



## **REPORT**

**ON**

# **THE REGIONAL PROJECT ON “SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN A NETWORK OF CROSS-BORDER PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS IN WEST AFRICA”**

**DOCUMENT SUBMITTED BY**

**THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT  
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**TO THE**

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OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC AND  
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Agenda n°8: Developing a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism Sector

Virtual Meeting

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**REPORT ON  
«THE REGIONAL PROJECT ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT  
IN A NETWORK OF CROSS-BORDER PARKS  
AND PROTECTED AREAS IN WEST AFRICA »**

**REMINDER:**

In compliance with the decision of H.E the OIC Secretary General, ICDT ensures since 2006 the follow up of the implementation of the Regional Project on “Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa”. This Project includes 10 OIC Member States (Benin, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra Leone).

The Regional Coordination of the Project is ensured by HE Thierno Ousmane Diallo, Minister of State and Minister of Tourism, Hospitality and Handcrafts of the Republic of Guinea.

**Objectives of the Project:**

- ✓ Support the process of sub-regional economic integration on the basis of rational management of Cross-border protected areas;
- ✓ Promote sustainable tourism and ecotourism;
- ✓ Ensure the conservation of biological diversity at sub-regional level;
- ✓ Reduce poverty in local communities through increased incomes, increased employment and the promotion of income-generating activities;
- ✓ Create a network of national and regional parks of Cross-Border Protected Areas.

**List of concerned parks and protected areas:**

- ✓ Djoudj - Diawling (Senegal / Mauritania);
- ✓ Niokolo Koba - Badiar (Senegal / Guinea);
- ✓ Gambia River Basin - Kayanga - Geba - Koliba - Corubal (Gambia / GuineaBissau/Senegal);
- ✓ Rios Kogon - Korubal - Nunez (Guinea Bissau / Guinea);
- ✓ Pinselli - Outamba - Kilimi (Sierra Leone / Guinea) ;
- ✓ Bafing - Faleme (Mali / Guinea);
- ✓ W (Benin / Bukina Faso / Niger).

-Within the framework of the implementation of the Project, ICDT in collaboration with the Regional Coordinator, SESRIC and the UNWTO held several steering committee meetings at its Headquarters in Casablanca (Kingdom of Morocco) in July 2006, March 2008, July 2009, February 2012, December 2014 and in February 2016.

Other important meetings were also held on the sidelines of the Conferences of OIC Tourism Ministers in Azerbaijan (2006), Syria (2008) and Gambia (2013), at the UNWTO' Headquarters in Madrid in 2009 for the adoption of the Study of the Project and on the occasion of the Donors Conference organized in Dakar, Senegal, in 2011 for the funding of the Project.

Despite the continuous efforts of all stakeholders, the Project still needs the financial support of OIC countries, institutions and partners.

**Recently, ICDT initiated the organization of the following events:**

❖ **Meeting on the "Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa", Casablanca, Morocco, 11 March 2019:**

With the aim of reviving the "Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa ", the Director General of ICDT Dr. El Hassane HZAINÉ held, on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 in Casablanca, a Meeting with H.E Aboubacar DIONE, Ambassador of the Republic of Guinea to the Kingdom of Morocco representing HE Thierno Ousmane DIALLO - Minister of Hospitality, Tourism and Handcraft of the Republic of Guinea, Regional Coordinator of the Project.

On this occasion, H.E Aboubacar DIONE thanked Dr HZAINÉ for his warm welcome and recommended the following actions to facilitate the implementation of the Project:

- Initiate Advocacy for the Project at the level of States, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Technical Ministries (Tourism and Environment) and during the next OIC Summit.
  - Continue capacity building program related to the Project;
  - Invite countries to explore the bilateral approach in parallel with the multilateral channel with a view to facilitating the fundraising for the national segments of the Project, pending the holding of the next Conference of Donors;
  - Nominate a technical focal point at the level of the Regional Coordination Office of the Project and the relevant Ministries;
  - Provide support to the Regional Project Coordination.
- ❖ **Workshop for the benefit of the Managers of West African Cross-border Parks and Protected Areas, Ankara, Turkey, 5-7 November 2019:**

ICDT and the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) held a Training Workshop for the Managers of West African Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas from 5 to 7 November 2019 in Ankara, Turkey. Experts from SESRIC, ICDT, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Turkey, and countries representatives from Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali and Morocco attended the workshop.

The Workshop which was organized for the benefit of Member Countries of the "Regional Project on Sustainable Tourism Development in a Network of Cross-Border Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa" aimed at reinforcing the capacities of the Managers of the West African cross-border parks and protected areas and at sensitizing them on the importance of protecting local animals and preserving natural resources.

***Proceedings of the meeting:***

The Workshop was chaired by Mr. Mohamed Sanoussy CISSE, National Director of Hotels and Tourism of Guinea along with Mr. Mehmet Fatih SERENLI from SESRIC and Mrs. Kadiatou DIALLO from ICDT. The participants appointed two rapporteurs: Mr. Nounifou SABDANO from Burkina Faso and Mr. Djibril Issa NIARE from Mali. The rapporteurs were tasked to provide a daily report for day 1 and day 2.

During two days, participants were presented the following themes:

- Importance of Tourism in OIC Countries by Dr Cem TINTIN (SESRIC)
- Governance for of Protected Areas by Dr Paul OUEDRAOGO (ICDT Expert)
- Planning Protected Areas by Dr Paul OUEDRAOGO (ICDT Expert)
- The Turkish Model of Planning for Protected Areas: Protected Areas of National Park Department in Turkey by Mr Ömer Faruk ASLAN
- The Turkish Model of Planning for Protected Areas: Wetland Division within Department of Ecological Sensitive Areas in Turkey by Mr Serhan CAGIRANKAVA
- Protected Areas Staff Training by Dr Paul OUEDRAOGO
- The Turkish Model of Planning for Protected Areas: Visitor Management and Tourism in Protected Areas in Turkey by Mrs Nergiz BELEN

The aforesaid presentations were followed by working group sessions and general discussions aiming at discussing the current management of West African parks and protected areas and formulating recommendations for their upgrade.

At the end of the Workshop, participants stressed the urgent need to update the Study of the Project in order to assess the real financial needs for the protection of the environment and animals and the setting up of an equipment of signage for all parks and protected areas concerned by the Project. They also expressed the need to benefit from capacity building programs to improve their skills in the domain of parks and protected areas' management.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the Workshop, participants had the opportunity to visit the Soğuksu National Park located in Kızılcahamam (Province of Ankara) in order to learn from best practices in Turkey as regards the management of parks and protected areas.