

Name of the activity: Conservation and sustainable management of mangrove forests in Benin through local capacity building and community development

1. Overview of the project

The coastal zones of Benin have many mangroves containing a rich biodiversity of plants and animals. These mangroves recognized for their global importance have been classified in Ramsar sites 1017 and 1018. They are subject to a particular attraction of populations and thus causing the installation of the communities in surrounding areas. They play a crucial role in the live of local population. Currently these ecosystems of mangroves are highly degraded and their size reduced to more than 60% due to the conjunction of anthropogenic actions including preparation of salt, overharvesting fuel wood, medicinal plants etc; and the adverse effects of climate change. The degradation of mangrove ecosystems is a significant threat to the conservation of biological diversity and to the survival of the local communities. Benin mangroves have no protection status, which gives the right to anyone to exploit the resources as he want without permission and without any control. These particular ecosystems have always been neglected and have not benefit of a plan of restoration and sustainable management. If any urgent action is not made, the mangroves may disappear in the short term under the combined effects anthropogenic and climatic actions. At the request of local populations, NGO Ce.Sa.Re.N identified and prepared the project of conservation and sustainable management of mangrove forests by a multidisciplinary team in collaboration with civil society and local authorities. This project aims to contribute to restoration and sustainable management of mangrove forests in Benin for improvement of livelihood and reduction of the vulnerability of ecosystems and the population to harmful effects of climate change.

General objective: contribute to the sustainable management of forest resources of the landscapes of coastal wetlands for better well-being and mitigation of vulnerability to climate change.

Specific objectives:

- Initiate and support participatory management processes of mangroves forests in Benin;
- Promote the restoration and sustainable use of local natural resources to reduce pressures on mangroves and increase income and standard of living of the local populations.

The strategy of the project

The project strategy consists of an integrated approach to coastal zones management based on a continuous and iterative process using knowledge and endogenous practices that promote sustainable development of coastal regions. This approach will be implemented through the following steps:

- Participatory diagnosis of the state of the ecosystems of mangroves,
- Development of master plan of the commune and management plan of mangroves,
- Local capacity building for the implementation and follow-up evaluation of management plans.

Project area and target group

The project will be implemented in the main mangroves Benin. The main beneficiaries of the project are women, youth and other social and community users of mangroves such as small farmers and fishers.

Expected outcomes

The main results expected at the end of this project are:

Outcome 1: The knowledge of the potential resources of mangrove ecosystems are increased

Outcome 2: The tools of planning and sustainable management of the mangroves are available and functional,

2. Budget and duration

The amount necessary for the implementation of this project is estimated at US\$ **75920** and will be implemented during eight (8) months.

3. Clusters to be allocated:

Cluster 2: Policy Research

Cluster 4: Capacity Building

Cluster 5: On-the-Ground Activities

4. **IPSI member organisations involved:** International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

5. Contact person:

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