



*Fauna & Flora International, 2015*

# Wonegizi Proposed Protected Area

## IMET ASSESSMENT 2023

*NZIGIYIMPA Léonidas*

*IMET Coach Consultant*

**From 25<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023**

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## **Acronyms**

<b>IMET</b>	Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool
<b>GPS</b>	Global positioning system
<b>IT</b>	Informatic technician
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for Conservation of Nature
<b>NTFP</b>	Non timber forest products
<b>PA</b>	Protected area
<b>PPA</b>	Proposed protected area
<b>SWOT</b>	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Treat
<b>WABICC</b>	West Africa biodiversity and Climate change

## **Executive summary**

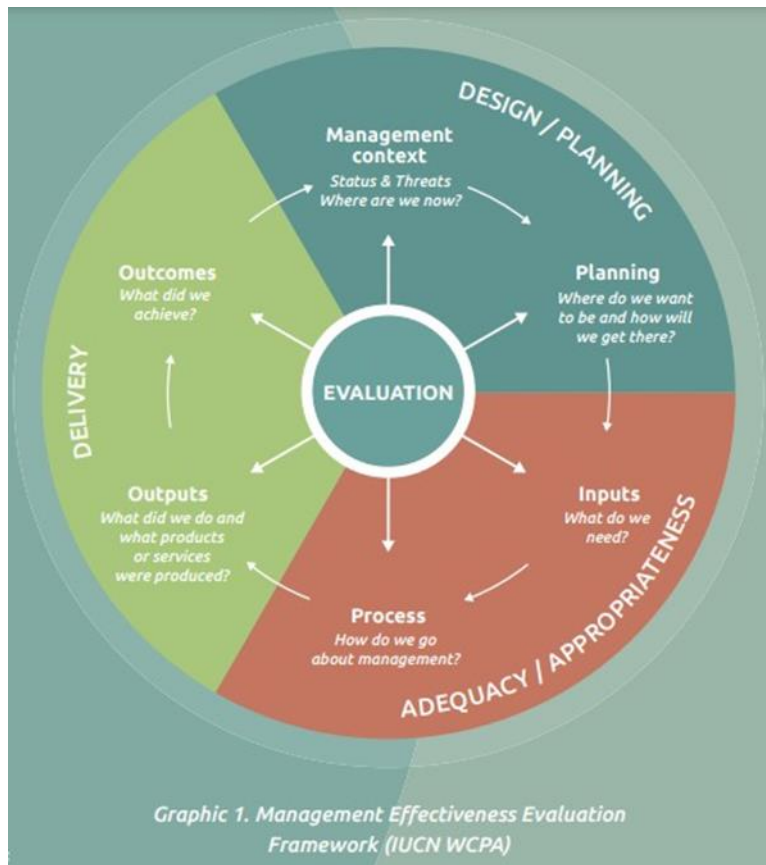
Northwest Liberia holds the largest remaining tract of primary Upper Guinean Forest that once covered all of West Africa. At the heart of this ecosystem lies one of Liberia's most important forests, the Wonegizi Proposed Protected Area, which includes Liberia's third highest peak and meets the Guinean border to form a massive trans-boundary forest complex with the Zياما Biosphere Reserve. Wonegizi hosts an incredible diversity of species, many of which are endangered, including the African forest elephant, chimpanzee, pygmy hippopotamus, West African red colobus monkey and numerous threatened birds, reptiles and amphibians. It is also home to several species, including the threatened zebra duiker, which are found only in this part of the world.

IMET (Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool) is an assessment, monitoring, planning and reporting tool. It was used to assess the level of management of the Wonegizi nature reserve in August 2023. The results show that despite the many pressures and threats, and the limited human, financial and material resources, the values of this protected area are well conserved. Elephants, hippos, buffalos, chimpanzees, pangolins and their habitats are well preserved.

The Wonegizi Nature Reserve does not yet have the legal status of a protected area. It is still a "Proposed Protected Area". As a result, it has no management plan. Its human resources need capacity-building in biomonitoring, monitoring the effects of climate change, inventorying flora and fauna and in the use of new information and communication technologies with applications relating to biodiversity management (IT, GPS, camera trap, etc.).

The Wonegizi reserve is full of potential for tourism. But for the moment, there are virtually no facilities on the site. The villages in and around the reserve continue to grow and receive very little benefit from the conservation of the reserve. As a cross-border Guinean forest, the Wonegizi Nature Reserve is a jewel that deserves special attention. If tourism is promoted in that area, it could become a catalyst for development in the region.

# 1. IMET overview



Graphic 1. Management Effectiveness Evaluation Framework (IUCN WCPA)

IMET is an approach to support protected areas planning, monitoring and evaluation and to improve management patterns and conservation outcomes. IMET is supported by a computer-based application that collects, organizes and analyses data to facilitate informed decision-making for protected area management, operations and planning.

The IMET tool has been designed to directly support managers, both in the field and at the national level, to improve the effectiveness of protected area management and, more generally, biodiversity conservation. IMET provides support for planning, monitoring and evaluation of protected areas based on the organization of available information and the

definition of baselines. The resulting analyses can be explored at different scales: protected area, national or regional level. In this way, the tool promotes a proactive results-based approach that facilitates planning, analysis of the conservation status and visualization of parameters to assess the effectiveness of management in terms of achieving conservation objectives.

The IMET assesses the degree of delivery throughout the six stages of the protected area management cycle (management context, planning, inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes).

*“A protected area is a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values” - (IUCN 2008)*

## IMET process – 25 to 30 August 2023

Eighteen participants from the Wonegizi Nature Reserve, FFI and Community met in Konia – Lofa County for four days in order to conduct an assessment on effectiveness of management activities of Wonegizi Nature Reserve with IMET. The process was facilitated by an IMET coach. The assessment followed a four-day training course on using the IMET tool to assess the management effectiveness of protected areas.



*Managers of Wonegizi Nature Reserve and Communities participating in IMET training and assessment in Konia. Nzigiyimpa L. 2023*

## **2. Description of the Wonegizi Nature Reserve**

The Wonegizi mountains are situated in the north-west of the country against the international frontier with Guinea. The Wonegizi Nature Reserve (275.94 km<sup>2</sup>), which includes the third-highest point in Liberia, is a southern spur of the Guinea Highlands and the site is contiguous with the Massif du Ziama Biosphere Reserve in Guinea. The terrain is rugged with broad cliffs and rocky outcrops. The vegetation consists mainly of semi-deciduous forest, similar in composition to that found on the Wologizi mountains, some 50 km to the west. The sites span a still largely intact transition from lowland rainforest to semi-montane *Parinari*-dominated forest at altitude.

### **Main values for which the protected areas have been gazetted**

Wonegizi host an incredible diversity of species, many of which are endangered including the African Forest Elephant, Chimps, Pygmy Hippo, West African Red Colobus Monkeys, and numerous threaten birds, reptiles and amphibians. It forms part of a Northwest upper Guinea transboundary landscape.

### **Objectives:**

1. Conserve biodiversity including rare and endangered wildlife.
2. Protect large area of mature forest, safeguarding ecosystem service such as fresh water provisions, flood control, coordination, cultural values & provision of food and medicines.
3. Empowered communities and improve wellbeing needs
4. Prevent millions of tons of carbon emissions.



### 3. Key elements

#### Key species

<b>Fauna</b>	<b>Flora</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Loxodonta cyclotis</i></li> <li>• <i>Choeropsis liberiensis</i></li> <li>• <i>Pan troglodytes</i></li> <li>• <i>Syncerus caffer</i></li> <li>• <i>Cephalophus jentinki</i></li> <li>• <i>Colobus polykomos</i></li> <li>• <i>Phataginus tricuspis</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Entandrophragma cylindricum</i></li> <li>• <i>Cola angustifolia</i></li> <li>• <i>Tarenna hutchinsonii</i></li> <li>• <i>Rinorea djalonensis</i></li> <li>• <i>Cryptosepalum tetraphyllum</i></li> <li>• <i>Milicia regia</i></li> <li>• <i>Drypetes afzelii</i></li> <li>• <i>Entandrophragma candollei</i></li> <li>• <i>Entandrophragma utile</i></li> <li>• <i>Garcinia kola</i></li> <li>• <i>Neolemonniera clitandrifolia</i></li> </ul>



The Wonegizi mountain range and its surrounding forest—all a part of the Ziama-Wonegizi-Wologizi forest complex. Published by Guinea and Liberia Forge Historic Partnership for the Conservation of the Ziama-Wonegizi-Wologizi Forest Landscape. 2019

### 4. Ecosystem services

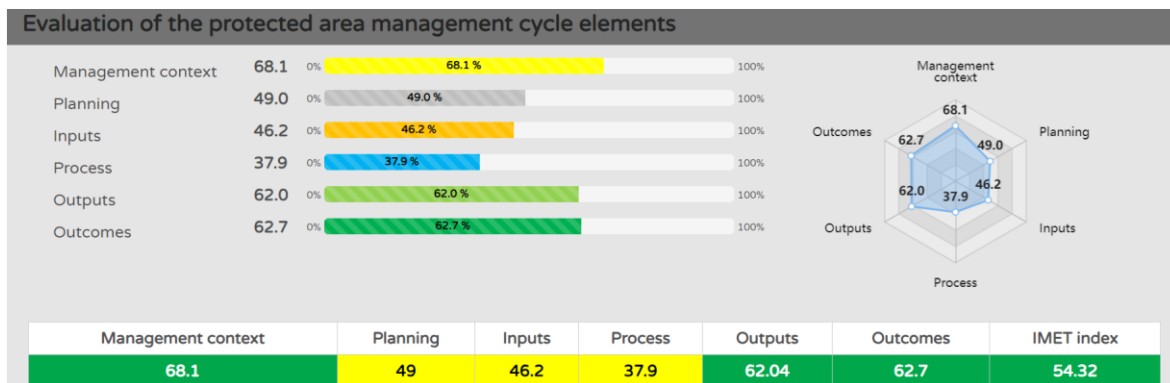
- Fertiliser - legal
- Sacred or religious
- Fuelwood and biofuels - legal
- Human food - vegetal (tubers, fruits, honey, mushrooms, seaweed, etc.) - legal
- Fish / livestock feed (wild, farmed, bait) - legal
- Stems - fibres (palms, kenaf, etc.) - illegal
- Timber for local construction - illegal
- Water supply - legal

- Human food - animal (wild / farmed meat, insects) - legal
- Gas regulation (carbon sequestration)
- Water erosion control
- Net primary production (vegetation)
- Important habitats (bird nesting sites - sea spawning grounds - nursery habitats)
- Pollination (plants)
- Water cycling
- Medicines and blue biotechnology (fish oil) - legal
- Science - Research
- Educational
- Flood control
- Drought control
- Cultural heritage

## 5. Threats

- Enclave areas
- Herbicides and pesticides
- Plant harvesting
- Plastics
- Urban and residential areas
- Roads
- Damage and changes to habitat
- Smallholder farming
- Increased rainfall and seasonal changes
- Waste water and sewers
- Storms and flooding
- Hunting of land animals
- Extreme temperatures
- Shifting cultivation

## 6. Specific analysis from IMET



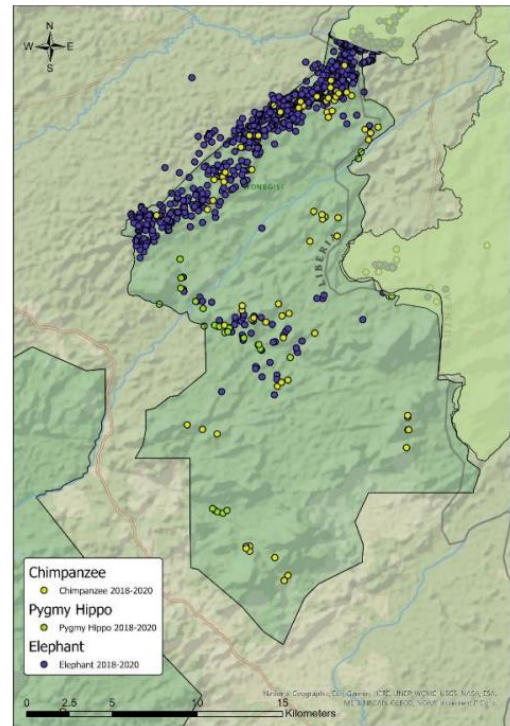


Management context <b>68.1</b>	Value and Importance 56.65	External constraints or supporting 82.61	Threats -43.64				
	Value and Importance	Special Designations 61.9	Key Species 38.89	Terrestrial and marine habitats 72.22	Climate Change 46.67	Ecosystem services 63.55	Value and Importance 56.65
Planning <b>49</b>	Adequacy of legal and regulatory provisions 88.89	Design and layout of the protected area 48.15	Demarcation of the protected area 36.9	Management plan 0	Work/Action plan 60	Objectives of the protected area 60	
Inputs <b>46.2</b>	Basic information 45.92	Staff 45.83	Current budget 60	Securing the budget 53.33	Infrastructure, equipment and facilities 26.16		
Process <b>37.9</b>	Internal management systems and processes 42.51	Management / Protection of the values 41.45	Stakeholder relations 47.26	Tourism management 0	Monitoring and Research 21.72	Management of the effects of climate change and ecosystem services 39.53	
	Internal management systems and processes	Staff capabilities programme and training 41.67	Human resource management policies and procedures 36.36	Analyse the degree of staff motivation (job suitability) 58.33	Management orientation of the protected area 16.67	Budget and financial management 54.17	Maintenance of infrastructure, equipment and facilities 47.83
	Management / Protection of the values	Managing the values and key elements of the protected area with specific actions 43.81	Ranger patrols management (Law enforcement) 44.44	Intelligence / investigations / case development /charging management (Law enforcement) 36.11	Management / Protection of the values 41.45		Internal management systems and processes 42.51
	Stakeholder relations	Cooperation with the stakeholders 80.77	Appropriate benefits/assistance for local communities 33.73	Environmental education and public awareness 27.27	Stakeholder relations 47.26		
	Tourism management	Management of visitors' facilities and services 0	Management of visitors' impact -	Tourism management 0			
	Monitoring and Research	Monitoring systems for natural and cultural resources 22.22	Research and biomonitoring 21.21	Monitoring and Research 21.72			
Management of the effects of climate change and ecosystem services	Management of the effects of climate change 15.56	Ecosystem services 63.49	Management of the effects of climate change and ecosystem services 39.53				
Outputs <b>62.04</b>	Implementation of the work/action plan 66.67	Annual outputs – targets – achievement 66.67	Area domination 75				
Outcomes <b>62.7</b>	Achievement of long-term conservation objectives of the management 58.33	Conditions and trends of the key conservation elements of the protected area 35.51	Effects and outcomes for stakeholders on quality of life 24.21				

## 6.1. Management Context

With an average score of 68.1%, the management context of the Wonegizi nature reserve is in a good position. The values and importance, and the support of stakeholders including the local authorities and the government scored an encouraging 60%. It is an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot. It is a transboundary Guinean tropical forest with many ecosystem services provided to local communities. Unfortunately, despite the site's impressive wealth of key species such as forest elephants, chimpanzees, forest buffalo, pygmy hippos and pangolins, information on these elements is insufficient. The protected area has very little information on the effects of climate change on the site. There are still many threats due to human factors. These include the expansion of villages within the reserve, the severing of ecological connectivity, human-wildlife conflicts, poaching, etc.

*WA BICC: Spatial distribution of chimpanzee, elephant and pygmy hippopotamus signs recorded in the Wonegizi proposed protected area (June 2019–February 2020 biomonitoring data and December 2018–February 2020 law enforcement patrol data).*



## 6.2. Planning

Planning for the Wonegizi nature reserve has an average score of 49%. The site is managed on the basis of an annual work plan that is largely supported by partners, mainly the FFI. The objectives are clearly defined in this work plan. Unfortunately, Wonegizi does not have a development and management plan. This management without a compass is detrimental to achieving the site's long-term conservation objectives. Fortunately, the lack of this tool is partly compensated for by the annual work plan of the partners working on the site. The configuration of the site is not good, as in some places the pressure of human activity is so great that ecological connectivity is on the point of being cut off. In addition, the assessment shows that the boundary is clearly demarcated at around 36.9%. Here is a growing need to clearly demarcate the entire boundary of the reserve.

## 6.3. Inputs

The average score for inputs, the third stage in the protected area management cycle, is 46.2%. The current budget and the secure budget score well, varying between 53% and 60% of the score. However, basic information on the key elements (chimpanzees, hippos, buffalo, pangolins) for making good management decisions is insufficient (45.83%). The staff to fulfil the management requirements of the protected area is insufficient. Wonegizi needs qualified, competent, committed and adequate (in number) staffing. Added to this is the glaring lack of basic infrastructure (26.16%), i.e., an adequate office, accommodation for rangers and equipment such as uniforms.

#### 6.4. Process

The process received a low score of 37.9%. In terms of the internal staff management process, several indicators are weak. The capacity of the rangers needs to be strengthened in biomonitoring and the use of IT tools. Staff management procedures and strategies need to be improved. Motivating the rangers would improve performance in the field. As for the management of values, the lack of sufficient information for most key species such as chimpanzees, hippos, pangolins and buffalo is a handicap when it comes to making good management decisions. Ranger patrols are not sufficiently sustained to allow total control of the reserve. The intelligence resources used to obtain information to better combat threats are largely inadequate.

Cooperation between the reserve and the various partners is excellent. However, the local communities perceive very little benefits from the conservation of Wonegizi nature reserve. There is no environmental education program for either children or adults. Tourism is virtually non-existent: the lack of facilities for tourism and the poor state of the access tracks are limiting factors for the development of this sector in the site. Very few research results are made known to the area's managers. The researchers working in Wonegizi rarely provide feedback. In terms of monitoring the effects of climate change, the managers need capacity-building in this emerging area. Although the area is rich in ecosystem services, there are almost no concrete actions to promote them for the benefit of the population.

#### 6.5. Outputs

The results of the annual work plan carried out with the support of partners, including FFI, show a good score of 66.04%. Thanks to the support of partners and the prioritization of intervention actions, permanent patrols managed to control 75% of the reserve.

#### 6.6. Outcomes

Despite the lack of a management plan and limited means in terms of human and financial resources, infrastructure and equipment, the conservation objectives of the Wonegizi nature reserve and its key elements, which are the flagship and emblematic species and its valuable ecosystem services, have been sufficiently achieved with a score of 62.7%. However, population growth and the expansion of villages around and within the reserve pose a serious threat to the future of the reserve's key species. In addition, the populations inside and outside the reserve remain poor. The reserve has had little positive impact on their living conditions.

### 7. SWOT Analysis

<b>Strength</b>	<b>Weakness</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support from Government and local authorities</li><li>• Presence of wildlife management agency</li><li>• Presence of staff</li><li>• Biodiversity hotspot</li><li>• Transboundary area</li><li>• Recognised by WDPA</li><li>• High ecosystem values</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited staff</li><li>• Limited budget</li><li>• Inadequate capacities of staff</li><li>• Lack of infrastructures</li><li>• No management plan</li><li>• Lack of research information</li><li>• No tourism</li><li>• Limited sustainable livelihoods</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No clear demarcation of Wonegizi</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political stability</li> <li>• Support from partners (ex. FFI, LFSP)</li> <li>• Civil society support</li> <li>• Support from environmental agency</li> <li>• Part of an international landscape ( Wologizi, Wonegizi, Ziama).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase of community population</li> <li>• Climate change effects</li> <li>• Shifting cultivation</li> <li>• Poaching</li> <li>• Unsustainable harvesting of non-timber products forests</li> <li>• Deseases: Ebola, Covid.</li> </ul>

**Ziggida Village**

Ziggida is a village located in the East of the region of Zorzor. The word “Ziggida” means: “Move from my mouth”. Once upon a time, there was an old town and a guy decided to create a new settlement closer to water stream. While brushing this new spot area a fly sat on his mouth. While trying to remove the fly, he mentioned the word “ ziggida”.

*FFI interventions were as follows:*

1. Set-up farmer field school programs to train the citizens in conservation agricultural practices. These programs ran for 8 months. Upon graduation, machinery of their chosen was purchased and delivered to them to continue their farming practices and process their raw materials into finished products.
2. Village saving Loan Association (VSLA) was set-up comprising of 30 persons. They were training into book keeping, loan disbursement credits and shares allocations and auditing. An initial cash and safe box were made available by FFI to the group. Currently, that group has been very successful and is still running as an association.
3. Three persons from Ziggida had been recruited and trained to form part FDA law enforcement and biomonitoring teams. They have been working with FDA since 2018 up till present. There has been a request from the community for assistance in rehabilitating the major bridge leading to the town. FFI committed itself to assist but yet to comply. Still making efforts to have management commits itself to assisting this community.



*The man in the red shirt is the Town chief of Ziggida*



*Representative of the FFI, WNR, communities surrounding the Town Chief*



## 8. Operational Recommendations

### To FDA:

- provide WNR with a management plan, strengthen the capacities of the staff in this area, increase the number of rangers, operational budget, equipment and gender equity.
- involve communities in decision making process of Wonegizi.

### To Partners:

- support to monitor the key elements and ecosystem values (logistic, patrols, ration, financial and technical resources).
- invest in supporting tourism in Wonegizi
- share information result from survey and research done at Wonegizi landscape at site level and head office.
- provide sustainable livelihood for communities in and around the forest.

### To communities:

- share information about Wonegizi Nature Reserve.
- harvest sustainably Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP).







*Participants in the WNR assessment reflecting on key recommendations to improve the management effectiveness of this protected area. Nzigiyimpa L. 2023*

## **9. Conclusion**

The average score or IMET Index for all elements of the management cycle for Wonegizi Nature Reserve is 54.32%. This is a good indicator of the good health of the PA, although there are input and process challenges. Key elements and values are well integrated into the management of the area, which is supported by local authorities and partners. Unfortunately, this site has no management plan. The annual work plan is mainly supported by partners. As part of a vast transboundary landscape, this protected area is rich in biodiversity, ecosystem services, and several tourism potentialities. The Liberian Protected Areas Authority (FDA), site managers, and technical and financial partners need to make efforts to create basic infrastructure and facilities and to upgrade the status of this impressive landscape, all for the benefit of local communities.



# Annex 1: List of participants

**Integration Management Effectiveness Tool (IMET)  
Assessment & Training  
(WONEGIZI PPA)  
Attendance Form  
VENUE: Konia Town**

No.	NAMES OF PARTICIPANTS	POSITION	ENTITY/COMMUNITY	CONTACT #	DATE	SIGNATURE
1	CEDRIG N. Allison	Biodiversity Officer	Fauna & Flora	231820233740	Aug 21, 2023	[Signature]
2	T. Mamu Ricks	Zone Warden	FDA	0886287343	✓	[Signature]
3	G. Norkonney Keah	Zone Warden	FDA	0880402232	✓	[Signature]
4	J. David B. Ricks	Zone 3	FDA	0777031810	✓	[Signature]
5	Melvin Wablatte	Ranger	FDA	0555323246	✓	[Signature]
6	Bandu E. Ricks	Ranger	FDA	0776314830	✓	[Signature]
7	Abraham	Peagobate	-	850120203		[Signature]
8						
9	Daniel Livingstone	CEK	FDA	0776471455		[Signature]
10	Nelson Kanyiah	Ranger	FDA	0779089060	✓	[Signature]
11	Beyan B. Flomo	Zone Warden	FDA	0777952786	✓	[Signature]
12	Emmanuel N. Stebo Sr.	Ranger	FDA	0886817310	✓	[Signature]
13	Samuel K. Treman	Chief Park Warden	FDA	0771921078	✓	[Signature]
14	Amana V. Kromah	CA	Bulor	0775687222	✓	[Signature]
15	Emmanuel Kpadah	CA	Barikwan	0776946718	✓	[Signature]
16	Mohammed R. Li. Kamara	CA	Bulor		✓	[Signature]
17	Gafla Kpadah	CA	Ziggida	077734425	✓	[Signature]
18	Famolu Yamah	CA	Kiangbata	0777089311	✓	[Signature]
19	Alpha Kaman	Finance Officer	FPI	0780525313	✓	[Signature]
20	N2191YIMPA Koomikas	Coach	Independent	+2779452078	✓	[Signature]

## **Annex 2: Terms of reference**

### **WOLOGIZI-WONIGIZI-ZIAMA IMET TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **THE CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

Background: FFI is implementing a project funded by the European Union (EU) within the framework of the Support Programme for the Preservation of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa (PAPFOR). The objective of PAPFOR programme is to effectively and efficiently protect biodiversity and priority forest ecosystems in West Africa by contributing to building resilience to climate change, water and food insecurity. The project component in Liberia and Guinea is titled One Landscape: One Vision – Enabling all stakeholders to achieve sustainability for people, forest and wildlife in the Wologizi-Wonegizi-Ziama (WWZ) landscape co financed by the Halcyon Land and Seas grant (FFI internal funding) supporting FFI’s work on maintaining connectivity across the ZWW transboundary landscape in Guinea and Liberia. Both projects are implemented as a single action and seek to attain shared objectives. In ZWW, the project is implemented from March 2022 to July 2024, in collaboration with the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and Centre Forestier de Nzerekore in Guinea the, Liberian and Guinean institutions with the mandate to protect and conserve forest areas in their respective countries.

**Purpose:** The overall objective is to assess management effectiveness outputs for the Wonegizi PPA using IMET 2.10.6 tool at the same time build the capacity of FDA and FFI staff on the use of the tool in improving PA/PPA management effectiveness.

#### **Specific tasks**

- Develop a training module or material on IMET 2.10.6 based on the expectations expressed by FFI in particular
- Ensure IMET is installed and operational on FDA and FFI laptops
- Deliver a training in IMET ensuring the trainees are able in turn to build capacity of other rangers who have not yet been trained on the IMET (training of trainers), including data analysis, supervision of data collection campaigns and facilitation of the IMET campaign feedback process
- Carry out an IMET Assessment of Wonegizi PPA as part of the IMET training (learning by doing)
- Produce a detailed report on the IMET assessment of Wonegizi PPAs, showing the current management effectiveness of the PPA, including appropriate management recommendations,
- Produce a technical report of the IMET training.

Profile of participants : 15 persons:

- Site managers

- Representatives of the territorial administration

- Representatives of national or international partners
- Representatives of civil society organisations
- Representatives of local communities (populations)

### Procedures

The consultant will adopt the following approaches:

- Train the participants on the basic concepts and rationale of management effectiveness assessment
- Focus on practice rather than theory
- Prepare a manual to support the training

### Working methods and conditions

- The training will be held in Liberia at WWZ.
- The trainer will work under the coordination of the FFI coordination.
- He will work in close collaboration with the Chief warden and the monitoring-planning or monitoring-evaluation unit of the WWZ .

### Equipments

Work in a room where there is electricity. 1 projector, 1 screen, 2 extension cords with multiple sockets, laptop per participant (if possible), a camera and batteries, a printer (provide ink cartridges) or printing facilities, 1 flipchart + holder, 5 different coloured markers, 1 scotch tape, Wifi, notepads and pens, adhesive tape.

### Required documents:

Map and management plan of the protected area, annual work plan, map of the region.

#	Deliverables	Timeline
1	Training modules or material on IMET 2.10.6	August 2023 (1 <sup>st</sup> week)
2	Training evaluation scores pre and post training	August 2023 (2 <sup>nd</sup> week)
3	IMET assessment report + key recommendations	August (4 <sup>th</sup> week)
4	Technical report of the training	August (4 <sup>th</sup> week)
	A synthesis of proposals and recommendations on the relevant on WWZ	
5	The Json file of the WWZ evaluation.	
	Installation of the IMET tool on trainees' computers	