West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change Program (WA BiCC)
The West Africa Biodiversity and Climate Change (WA BiCC) Program is a USAID-funded 5-year regional program that aims to improve conservation, climate resilient and low emission growth in the West Africa Region. WA BiCC works to strengthen policies and regional capacity to improve natural resource management and maintain healthy, resilient forest ecosystems and forest-based livelihoods in West Africa.

**MANDATE**

Environmental issues affect the social, economic and ecological sustainability in West Africa. In response to this challenge, WA BiCC works with partners to protect natural resources and ecosystems by addressing the direct and indirect factors that cause environmental degradation. The program is implemented in collaboration with stakeholders at the community, national and regional levels. Best practices and approaches are applied to:

- Combat wildlife trafficking;
- Improve coastal resilience to climate change;
- Reduce deforestation, degradation and biodiversity loss.
**APPROACH**

Inconsistent policies and inadequate practices put biodiversity, critical environmental services and communities vulnerable to the affects of climate change at risk. However, committed national, regional, and local institutions—along with individuals and development partners— are working together to passionately tackle these challenges. WA BiCC harnesses this commitment to increase access to information, encourage collaboration, enhance adoption of best practices and policies across the region.

**LEARNING LANDSCAPES**

WA BiCC works in coastal landscapes and key upland forests in order to understand and share regional best practices. Several of these landscapes are transboundary in nature. These landscapes provide lessons to improve policies and replicate successes based on practice in the region. They are:

- Coastal landscapes; Fresco landscape in Cote d’Ivoire, and Greater Freetown Coastal landscape in Sierra Leone.
- Trans-boundary forest landscapes within the Upper Guinean Rainforest; Gola linking Liberia and Sierra Leone, Ziama-Wonegizi-Wologizi linking Liberia and Guinea, and Tai-Grebo-Sapo linking Liberia and Cote d’Ivoire respectively.
Upland Forest Learning Landscapes
Coastal Learning Landscapes

WA BiCC Field Office
Freetown, Sierra Leone

Burkina Faso
Mali
Senegal
Côte D’ivoire
Sierra Leone
Guinea
Gambia
Liberia

Mano River Union Headquarters
Freetown, Sierra Leone

Abidjan Convention Headquarters
Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire

Guinea-Bissau
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Support and build the capacities of regional institutions and partners: ECOWAS, Mano River Union, Abidjan Convention, and others.
- Incorporate sustainability measures in all activities and interventions.
- Recognize how people and the environment function as one and affect one another.
- Empower women, youth and disadvantaged populations.
- Collaborate, learn and adapt as activities are implemented.
IMPROVE COASTAL RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

WA BiCC will identify and promote effective adaptation interventions and create an enabling policy environment to support and scale-up effective interventions. To address issues effectively, WA BiCC will generate information and data to improve understanding of coastal vulnerability and how to address it. With local stakeholders and partners, WA BiCC will implement intensive site-based coastal adaptation activities in two coastal learning landscapes while simultaneously contributing to National Adaptation Plans (NAP), regional and national protocols and policies.
**REDUCE DEFORESTATION, DEGRADATION AND BIODIVERSITY LOSS**

WA BiCC will provide technical support to bolster stakeholder capacity to manage information on how to tackle forest and biodiversity loss. By doing so, local partners will better understand and respond to forest degradation causes, ultimately preventing further habitat and species loss. WA BiCC and partners will work together to improve capacity for economic planning and conservation strategy development, including REDD+. WA BiCC promotes learning and collaboration among partners, fostering the sharing and adoption of interventions, strategies and policies that have shown to be successful in other regions.

**COMBAT WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING**

WA BiCC works with regional and national partners to strengthen policies, laws and regulations to combating wildlife trafficking. Together with these partners, WA BiCC increases the capacity of networks and institutions to strengthen, develop and enforce wildlife legislation. WA BiCC is implementing strategies such as establishing more effective means of tracking wildlife trafficking and crimes within the region to identify threats and how to mitigate them in the region.
CORE REGIONAL PARTNERS:

- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- Mano River Union (MRU)
- Abidjan Convention

KEY IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS:

- Tetra Tech ARD, Lead Implementing Partner, with:
  - Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN)
  - Pact World
  - Palladium (Formerly dTS)
  - PCI Media Impact
  - Wetlands International Africa (WIA)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit www.wabicc.org
Email info@wabicc.org

Accra Office:
House No. F185/6, 2nd Labone Link, North Labone, Accra
Stephen Kelleher – Chief of Party
Contact +233 207 960 905

Freetown Office:
41 WI Derrick Drive, Off Spur Road, Freetown, Sierra Leone
Leonis Sesay – Administrative Point of Contact
Contact +232 76 820 622

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