

# Evaluation summary

## *Territorial approach as a driver of socio-environmental resilience in three African landscapes of high biodiversity priority (Resilient Territories)*

Countries: Côte d'Ivoire / Burkina Faso

Topic: Forest & Farmland

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### Key FFEM support data

**Project name:** Territorial approach as a driver of socio-environmental resilience in three African landscapes of high biodiversity priority (*Resilient Territories*)

**Project number:** CZZ2875

**Amount financed by the FFEM:** EUR 2 100 000

**Project grant date:** 2021

**Duration:** 4 years

### Context

Building on the positive results of the REDD+ Programme in the La Mé region (PRM) in Côte d'Ivoire, and on a robust methodology to address the drivers of deforestation, Nitidæ requested the FFEM's support to replicate this approach in other areas of high ecological value (savanna-forest ecosystems in northern Côte d'Ivoire and southern Burkina Faso) while continuing its work within the La Mé region.

### Participants and operating methods

**Nitidæ** – Implementation Lead

#### Operation based on a territorial approach:

The project is built on a territorial approach designed to establish a model where natural resource conservation serves as a catalyst for local development.

To achieve this objective, the project implements a multisectoral intervention linking agriculture and forestry, alongside capacity-building for key territorial stakeholders involved in safeguarding protected areas, including local communities, public institutions, and civil society organizations.



### Objectives

Contribute to landscape resilience and sustainable local livelihoods through the concerted management of natural resources and the promotion of zero-deforestation agricultural production systems, based on a landscape approach. This also involves integrated territorial planning bringing together conservation stakeholders and profitable agricultural value chains, in order to protect biodiversity and effectively combat deforestation.

#### Specific objectives:

- Consolidate participatory territorial planning that fully integrates biodiversity conservation issues.
- Strengthen the operational capacities of the authorities responsible for managing protected areas and support the shift of their operations to the landscape scale.
- Support the transition towards more sustainable production practices and investment in natural capital.
- Measure the project's impact and develop a "Zero-Deforestation Territory" reference.

## Performance appraisal

### Effectiveness

Most of the performance objectives initially set were achieved in all three territories. This is largely explained by an effective and flexible operational set-up, capable of adapting to each landscape's specific characteristics and, above all, to the needs of end beneficiaries.

### Efficiency

Resources were used efficiently in the three territories. Some targets were surpassed while spending remained below what had been planned, particularly for activities supporting the transition to more sustainable production practices.

### Impact

Across the three territories, the projects (1) improved the income and livelihoods of rural households through a multi-value-chain approach tailored to local realities; (2) supported the lasting adoption of technical practices and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing among beneficiaries; and (3) helped reduce pressure on protected areas, notably through awareness-raising activities.

The impact is also visible among public authorities, especially in Côte d'Ivoire, where the government and Regional authorities are directly involved in the initiative.

### Viability/Sustainability

Beneficiaries have adopted transition-oriented farming practices well, which offers a strong basis for continuing the transformation. However, the durability of these gains remains fragile, particularly for the territorial planning component, as it still depends heavily on Nitidæ's role in facilitating territorial coordination.

### Added value linked to FFEM support

FFEM support brings clear added value through the complementary approach implemented. The intervention builds on ongoing efforts led by local public and private actors, while responding directly to end beneficiaries' needs. Overall, the initiative is well aligned with the landscape's challenges and stakeholder expectations, placing particular emphasis on rural communities' financial and food security.

### Innovation linked to FFEM support

Innovation is built around two main pillars: (1) co-developing governance and land-use planning tools with stakeholders; and (2) adopting a landscape approach that brings together multiple value chains and actors, generating a range of transition and agroecological intensification packages adapted to farmers' priorities and local conditions.

### Exemplary value of FFEM support

FFEM support stands out through a territory-centred, needs-based approach and in continuous knowledge capitalisation (guides, manuals, protocols) to support information-sharing and strengthen stakeholders' capacities.

## Recommendations & learnings

1. **Strengthen a structured collective governance framework.** The success and replication of the landscape approach depend on close coordination among local stakeholders, while recognizing their operating procedures, administrative constraints, and capacity levels. Activities must be co-designed and jointly validated, while maintaining the flexibility to adapt to field realities. To this end, two mechanisms are central:

- Systematically establish a participatory Steering Committee (COFIL) for each project, ensuring it brings together diverse stakeholders with real decision-making authority.
- Define a clear and precise theory of change from the outset of the initiatives, serving as an analytical framework to structure the intervention phases, make assumptions explicit, anticipate adjustments, and organise Nitidæ's gradual exit from the territory.

2. **Enhance social mapping and stakeholder analysis.** To engage the private sector, manage risks linked to illegal actors, and secure areas of high environmental value, it is recommended to develop a holistic mapping of the territories. This should combine the remote-sensing data already used by Nitidæ with qualitative information on social and economic flows (legal and illegal supply chains).

3. **Ensure continuity of efforts to consolidate the project's achievements.** Although the initiative has already generated tangible impacts, it has not yet consolidated all the elements necessary for the sustainability of the action. A new phase therefore appears useful, but on the explicit condition that it focuses fully on empowering local stakeholders.