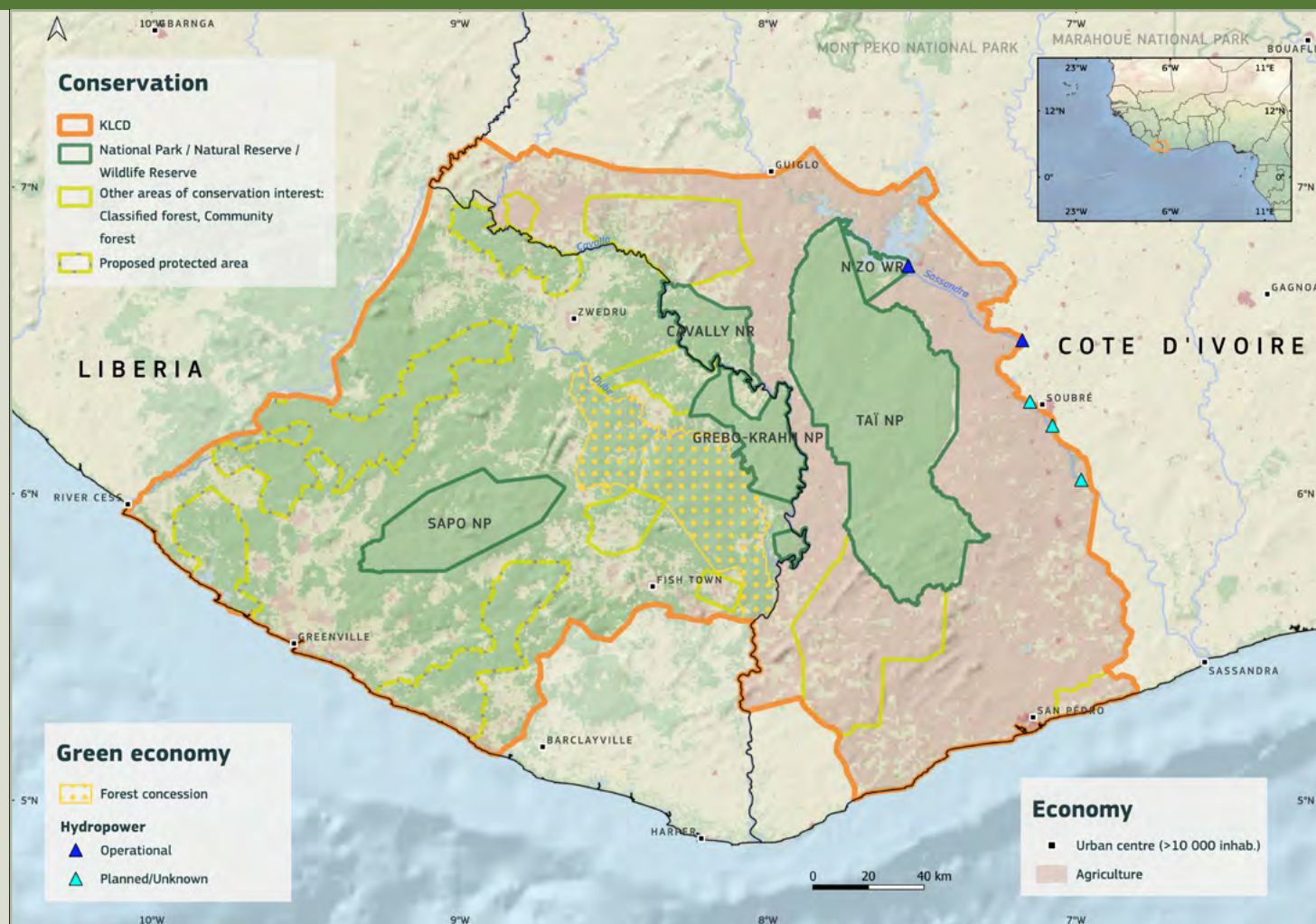


NaturAfrica West Africa

TAÏ – GREBO-KRAHN – SAPO (TGKS)

Côte d'Ivoire – Liberia



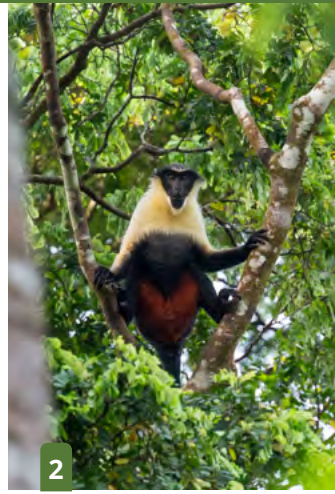
TGKS landscape at a glance

Main protected areas:	Taï National Park (TNP); Cavally Nature Reserve (CNR); Grebo-Krahn NP (GKNP); Proposed Kwa NP (PKNP); Sapo NP (SNP)
Biome :	Upper Guinean forests
Area:	52 269 km ²
Flagship species:	West African chimpanzee, pygmy hippopotamus, forest elephant, forest duikers, Gola malimbe

Objective of the NaturAfrica West Africa project in the landscape:

To combat biodiversity loss through effective and enhanced protection, conservation, governance and management of the transboundary forest complex, while developing sustainable livelihood opportunities within a green economy for local communities.

Project implementation period: 2025-2028



Conservation targets

- Ensure the maintenance of the **largest protected forest block in West Africa**.
- The **pygmy hippopotamus** (*Choeropsis liberiensis*) (6) and the West African **chimpanzee** (*Pan troglodytes verus*): Taii is one of the most important sites in the world for the conservation of these two endangered species.
- The **forest elephant** (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) and the **three species of pangolins**, including the white-bellied pangolin (*Phataginus tricuspis*) (3) living in West Africa. The elephant depends on the large expanse of preserved forests for its survival.
- Duikers, including Jentink's duiker (*Cephalophus jentinki*) and the zebra duiker (*C. zebra*) (4).
- The leopard (*Panthera pardus*), the golden cat (*Caracal aurata*), and other mammals, such as Johnston's genet (*Genetta johnstoni*) (5).
- The Liberian mongoose (*Liberiictis kuhni*) and Gola malimbe (*Malimbus ballmanni*).

Improving and preserving connectivity between protected areas within the Tai – Grebo-Krahn – Sapo complex is very important for the conservation of this landscape.

Flora characterised by a high rate of endemism. More than 1 400 plant species – such as *Campylospermum* (*Campylospermum* sp) (1) – of which more than a hundred species are only found to the west of the Sassandra River in Côte d'Ivoire, characterise the floristic hotspot known as 'Bas-Cavally' or 'Col-lines de Grabo' on either side of the Cavally River, a former forest refuge during a drier climatic episode.

Primates endemic to West Africa and to the west of the Sassandra River. The TGKS landscape is home to an impressive number of primates, with a total of 13 species, eight of which are endemic to West Africa. These include the sooty mangabey (*Cercocebus atys*) and the Diana monkey (*Cercopithecus diana*) (2).

Main threats to biodiversity

- Uncontrolled development of cocoa cultivation causing significant deforestation, mainly on the edges of protected areas but potentially encroaching into them. The rapid expansion of the 'cocoa frontier' also presents many social challenges.
- Poaching within protected areas for local consumption and to supply commercial trafficking, including species that are strictly protected by law.
- Artisanal mining, which is booming in connection with the sharp rise in international prices for gold and other minerals.
- Weak law enforcement due to limited human or material capacities or poor governance.
- Complex cross-border management with cross-border trafficking of natural resources that is difficult to control.

Ongoing interventions

Biodiversity conservation

Development of biomonitoring and wildlife monitoring

To gather information on the status of wildlife populations, the WCF supports the Ivorian Office of Parks and Reserves (OIPR) and the Liberia Forestry Development Authority (FDA) to undertake biomonitoring in proposed and established protected areas, combining camera trap sampling and linear transects. Biomonitoring surveys will be conducted in CNR on two occasions, in 2026 and 2028; in TNP on one occasion, in 2026; in SNP on one occasion, in 2025; and in PKNP on one occasion in 2026.

Eco-guard patrols and enforcement

The community ecoguard programme is managed by the WCF in the landscape in collaboration with the FDA and the OIPR. The WCF supports community ecoguards in each of the five proposed and established protected areas in the landscape.

Analysis of the connectivity potential of corridors between protected areas

To ensure the conservation and survival of critically endangered species such as the West African chimpanzee, it is crucial to maintain and/or restore the connectivity of their habitats. The WCF in Liberia is studying the feasibility of two ecological corridors within the landscape.



Photos taken by camera traps are very useful for biomonitoring purposes.



Training for community ecoguards from the town of Jalay in Sapo National Park, March 2025.

Green economy development



Filtering honey after harvesting in hives around the village of Port Gentil in Côte d'Ivoire.



Bottled honey ready for sale.

Support for vegetable farming and vegetable oil production

The project aims to help members of local communities create and maintain vegetable gardens using agroecological techniques, including biopesticides, biofertilisers, compost and other sustainable practices.

The project supports community members in the landscape in vegetable oil production by organising training on the sustainable selection of oilseeds from native forest trees. These are then transported to an oil mill in the village of Zaipobly, Côte d'Ivoire, to be processed into vegetable oil.

Promotion of improved stoves, beekeeping and ecotourism

The project trains women from local communities in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire in the production, use and promotion of improved stoves.

In Côte d'Ivoire, where wood is scarce and its use restricted, the project is testing and promoting beehives made from recycled plastic and bamboo. This initiative will be followed by training in recycling and plastic production. In Liberia, the WCF will continue and expand its beekeeping activities.

To date, the WCF has established two ecotourism sites, in Taï National Park in Côte d'Ivoire and Sapo National Park in Liberia. As part of this project, the Sapo Ec lodge is undergoing further improvements and specialised training is being provided to tour guides. In Taï National Park, the WCF will hire an architect to assess the needs and costs of improving the ecolodge.

Strengthening territorial governance

Organisation of cross-border steering committees

Cross-border collaboration has existed since 2009, with the establishment of a cross-border steering committee and, subsequently, various technical committees under its authority. A framework agreement between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia is expected to be signed shortly. In addition, the WCF has developed a specific cross-border agreement aimed at strengthening law enforcement between the two countries. It will facilitate the organisation of this committee's meetings during the project period.

Development of an independent monitoring programme

To strengthen surveillance, enforcement efforts and the fight against corruption, the WCF will expand its independent monitoring programme in Côte d'Ivoire and launch it for the first time in Liberia. In Côte d'Ivoire, the WCF is currently working with a non-governmental organisation (NGO), Notre Forêt Notre Avenir (NOFNA), a project partner, to carry out independent monitoring missions around protected areas. This enables rapid intervention by the authorities and the dismantling of networks involved in wildlife trafficking and illegal logging. In Liberia, NOFNA Côte d'Ivoire is supporting the establishment of NOFNA Liberia, which will be trained to conduct investigations and will work towards setting up a similar independent monitoring programme.

Exchange of experiences, communities, authorities

The project organises study and exchange trips between the two countries on community environmental protection programmes, biomonitoring, ecotourism, beekeeping and conservation businesses. Participants include members of local communities, representatives of public authorities, NGOs and civil society organisations (CSOs). The aim is to strengthen collaboration and coordination between the FDA in Liberia and the OIPR in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as to consolidate the commitment of community members and partner NGOs and CSOs involved in the project.



The steering committee for the Tai – Grebo-Krahn – Sapo forest complex (whose 8th edition was held in July 2025) strengthens cross-border collaboration and exchanges, as well as constructive discussions and efforts to improve support for law enforcement across borders.

Implementing partners

Operator: Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF)



Côte d'Ivoire:

Ivorian Office of Parks and Reserves (OIPR)

Our Forest Our Future (NOFNA)

Initiative for Cocoa Development (ID-COCOA)

Environment-Hygiene-Agriculture-Beekeeping (EHYA)

Alma Production

Local communities



Liberia:

Forestry Development Authority (FDA)

Society for Environmental Conservation (SEC)

Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL)

Forestry Training Institute (FTI)

Universal Outreach Foundation (UOF)

Tropical Biology Association (TBA)

Eddie Theater Production

Liberia Marketing Association (LMA)

Local communities



About NaturAfrica

The NaturAfrica initiative is funded by the European Union and covers six terrestrial biomes and four coastal/oceanic areas in sub-Saharan Africa through 69 programmes (six multi-regional, 17 regional and 46 national), with more than €1.4 billion committed in its first phase up to 2025. It places human rights at the heart of its work and applies a landscape approach based on three pillars: conservation, green economy and governance.

The NaturAfrica West Africa Regional Programme supports transboundary landscapes with a budget of €41 million. It is complemented by national projects funded by the EU Commission and its Member States. The initiative contributes to the implementation of the regional environmental policies of WAEMU and ECOWAS, in particular the Regional Strategy for the Management of Protected and Conserved Areas in West Africa by 2050, as well as the 30x30 targets of the Montreal-Kunming Global Biodiversity Framework.

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