these visits as appropriate.
- c. Progress reports: Beneficiary organizations should submit half-yearly progress reports to the NC along with a financial report. A forecast of resources needed in the following period should be submitted by the grantee to the NC as a requirement for disbursement of next instalment. Each Project must devote between 4-6% of the grant sum for monitoring. The progress report must cover the indicators.
- b. Final project evaluation/impact report: Beneficiary organizations should submit a final report summarizing global benefits and other results achieved, outputs produced, and lessons learned. The final report should also include a final financial statement.

9.1 Monitoring Approaches at Project and Country levels

9.1.1 Gender Assessment

Under OP8, the SGP will be tracking the following indicators that will also contribute to the achievement of the indicators established in the GEF Gender Policy and to the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy (2022-2025):

- Number of participating community members (gender disaggregated) (Note: this is mandatory for all projects).
- Number of women-led projects supported.
- Number of projects that contribute to equal access to and control of the natural resources of women and men.
- Number of projects that improve the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance.
- Number of projects that target socio-economic benefits and services for women.

9.1.2 Landscape-level interventions

Landscape Outcomes	Indicators
Landscapes/Seascapes for Sustainability, Resilience and the Global Environment	- Hectares of land (by land use type: ICCAs, PAs, OECMs, production landscapes, including marine/coastal areas or fishing grounds) brought under sustainable land and resource management. - Hectare of lands under recovery and regeneration - Number of significant species with maintained or improved conservation status. - The number of targeted communities that implement innovative or traditional sustainable land use management practices.

Landscape Outcomes	Indicators
	- Hectares of land ecosystems are under restoration - Hectares of areas protected for cultural and ecological importance
Biodiversity and sustainable management (agriculture and fisheries)	- biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resource management, climate mitigation and adaptation, multi-stakeholder governance, poverty reduction, waste management, energy access, water security, access and management, human health, gender equality, and others - Hectares of land applying sustainable forest, agricultural, and water management practices. - Hectares of forest under sustainable resource management - Number of farmers implementing traditional and adaptive agro-ecological practices - Number of farmers/farming groups with improved capacity for sustainable agro-ecological practices - Number of wild foods with value addition - Number of people and percentage of the communities participating in sustainable agricultural practices promoted by OP8 at the landscape level
Low-carbon energy access co-benefits	- Number of CSOs supporting the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the NDCs - Number of CSOs promoting renewable and energy-efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods. - The number of off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas introduced. - Number of local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management projects initiated - Number of miners reducing and promoting alternatives to mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining. - Number of CSOs promoting plastics/solid waste management and circular economy. - Number of farmers reducing /removing the use of chemicals in agriculture. - Number of Groups enhancing local to global coalitions on chemicals, waste, and mercury management.
Livelihoods and well-being	- Number and type of livelihood enterprises (and/or alternative income sources) established and sustained. - Number of targeted households and communities with improved income generation (disaggregated by gender) - Number of women-led/youth-led eco-enterprises developed - Number of households with increased income and economic assets as a result of project support activities. - Number and types of livelihood enterprises established and sustained.

Landscape Outcomes	Indicators
Governance and social equity	- Number of representatives from social inclusion groups meaningfully engaged in multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms. - Several institutions created or strengthened that are engaged in integrated landscape/seascape management. - Number and type of plans and decisions relevant for the target landscape agreed upon and implemented - Number and type of plans/decisions relevant to the target landscape that have been agreed and implemented. - Type of participatory governance mechanisms involving more than one community () established or supported that take concerted decisions about landscape management - Number of OP8 knowledge products developed to capture and disseminate lessons learned at the programme level.

9.1.3 Monitoring And Evaluation Programme Level

Participatory monitoring and observation of ethical guidelines are important characteristics of SGP M&E. It includes administering all actions with a 'do no harm' approach and also aligned to principles of 'free, prior and informed consent.' It includes due regard to the welfare, beliefs, and customs of those involved or affected, avoiding, or disclosing any conflict of interest, and acknowledging the influence of culture within and across groups.

Table 5: M&E Plan at the Country Programme level

M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible Parties	Budget Source	Timing
Preparation of OP8 Country Programme Strategy Elaboration	To formulate a framework for action, including the identification of community projects	NC, NSC, country stakeholders, grantees	An SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to update OP8 CPS	At the start of OP8
NSC meetings, field ongoing review of project results and analysis. This includes an Annual CPS Review.	To assess the effectiveness of projects, the country portfolio, learning, and adaptive management.	NC, NSC, UNDP Country Office. Final deliberations shared/ analyzed with CPMT colleagues.	Staff time, Country Operating Budget	At least one annual participatory CPS review to ensure OP8 CPS is on track to achieve its results and make timely and evidence-based modifications to

M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible Parties	Budget Source	Timing
				CPS as may be needed ¹
Annual Monitoring Report Survey by CPMT directives	Enable efficient reporting to CPMT and GEF. It serves as the primary tool to record and analytically present results to donors.	NC/PA in close collaboration with NSC. CPMT provides technical guidance support and receives the final country submission for further action	Staff time	Once per year in June-July
Country Portfolio Review	Methodological results capture the portfolio at a given point to note impact-level change as well as broader adoption. The goal is to support reporting to stakeholders, learning, and support for the strategic development/implementation of CPS.	NC, NSC	SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to undertake the previous operational cycles' impact review and utilize lessons for both OP8 CPS development and its implementation. Global technical M&E support can be expected	Once per operational phase
SGP Database	Ensure the recording of all Project and Country Programme inputs in the SGP database.	NCs, PAs,	Staff time	Throughout the operational phase. Ensure quality assurance and completion of data before the annual monitoring cycle (May-June of every year)
Audit	Ensure compliance with project implementation/management standards and norms.	External/independent auditors. NC/ PA to provide the requisite support.	Global Operating Budget	Annually for selected countries on a risk-assessment basis

9.2 CPS Results Framework

Table 6: Results Framework of SGP OP8 Country Programme Strategy

¹ It is recommended that the Annual CPS review is done close to AMR submissions for both processes to benefit from each other (suggested timeframe is May- July). Note that OP8 CPS will be regarded as a dynamic document and can be updated by the SGP country team and NSC periodically to reflect any necessary adjustments to ensure maximum impact.



Alignment with SDGs The CPS is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and will contribute specifically to SDG 2 (2.3, 2.4, & 2.5); SDG 5 (5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5); SDG 7 (7.2); SDG 13 (13.1, & 13.3); and SDG 15 (15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4 & 15.5)		
Synergy with UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD): The CPS is in synergy with the UNDP CPD (2023-2027) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). It is built within the CPD output 1 Sustainable, resilient, and inclusive growth and structural transformation. The purpose is to facilitate access to innovative tools, approaches, and technologies developed and tested by the SGP to help communities (particularly in the north or highly degraded rural areas) adapt to climate change, reduce vulnerability to disasters, promote environmental conservation, support the private sector to make production more environmentally sustainable, and enhance private sector involvement in inclusive markets and the delivery of green products and services.		
OP8 SGP Programme Goal: Engage local CSOs/CBOs in landscape-seascape approaches across the world, providing them access to knowledge and information, capacitating them through learning-by-doing, skills development, and delivering technical and grant assistance for interventions that enhance wellbeing and socioeconomic conditions and generate global environmental benefits.		
1 OP8 SGP CPS Strategic Initiatives	2 CPS Indicators and Targets	3 Means of Verification
Strategic Initiative 1: Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species		
1.1 <i>Promote effective ecosystems management through community landscape and waterscape strategies to conserve biodiversity, sustainably develop the ecosystem goods and services whilst enhancing sustainable utilization of biodiversity products for livelihood development.</i> 1.2 <i>Support the public-private partnership approach for the conservation and utilization of biodiversity products in the CREMAs and local community conserved areas (ICCAs).</i> 1.3 <i>Restock Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures" (OECMs) OECMs as a long-term approach to achieving large-scale conservation targets and mitigating biodiversity loss.</i> 1.4 <i>Enforce traditional rules and regulations that protect, and conserve threatened species.</i>	1.1.1 500 hectares of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (GEF core indicator 4.1 and 4.3) 1.1.2 200 hectares of land and ecosystems under restoration (GEF core indicator 3.1) 1.2.1 800 ha of Community Resource Management Area (CREMA) created and secured through mapping and enrichment planting. 1.3.1 250 ha of buffer lands around sacred landscapes (OECMs) replanted with indigenous species. 1.6.1 Traditional Policies and Regulations for managing sacred landscapes and protecting threatened flora and fauna published and enforced.	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports) Baseline assessment comparison variables (use of conceptual models and partner data as appropriate) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review.
Strategic Initiative 2: Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security		
2.1 <i>Support climate-resilient agriculture and food systems incorporating in-situ conservation of genetic resources, smart climate agriculture,</i>	2.1.1 Three (3) partnerships to advance sustainable agriculture and fisheries and/or food security (such as diversification, sustainable	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports)

<i>agroecological innovative farming, and land-based organic providers (i.e. bio-deposit) to reduce the use of chemical-based fertilizers while also reducing emission from ozone-depleting substances such as nitrites and nitrates</i> 2.2 Promote sustainable integrated aquaponic farming systems to ensure food security and organic farming 2.3 Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security	intensification, sustainable fisheries management, agroecological farming practices, climate-smart agriculture, certification programmes, local sourcing initiatives, waste reduction, and circular economy, etc.) established and supported. 2.2.1 Ten (10) Aquaponic-vegetable integrated farming system established and supported	Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review Socio-ecological resilience indicators for production landscapes (SEPLs)
Strategic Initiative 3: Low-carbon energy access co-benefits		
3.1 Support renewable in agriculture and energy-efficient technologies in homes, commercial and industrial sectors of the rural economies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods. 3.2 Support the mainstreaming of eco-certification sustainable woodfuel production and efficient renewable energy technologies within the Black Volta Basin socio-ecological production landscape for improved livelihood	3.1.1 36,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions mitigated/avoided (GEF core indicator 6) 3.1.2 145.20 kW increase in installed renewable energy capacity from community-scale systems (e.g., biomass, micro-hydro, solar, etc.) 3.2.1 250 smallholder farmers locally adapted solutions promoting low-carbon technologies (such as new/modified biogas technology, locally developed energy-efficient stoves, innovative uses of solar/wind energy, etc.)	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Strategy Review (NSC inputs)
Strategic Initiative 4: Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management.		
4.1 Promote integrated plastics/solid waste management and circular economy in the urban centres 4.2 Establish systems of local certification of organic producers in vegetables through producer-consumer agreements and eventually graduating to national government policy that will influence markets. 4.3 Reduce and promote alternatives to mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining by popularizing the community mining concept as a model for small-scale gold mining in Ghana.	4.1.1 Two (2) policy recommendations or advocacy initiatives related to land-based pollution because of the SGP project. 4.1.2 One Platform of civil society organizations involved in local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management strengthened and/or established. 4.2.1 30 Small holder farmers groups involved in vegetable production certified in organic vegetable production. 4.3.1 Zero mercury small scale community mining piloted and certified.	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports) Strategic partnership with IPEN and Mercury GOLD country partners Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), a global database Country Programme Review
Strategic Initiative 6: CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms		
5.1 Promote/enhance community voices and participation for Black Volta Basin Communities in global and national	5.1.1 One (1) CSO-government-private sector dialogues formed or strengthened.	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams



policy, strategy development related to global environment and sustainable development issues.	5.1.2 At least 3 high-level policy changes associated with increased community participation in multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms. 5.1.3 Six (6) representatives from social inclusion groups (Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, persons with disability, farmers, other marginalized groups) meaningfully engaged in multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms.	Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), a global database Country Programme Review
<u>Strategic Initiative 7: Enhancing social inclusion.</u> 6.3 Promote targeted initiatives that will involve creating wealth and empowerment for the Youth and Persons with disabilities. 6.4 Mainstream social inclusion in all projects to be approved.	6.3.1 120 people benefitting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (GEF core indicator 11) 6.4.1 Twelve (12) projects with focused interventions promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. 6.4.2 Three (3) projects that demonstrate models of engaging (a) Indigenous Peoples, (b) youth, and (c) persons with disabilities. 6.4.3 Ten (10) grants with targeted support for 1) women or women groups; 2) youth or youth-led groups; 3) Indigenous Peoples' groups 6.4.4 Two hundred thousand dollars of total grant portfolio accessed by 1) women or women groups; 2) youth or youth-led groups; 3) Indigenous peoples' groups	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review
Strategic Initiative 8: Monitoring and Evaluation and Knowledge Management		
7.1 <i>Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities.</i> 7.2 <i>Support the capacity development of CSOs/CBOs.</i> 7.3 <i>Strengthen South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices, within the Sahelian countries of West Africa.</i> 7.4 <i>Incorporate the new M&E strategy in the Country Programme Strategy and project design, implementation, and overall decision-making using participatory mechanisms.</i>	Five (5) projects with meetings involving local CSOs/CBOs or communities to monitor project results, assess impacts, and identify lessons learned. Five (5) knowledge exchange/sharing events with the participation of local communities. Two (2) online knowledge repositories developed as a result of the SGP project. One (1) country/cross-country impact reviews conducted with evidence of SGP impact and lessons learned. One (1) (number of) South-South exchanges between communities, NGOs/CSOs, or other partners from Ghana and Burkina Faso to transfer knowledge, replicate technology, tools, or approaches to global environmental issues	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review



10.0 NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT



10. National Steering Committee Endorsement

NSC members involved in OP8 CPS development, review and endorsement	Signatures
DR. ABDUL-RAZAK SAEED	for:
DR. JAMES K. ADOMAKO	
DR. KING-DAVID AMOAH	
DR. KOFI KWAKYE AMEYAW	
DR. WILLIAM OWUSU ODURO	
MR ISAAC ACQUAH	
MR. JOHN KWADWO OWUSU	
MR. KWAMI EDEM SENANU	
MR. WISDOM AHIATAKU TOGOBO	

DATED: 26 February 2025

PLACE: Accra Ghana