



WORLD BANK GROUP



2023

Liberia Forest and Climate Resilience Forum

This high-level Forest and Climate Resilience Forum is to catalyze partnerships, renew political commitments, and chart the path towards sustainable forest management as a key strategy supporting the Liberia Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development.

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GREENING THE GREEN

This is a Green Forum

- We encourage electronic program brochures, registration, and confirmation procedures
- Presentation handouts will be made available online or will be sent to participants electronically on request after the forum
- Go paperless
- No plastic bottles
- We encourage the use of reusable bottles by participants
- We encourage locally sourced food
- Turn lights and electronic equipment off when not needed and when the meetings are over

1. FORUM BACKGROUND

The importance of Liberia’s forests for its economic development cannot be overstated, nor can the global significance of its forests be overlooked due to their unique biodiversity and potential for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Liberia contains 7.5 million ha of lowland tropical forest, including two important massifs of forest in the southeast (evergreen lowland forest) and in the northwest (semi-deciduous mountainous forest). Altogether, Liberia’s forests constitute 43 percent of the remaining Upper Guinean Forest of West Africa—a global biodiversity hotspot—and cover approximately 69 percent of Liberia’s total land surface as of 2019.

Liberia’s forest and coastal resources are increasingly at risk due to recurrent droughts, rising sea levels, and deforestation. The deforestation rate was estimated at 0.46 percent per year for the period 2005–2015. This poses grave consequences for economic development and food security. The unsustainable exploitation of natural resources increasingly demonstrates that Liberia, along with all nations, would benefit by embracing sustainable nature-based solutions.

Liberia has embraced nature-based solutions, and is addressing various approaches to sustainable forestry through the Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP) and other similar initiatives. Forestry is an essential approach to nature-based solutions in mitigating and adapting to climate crises. Forest protection, restoration, and enhanced sustainable use build natural assets, absorb vast quantities of GHGs, conserve biodiversity, protect water catchments, and provide natural resources.

Through the forum, the Government of Liberia is working with the World Bank, Kingdom of Norway, European Union, USAID, Government of Sweden and other development partners to take stock of current approaches to forestry, explore possibilities to mitigate climate change and climate-related shocks, and chart a path towards sustainable forestry and climate resilience.

2. FORUM PROGRAM & SCHEDULE

Liberia Forest and Climate Resilient Forum 2023

Date February 2 and 3, 2023	Objective The objective of the Forum is to catalyse partnerships and renew political commitments and broad interest at the highest level in sustainable forest management and climate resilience as a key strategy supporting Liberia's pro-poor agenda for economic development.
Venue Monrovia, Liberia. EJS Ministerial Complex (Conference Room)	
Approach Green, paperless, hybrid (both in-person and virtual)	

Day 1 February 2

8:00-9:00	Registration Cultural performance
9:00-10:00	Welcome Opening Remarks <i>Mr. Hans Brattskar, Special Envoy on Climate and Forest, Kingdom of Norway</i> Opening Remarks <i>Mr. Khwima Nthara, Country manager for Liberia, the World Bank</i> Introductory Remarks <i>Hon. Samuel Tweah, Minister, Liberia Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Liberia</i> Opening Welcome <i>His Excellency, George M. Weah, The President of Liberia</i>
10:00-10:30	Coffee Break Cultural performance
10:30-12:00	Keynote Addresses Creating the Enabling Environment for Climate Resilience in Liberia <i>Wilson K. Tarpeh, Executive Director, Environment Protection Agency</i> Maximizing Carbon Sequestration: How to create a resource efficiency frontier for Liberia <i>Richard Damania, Chief Economist, Sustainable Development Practice Group, the World Bank</i> CSO's Calls for Attention to Finance Adaptation and Forest Communities <i>Loretta Alethea Pope Kai, Chairperson, National Civil Society Council of Liberia</i> Closing remarks <i>Attorney Adams Manobah, Chairperson, the Liberia Land Authority</i>

Day 1 February 2

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:00-14:30 Plenary Session 1

Ministerial Roundtable: Defining Opportunities and Commitments for Nature-Positive Investments in West Africa
Remarks from COP 26 and 27

Kate Thomson, Deputy British Ambassador and Development Counsellor to Liberia, the United Kingdom

Measuring Resilience to Climate Change: Call for renewed partnership to protect and use forest resources in the Upper Guinea Forest

Mohamed Imam Bakarr, Lead Environment Specialist, Global Environment Facility

Moderator

Hon. Samuel D. Tweah Jr, Minister, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning Liberia

Roundtable Discussion

Hon. Gesler E. Murray, Minister, Ministry of Mining and Energy Liberia

Hon. Professor Foday M. Jaward, Minister, Ministry of Environment Sierra Leone

Hon. Kwaku Afriyie, Minister, Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology, and Innovation Ghana

Mr. Kouassi Yao Lucien, Acting Director General of Forestry and Wildlife, Côte d'Ivoire

14:30-15:00 Coffee Break

15:00-16:30 Plenary Session 2

Development Partner Roundtable - Genuine Partnership to Turn Climate Ambition into Action

Mr. Hans Brattskar, Special Envoy on Climate and Forest, Kingdom of Norway

Roundtable Discussion; Development partners

His Excellency Laurent Delahousse, the Head of Delegation of the EU to Liberia

His Excellency Michael Roux, the Ambassador of France

His Excellency Urban Sjöström, the Ambassador of Sweden

Mr. Jim Wright, USAID, Mission Director

Ms. Kate Thomson, Deputy British Ambassador and Development Counsellor to Liberia, the United Kingdom

16:30-18:00 Social mixer

Live entertainment

Day 2 February 3

- 8:00-9:00** Arrival
Cultural performance
- 9:00-10:00** Opening Addresses
- Spending Wisely: A proposal for determining sustainable development spending priorities**
Richard Damania, Chief Economist, Sustainable Development Practice Group, the World Bank
- IMF Resilience and Sustainability Facility in the Face of Climate Change**
Aidar Abdychev, Resident Representative Liberia, the International Monetary Fund
- Conservation, Forest Carbon & Climate Finance: A valued nexus for Liberia**
Councillor Yanquoi Dolo, Forest Development Authority Liberia
- Next Steps for Liberian Forestry Engagement: An overview**
Sanjay Srivastava, Manager of the Environment, Natural Resources and Blue Economy, the World Bank
- 10:00-11:30** Plenary Session 3
- Looking Forward: Building Good Governance in Liberian Forestry**
Introduction to session by a moderator
Khwima Nthara, Country manager for Liberia, the World Bank
- Forest Governance in Liberia: Current status and future directions**
C. Mike Doryen, Managing Director, Forestry Development of Liberia
- Policy Options to Increase Transparency in Forest Governance**
Jeffrey Yates, National Coordinator, Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
- Implementing International Commitments to Support Forest Governance**
His Excellency Laurent Delahousse, the Head of Delegation of the European Union to Liberia
- 11:30-11:45** Coffee Break

Day 2 February 3

11:45-13:00 Plenary Session 4

Building Project Pipeline in Liberia and the Region: Private Sector Perspectives

Introduction to session by moderator

Paul Oliver, Economist, USAID/Liberia Mission

From Vision to Project: A case study from Sierra Leone

John Stelzer, Partner, West Africa Blue

Working With Community Forests: Solutions for sustainability and local buy-in

Augustine Jarrett, Founder and Chairperson, BlueEarth Capital

Projects Beyond Carbon: The economic value of other ecosystem services

Walid Al Saqqaf, CEO and Co-Founder, Rebalance Earth

Government Priorities for Climate and Conservation Investment

Hon. Augustus J. Flomo, Deputy Minister for Economic Management, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning Liberia

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 Plenary Session 5

Leveraging Forests for Sustainable Development and Climate Benefits

Introduction to session by moderator

Louis Kuukpen, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Liberia

Liberia's Revised NDC Targets for the Forestry Sector, Implementation, and Investment Plan

Abraham T. Tumbey Jr, Programme Coordinator, UNDP Liberia

Creating the Enabling Environment for Carbon Financing-building on the Gains of the Liberia Forest Sector Project. What are the gaps in terms of readiness?

Harrison Karnwea, Board Chair, Forestry Development Authority Liberia

Opportunities and Needs for Leveraging Forest Finance for NDC Implementation

Wahida Shah, Technical Specialist on Climate and Forests, Climate and Forest Team, UNDP

Addressing Climate Resilience Economy Through Community Participation

Edwin C. Mends-Cole, National Coordinator, Liberia Youth and Civil Society Environmental Secretariat

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

Day 2 February 3

16:00-17:30 Plenary Session 6

Finding a Way Forward: Identifying Feasible Ways to Advance Climate Finance

Introduction to session by moderator

Kanta Kumari Rigaud, Lead Environmental Specialist, the World Bank

What are the Climate Finance Options?

James Seward, Senior Financial Officer, Treasury, the World Bank

Using the National Development Plan and National Budget as Instruments to Attract Global Climate Finance for Sustainable Forestry

Hon. Tanneh Brunson, Deputy Minister of Budget and Development Planning, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning Liberia

Recalibrating the Management of National Benefit Sharing for the Future Carbon Market Fund

Roberto T. Kollie, Head of Secretariat, National Benefit Sharing Trust Board

17:30-18:30 Closing Remarks

Closing Remarks:

Madam Jamieyatu K. Watson Bamblla, Paramount Chief

Closing Remarks:

Andrew Zelemen, Head of Secretariat and National Facilitator, National Union of Community Forestry Development Committees

Closing Remarks:

Philip Q. Nyenuh, Chair, National Superintendent Council

Closing Remarks:

C. Mike Doryen, Managing Director, Forestry Development of Liberia

Closing Remarks:

Hon. Samuel Tweah, Minister, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning Liberia

3. THE VENUE

Conference venue: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (EJS) Ministerial Complex

The building sits on an area of 24,000 square meters and features offices, meeting rooms, lecture halls, multi-functional conference hall, archive room, administrative rooms, and dining hall.

Location

Tubman Boulevard, Oldest Congo Town, Monrovia, Liberia

Entry requirements

ID required to enter: Advisable to have a proper ID card

Prohibited items: No smoking, no alcoholic beverage allowed

Entrances

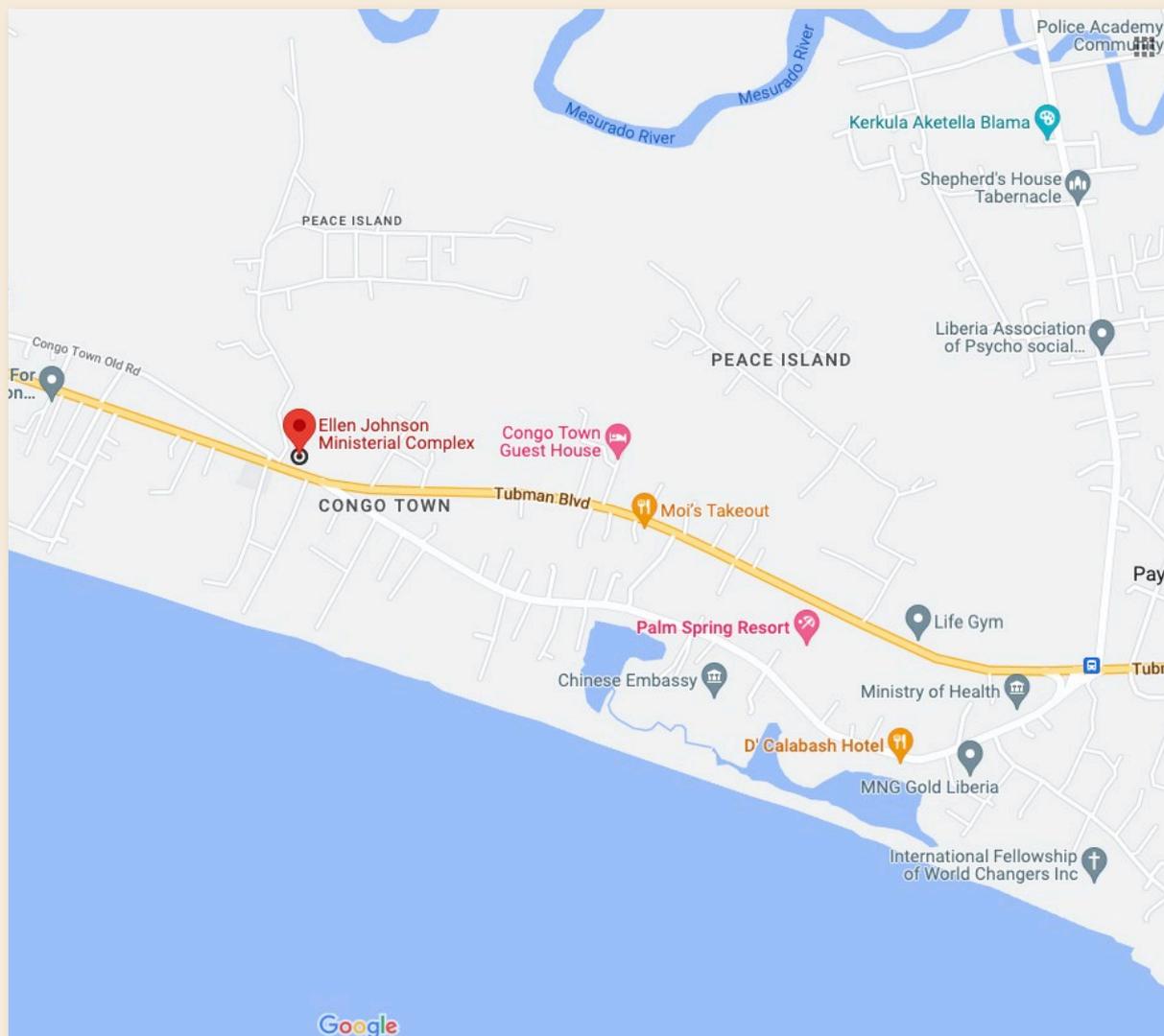
There are four (4) entrances to the main theater

Cafeteria

Available on same floor adjacent theater

Rest/washrooms

There are eight (8) washrooms which are gender sensitive



4. VIRTUAL CONNECTIVITY

The Liberia Forest and Climate Resilience Forum 2022 takes a responsible approach to the organization of the event and is therefore advancing a “paperless” meeting, where all Forum documentation will be distributed digitally. In keeping with this approach, the Forum will be conducted in a hybrid modality, allowing participants to join in-person and virtually.

Connection Details:

Liberia Forest and Climate Resilience Forum Day 1

Thursday, February 2, 2023

3:00 AM | (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada) | 8 hrs

[Register](#)

Liberia Forest and Climate Resilience Forum Day 2

Friday, February 3, 2023

3:00 AM | (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada) | 8 hrs

[Register](#)

5. TRANSPORTATION

Liberia Taxis and Car Rental

Bush taxis and minibus taxis are the main forms of ground transportation in Liberia, with both linking towns and cities with Monrovia and minibus taxis also providing travel within the capital. Both types are inexpensive, although it's far safer to take a cab on your own and pay full fare than to try to split the cost with other occupants. Motorcycle taxis can also be found, but should be avoided as they're very dangerous.

Car rental is available, but if you go this route, it's recommended to hire a driver familiar with the roads and driving conditions rather than attempt it yourself. Within the capital, local streets are metalled, but outside the urban area most are unpaved with the exception of the link to Roberts International Airport and the route to Buchanan and several border areas. During the rainy season, many of these become impassable. UN and government vehicle convoys travel fast and have priority, and general driving standards are low.

Liberia Water Taxis

River transport and coastal journeys are provided mainly by local fishing boats, often overcrowded and generally unsafe. The Atlantic Ocean is unpredictable, with strong waves and currents regularly resulting in capsizing and loss of life. Charter boats that run from Monrovia occasionally have room for passengers, and are a safer bet.

Liberia Trains and Buses

Liberia's trains were destroyed in the 14-year civil war, with only one line reopened to date, joining the iron ore mine at Bong with Monrovia, Careysburg and several other smaller towns. Bush taxis and minibus taxis serve as buses here, and link the capital with most other cities and towns.

6. MEALS & DINING

Monrovia is the hub for dining out and entertainment in Liberia with a number of worthwhile restaurants, bars and nightclubs located in upscale hotels and around the city center. International menus tend to be expensive, but Liberian and Lebanese cuisine is tasty and affordable. Local cook shops serve indigenous cuisine, relying heavily on rice and spicy sauces, with Chinese, Moroccan, Indian, American and ubiquitous seafood recipes found throughout the capital. Clubs and bars popular with expats and visitors are within major hotels and along the streets of downtown.

Bars and Pubbing in Liberia

The classiest and safest bars and clubs are located around the US Embassy and in Monrovia's diplomatic enclave of Sinkor in the downtown district. Wednesdays and weekends are happening times, with not much going on the rest of the week. Exodus (city center, Monrovia) is a good place to start and is a local hangout with a well-sized bar serving cheap drinks in a vibrant atmosphere.

The hottest club in Liberia is Déjà Vu (Sinkor, Monrovia), crammed with see-and-be-seen locals dancing the night away. Best after 2:00 a.m., it shows a cross-section of Monrovia's young, hip set. The upscale resorts in and near Monrovia offer sophisticated delights including a casino, and are perfect for visitors feeling slightly nervous about roaming the streets alone at night, with the Mamba Point Hotel (Sinkor, Monrovia) offering gambling and two attractive bars.

The Palm Springs Casino (Palm Springs Resort, Tubman Blvd, Monrovia) provides a terrace watering hole overlooking the ocean as well as a chance to lose your savings. The resort itself is one of the most luxurious in the city and a sight to be seen. A complete contrast is Tides Tapas Bar (UN Drive, Waterside, Monrovia), found near Waterside Market and, virtually in the heart of Africa, serving the ever-popular tapas with local cocktails, wine and spirits.

Dining and Cuisine in Liberia

Eating out in Monrovia offers plenty of options, from upscale restaurants in the better hotels to no-frills favorites known for their food and pretty venues overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. La Pointe (UN Dr Mamba Point, Monrovia) is a popular choice in the latter category for its dramatic setting on the tip of a promontory offering a daily lunch buffet and a Lebanese/international a la carte menu. For an introduction to delicious Liberian food, Auntie Nana (city center, Monrovia) is an upscale chop house serving traditional dishes and inexpensive local beers.

For an earthier experience involving Liberian cuisine, Mama Sheriff (city center, Monrovia) is the place to go. Favorites here include groundnut soup and cassava leaf stews, served in three portion sizes from small to gargantuan. The Heartbreak Restaurant (Sinkor Royal Hotel, Monrovia) is well-known in the expat and UN community for its comprehensive Lebanese, seafood, burger, and pasta menu along with its Sunday buffet lunch and live music on Wednesday and Saturday nights.

Lebanese-based and famed for its affordable and delicious chicken shawarma, falafel, hummus, and generous mixed grills, Diana Restaurant (city center, Monrovia) is also an expat favorite. At the other end of the scale, fine Italian dining is available at Bramante (Milano Hotel city center, Monrovia). Parma ham, shrimp tagliatelle and other delicious pastas plus a good choice of classic meat dishes are topped off by tiramisu and chocolate mousse desserts and fine Italian wines.

7. ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Key Government Officials

H.E. George Manneh Weah

President of the Republic of Liberia



Liberia's 24th President, Dr. George Manneh Weah, was born on October 1, 1966, on the Capitol Bypass in Monrovia, Montserrado County unto the union of Mr. William Tarpeh Weah and Madam Anna Quayeweh Weah (both deceased). He holds ancestry to the Kru and Bassa ethnic groups, as his father hailed from Grand Kru County while his mother hailed from Grand Bassa County. The Liberian Leader, born in a Christian home, got converted as a Muslim in 1989. To keep alive his grandmother religious' tutelage, President Weah reconverted to Christianity following her death in 1994. Presently, he is a devout Christian; he is a full and dutiful member of Georgia Patten United Methodist Church located down Waterside, Johansen Drive, Monrovia.

His Father, the late William T. Weah, worked as a mechanic with LIBTRACO on Johansen Drive while his mother, Madam Anna Quayeweh Weah, was a marketer. Dr. George Manneh Weah was reared by his late grandmother, Emma Forkay Klonjlaleh Brown, a devout Christian. Dr. George Manneh Weah George is one of dozens of children brought up by his grandmother.

President Weah is one of 13 siblings in his family. The Liberian Leader is a family man. He married Clar Marie Weah in 1992. The Liberian Leader is blessed with children (biological and adopted).

Education

In 2013, the Liberian Leader earned a master's degree in Public Administration (MPA) from Keller Graduate School of Management, DeVry University, United States of America. In 2011, Dr. George Manneh Weah earned a Bachelor's Degree (BA) in Business Administration from DeVry University in Miami, Florida (United States of America).

He began his early childhood education at the Daniel E. Howard and C. W. Brumskine Elementary schools. President Weah later attended G. W. Gibson and Ellen Mills Scarborough for his junior high education. In pursuit of secondary school education, President Weah attended Muslim Congress and Wells Hairston High Schools. He obtained high school diploma from the Continental Academy in the United States on September 21, 2007.

The Liberian Leader has three honorary Doctorate Degrees of Humane Letters (LHD). The Honoris Causa are in recognition of President Weah's accomplishments and contributions in many fields, including humanity, sports, peacebuilding and education.

They were conferred on him by the AME Zion University (June 22, 1997), Cuttington University (June 29, 2018) and University of Liberia (December 12, 2018).

Soccer Career

President Weah became famous at a young age due to his adorable soccer exploits. He started as a goalkeeper with Young Brazil. He later played for Bahjaenekay and Young Survivors, scoring 34 goals in his debut season thus earning him the highest goal scorer in the league. Notably in Liberia, President Weah played for Bong Range United, Mighty Barrolle and Invincible Eleven. In 1987, he won the highest goals scorer (Golden Boots) and most valuable player awards in the Liberia Football Association First Division League.

He was recruited by Tonnerre Kalara Club de Yaoundé in late December of 1987. Following a brief

spell in Cameroun, the Liberian Leader was signed by A S Monaco of France (1988 – 1992).

The President of Liberia also played for Paris Saint-Germain (1992-1994). From 1994 to 1999, he played for AC Milan in Italy. President Weah continued his glamorous soccer career playing for Chelsea FC in England (1999), and Manchester City (1999) in England. He moved back to France to play for Olympic Marseille and contributed to saving the club from relegation. He finally drew the curtains on his soccer career playing with Al-Jazira in the United Arab Emirates (2000 – 2003).

During his soccer career, the President won collective and individual awards, including three Confederation of African Football (CAF) Player of the Year awards, Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) Player of the Year, Ballon d'Or, Union of European Football Association (UEFA) and the Confederation of African Football (CAF) Player of the Year in 1995-1996. To date, he is the only African player to achieve this feat in a single year.

President Weah represented his country as he played, captained, and served as technical director for the Liberia National Soccer Team, Lone Star. He led them to two African Cup of Nations finals (1996 and 2002).

Goodwill Ambassador

Having worked extensively with UNICEF beginning 1994, Weah was named its Goodwill Ambassador on April 7, 1997. On July 14, 2004, Weah received the prestigious Arthur Ashe Courage Award from ESPN for his work on behalf of children who were affected by conflict, disease, and poverty. Additionally, that year, Weah made several visits to Liberia and Sierra Leone as Goodwill Ambassador in support of HIV/AIDS prevention and polio vaccination campaigns. He also partnered with UNICEF to reintegrate and demobilize child soldiers (boys and girls) back into their families and communities in Liberia as he did in Sierra Leone.

After ending his glamorous career in 2003, Weah returned home and labored in restoring peace to Liberia, a nation rocked by an internal conflict. He mainly risked everything, including moving into dangerous terrains, to ensure a successful disarmament of thousands of ex-combatants in his capacity as UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador.

Politics

Dr. George Manneh Weah began his political career in 2004. He is the founder of Liberia National Congress Party (LINCP) which later became the formidable Congress for Democratic Change (CDC). Weah contested three elections and won two. He lost the presidential race in the runoff with former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in 2005. In 2014, Weah contested and won the Montserrado County Senatorial by-election. In November 2017, he won the General and Presidential Elections with over 60% of valid votes following a runoff with former vice president, Joseph N. Boakai. Dr. Weah was inaugurated on January 22, 2018.

In his first annual message to the National Legislature, President Weah reduced his salary and other benefits by 25% with immediate effect. According to Article 60 of the Liberian Constitution, salaries of the President and the Vice President are established by the National Legislature and cannot be increased or reduced during the period for which they are elected. However, the President took the action in view of the very rapidly deteriorating economic situation of Liberia.

Humanitarian

During years of carnage and nightmare in Liberia as a result of the Liberian civil crisis (1990 – 2003), President Weah wasn't just the positive image of Liberia but was also the source of life for many. He was the nation's torchbearer during those dark days.

He flew regularly to refugee camps hosting Liberians, most notably the Bujumbura camp in Ghana. He provided relief items, sponsored some refugees in school and gave air tickets to some who had the opportunity of traveling for better future.

Back home, Weah took charge of sponsoring the national team, Lone Star, which he captained and later served as technical director for, to honor international games at his personal expense. He awarded scholarships to deserving and disadvantaged students and children respectively. To date, Weah has the highest number of scholarships in the country.

Honorable Samuel D. Tweah, Minister of Finance



Minister Tweah is the Minister of Finance and was part of the first batch of appointments made by President Weah only hours after his inauguration. He is currently pushing to deliver “quick-wins” via a 150-day plan.

Augustus J. Flomo, Deputy Minister for Economic Management



Augustus J. Flomo works for the Government of Liberia as the deputy minister for Economic Management at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. His position covers managing the Aid Portfolio, Debt (domestic and external), and Macroeconomic and Financial Policies of the government of Liberia. He has over 18 years of experience in Economic Analysis, Fiscal Management & Accounting, Leadership, Training, and Business Development and has actively participated in the political landscape of Liberia before his appointment to government in March 2018. Before March 2018, he served as Chief Executive Officer for GUSCEMAN, INC., a company he established with focus on Business Development & Support Services including business consulting, Training designs and deliveries of various kind, institutional capacity building, etc.

He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics and Mathematics from the University of Liberia and a Master of Science in Economics from George Washington University. Minister Tweah also has a certificate in Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) Modeling. He has worked as a consultant at the Ministry of Finance; as a Senior Economist at the Millennium Challenge Corporation; as Senior Advisor to the Board of Directors at AfDB (2016) where he served for some 18 months; as a Business Development Specialist with MBA Management, Virginia, USA; and as a consultant for a World Bank Agriculture Public expenditure Review (AgPer) where he developed three papers on: (i) Approaches to Improving Value Chains for Agriculture, (ii) Public Services Provided by Donors and (iii) Subsidies and Handouts.

Before moving to his own company, he worked for several institutions including Cuttington University, United States African Development Foundation – WUDARBO Project, Agency for Economic Development and Empowerment and lastly for the International Executive Service Corps (IESC), a Washington DC based entity that was implementing the USAID Investing for Business Expansion (IBEX) project in Liberia just to name a few. He served IESC as the Deputy Chief of Party with oversight responsibilities of managing operations, designing, and delivering capacity building programs for SMEs in the Liberian market and leading the sustainability component of the project; at the same time managing the technical team of business analysts and support staff. During his years of private sector work, he served as consultant for many institutions including: Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA)/LADA Project, Winrock International Agriculture development program for Liberia and many others. He has over 18 years of cross sectorial experience in the private sector.

He holds an MBA in Finance with emphasis in investment. He is currently doing his Doctor of Business Administration and holds several certificates in Business Development, Financial Management, Grant and project management, Economic Development, and is a certified trainer.

Professor Wilson K Tarpeh,

Executive Director of EPA



Professor Wilson K. Tarpeh is the Executive Director/ CEO of the Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia since October 5, 2020, after his appointment by the President of Liberia. Professor Tarpeh has over 35 years of experience both in the public and private sectors. He has a background in Finance, and he is a former Minister of Commerce and Industry.

He held several positions at the University of Liberia, including Vice President for Fiscal Affairs and Finance and Dean of Graduate School of Business. Professor Tarpeh also worked for the African Development Bank, where he served as Executive Director on its Board of Directors representing the Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. He also served as President of the Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank and Finance Minister of the Republic of Liberia. Professor is said to carry several weighty credentials, including a Bachelor of Law (LLB) from the Louise Arthur School of Law, University of Liberia; a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Pennsylvania; a Master of Science in Accounting from the University of New Haven, New Haven Connecticut, USA, and a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) from the University of Liberia.

C. Mike Doryen,

Managing Director of FDA



The current Managing Director of the Forestry Development Authority (January 2018 to present), Honorable C. Mike Doryen, Snr was born on April 3rd, 1969 in Tapita, Lower Nimba County unto the union of Madam Mary N. Paye of Nimba County and Mr. Daniel M. Doryen of Grand Kru County.

As a reformer, he has devoted much of his time in forest law enforcement including persecution, development of new policy and legal instruments, strengthening of existing policy frameworks as well as investment in human capacity development and critical forest support infrastructures including but

not limited to Regional Offices, Ranger Housing Units and Posts. Prior to his ascendancy to the position of Managing Director of the Forestry Development Authority, Honorable Doryen spent Seven Years working with Municipalities including the Monrovia City Corporation both as employee and Consultant, managing EU and other Donors' Funding. He spent additional ten years in the private Sector as a Businessman as well as serving in senior leadership positions in the United Nations System (UNHCR) and working with None State Actors including NGOs such as the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Tearfund, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and the Young Men Christian Association (YMCA).

Hon Doryen is an Adjunct Faculty at the African Methodist University, Chairman of the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) Multi Stakeholders Group, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Forestry Training Institute (FTI), Member of the Board of Directors of the Environmental Protection Agency, Member of the Liberia Business Association and Member of the Association of Liberia Construction Contractors.

Khwima Nthara, *Country Manager for Liberia, Africa, the World Bank*



Khwima Nthara is the World Bank country manager for Liberia. Nthara, a Malawian national, comes to Liberia with extensive World Bank experience in the field and at Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C. He is currently an economic adviser in the Bank's Operations Policy and Country Services (OPCS) Vice Presidency in Washington, where his main

duties include providing advice and guidance to senior management and task teams on the Bank's strategic approaches to supporting client countries as well as on specific financing instruments, such as budgetary support. Prior to this position, Nthara has held various field positions in the World Bank's Africa and East Asia and Pacific Regions, including program leader in Nigeria and senior country Economist for Nigeria, Myanmar, and Malawi.

Before joining the World Bank in 2005, Nthara was an economics lecturer at the University of Malawi, as well as country manager for the Malawi Trade and Poverty Program, and country manager for Deloitte's Development Consulting Practice. Nthara holds a Ph.D. in economics and a master's degree in Economics of Developing Countries, both from the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom.

Richard Damania, *Chief Economist, Sustainable Development Practice Group, the World Bank*



Richard Damania is the Chief Economist of the Sustainable Development Practice Group, effective March 1, 2020. He has held several positions in the World Bank including as Senior Economic Advisor

in the Water Practice, Lead Economist in the Africa Region's Sustainable Development Department, in South Asia and Latin America and Caribbean Regions of the World Bank. His work has spanned multiple sectors and has helped the World Bank become an acknowledged thought leader on matters relating to the environment, water, and the economy. Prior to joining the World Bank, he was a Professor of Economics at the University of Adelaide. He has published extensively with over 100 papers in scientific journals, has held numerous advisory positions with governments and international organizations, and serves on the Editorial Board of several prestigious scientific journals.

Sanjay Srivastava,
ENB Practice Manager, Africa,
the World Bank



Sanjay Srivastava is the World Bank Manager of the Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy Global Practice in Africa. He is a trained Environmental Engineer with more than 30 years of development experience with a focus on

environment and climate change agenda, including 15 years in Africa and South Asia region; and several years in the private sector (manufacturing and environmental consulting companies), public sector, donors and non-government organization (conservation NGO). He has been involved in high-level policy dialogue on managing environmental risks in infrastructure and sustainable development, making a business case to mitigate environmental degradation, protecting biodiversity, and promoting cleaner production processes to improve productivity and prevent pollution. Currently, he leads a team promoting green, clean and resilient development outcomes in multiple countries and development sectors in West and Central Africa.

James Seward,
Senior Financial Officer, Treasury,
the World Bank



James Seward is a Senior Financial Officer in the Capital Markets and Investments team of the World Bank Treasury. He leads the design and implementation of financial solutions to advise emerging market governments in Africa on accessing development financing, managing financial risks, and utilizing innovative financial structures for sustainable investments. As an expert in sustainable finance, James advises on green and sustainable bonds and arranges new World Bank loans for sovereign borrowers.

He has nearly 20 years of experience at the World Bank, focusing on financial sector development globally, where he has received 14 performance awards. James has written various reports and papers, most recently a published Working Paper on central bank governance and reserve management. He was previously a World Bank Practice Manager for the Finance and Markets team in Africa, overseeing a team of 26, a lending portfolio of \$1.4 billion, and 40 grants of \$32.4 million in 20 countries. He was the Practice Manager of the Finance team in the East Asia and Pacific Region, managing 42 staff in 10 offices and a lending portfolio of \$700 million. Before joining the World Bank, he worked on sanctions regulation and compliance at the U.S. Department of Treasury and the Middle East and North Africa portfolio at the U.S. Department of State.

He has a Master of Public Policy from Harvard University and a Bachelor of Political Science and Business Administration from James Madison University. He also has a Sustainability and Climate Risk certificate from the Global Association of Risk Professionals.

Kanta Kumari Rigaud,
Lead Environmental Specialist,
the World Bank



Dr. Kanta Kumari Rigaud is a Lead Environmental Specialist at the World Bank with more than 25 years of professional experience in natural resources management, environmental management, and climate change adaptation. She joined the World Bank in 2004 and has worked in the Middle East North Africa Region, the Climate Change Group, and is currently working in the Africa Region as the Regional Climate Change Coordinator. In her current role, she led the development of the Next Generation Africa Climate Business Plan and continues to support the rollout and implementation of the plan and associate knowledge work working with team across the institution. She also works directly in Uganda and Kenya, including on their National Determined Contributions.

Kanta has led numerous analytics and knowledge-based flagship reports at the World Bank. As the lead author of the flagship report *Groundswell – Preparing for Internal Climate Migration*, she worked with a multidisciplinary team from leading research institutions to provide insights on the plausible scale of climate-induced migration.

She has continued to lead on the deep diversity of climate-induced migration in West Africa and Lake Victoria Basin countries –with a view to informing policy dialogue and action on these fronts. She also co-led the World Bank’s engagement with the Potsdam Institute of Climate Impact Research to develop the *Turn Down the Heat* flagship report series, which focuses on the nexus of climate science and development. Kanta subsequently led in the development of the Bank’s first Massive Open Online Course: *From Climate Science to Action* to promote widescale learning based on the findings of the *turn down the heat* series. Kanta’s professional work has also focused on advancing climate policy and action at the practitioner level. On this front, she led the development of the World Bank’s climate disaster risk screening tools to inform project design and national/sectoral plans and strategies as a contribution to climate mainstreaming across the institution. Recognizing the critical importance of climate-informed decision support, she went on to develop an online learning platform on weather and climate services resilient development for policymakers and practitioners on why and how to develop of high-quality climate information products and services. As the World Bank team lead on the Africa Climate Resilient Investment Facility, a partnership with the African Union and United Nation’s Economic Commission for Africa she led the development of the Residence Booster Tool, which seeks to strengthen the integration of climate risks and opportunities into the design and delivery of investments by enhancing the capacity of people, assets, institutions, and infrastructure.

Jim Wright,
USAID Mission Director in Liberia



Jim Wright has served since July 2021 as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Director in Liberia. He is responsible for implementing the USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy, which aims to help Liberia foster self-reliance by spurring private sector-led economic expansion through a focus on catalyzing reforms and cultivating a healthy, productive and educated workforce. Mr. Wright has four decades of experience managing international development and relief programs. He has worked for USAID for 24

years and his previous position was Mission Director in Timor-Leste. Mr. Wright has also been posted to Washington, the Dominican Republic, Afghanistan, Egypt, Mali, Nigeria and Ghana. Prior to USAID, Mr.

Wright was employed by Save the Children, the University of Florida and the World Bank. He began his international development career as a Peace Corps volunteer in Cameroon.

Kate Thomson,
*Deputy British Ambassador and Development
Counsellor to Liberia, UK Government*



Kate Thomson Previous roles include the Department of International Development's (DFID) Education

Adviser to North Africa; Deputy Head of DFID's Children, Youth and Education Department; G20 adviser at the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Head of Human Rights Communications and Programme at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. Prior to joining the Civil Service, she worked in education: she qualified as a secondary school teacher (modern languages) and adult trainer and achieved her Master's in Education and International Development from the University of Central London. She did her undergraduate degree in modern and medieval languages at Cambridge University.

Paul Oliver,
Economist, USAID



Paul Oliver is an economist with USAID/Liberia. In this role, he provides analytical support for USAID activities, manages awards with private sector and

banking partners, and leads the Mission's climate finance initiatives. He also serves as a liaison with the U.S. Development Finance Corporation. He previously worked as an economist in USAID's Office of Economic Policy where he specialized in inclusive growth diagnostics, jobs diagnostics, and cost-benefit analysis. Mr. Oliver has co-authored a wide range of economic studies for USAID Missions in sectors including agriculture, health, energy, environment, and infrastructure. Mr. Oliver has worked with more than 20 USAID Missions and has lived in the UK, Kazakhstan, and Egypt. He holds degrees from the University of Michigan and the London School of Economics.

Wahida Shah,
*Senior Regional Technical
Advisor-Africa, UNDP*



Wahida Shah is a Technical Specialist/Senior Regional Technical Advisor-Africa, UNDP. Wahida brings 25 years of experience in nature management policy, practice and project management, and has worked in the climate and forests space since 2009. She leads the team in Africa working with countries to define and implement innovative policies and programme with non-state actors and the private sector and is the team's focal point for Forest Carbon Partnership Facility projects delivered through UNDP.

Eva Flomo,
Journalist, Liberia



Eva Flomo comes from the Central region of Liberia-West Africa and has for over 20 years heralded the emancipation of women in all sectors of society, including the media. Herself a journalist and media

specialist, Eva has travelled extensively at home and abroad, championing the cause of women in ways that have given them visibility.

In 2009, she headed a team of more than 40 journalists from Africa attending the Sixth Seminar for African Press Officials in China-and highlighted the importance of media in advancing bilateral activities of the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation-FOCAC.

She has trained with several institutions including the American Radio Relay League in Connecticut-USA; Forum for African Investigative Reporters-FAIR-Johannesburg, South Africa; and the Media Studies Institute in Cairo, Egypt-2012.

Anthony F. Vanwen,
Forest and Environment Journalist



Mr. Anthony F. Vanwen is a forest and Environment journalist with competence in facilitation, moderation, mentoring, and coaching. He holds a bachelor's

degree in business studies with an emphasis in accounting and economics from the University of Liberia and several

certificates from specialized trainers training as a media trainer, mentor, and coach organized by the |United Nations Mission in Liberia and justice reporting organized by the |United States Information Service of the U.S. Embassy near Monrovia. Over the past twenty years, Anthony F. Vanwen has served as co-trainer of the Integrated Regional Information Network of the United Nations and delivered specialized HIV-Aids reporting training to reporters of the Association of Community Radio Journalists across Liberia. Additionally, he has served as the facilitator of the Liberia Forest

definition conference, Liberia/EU VPA joint implementation Committee Meetings, animator of USAID/ PROSPER awareness on the Community Rights Law, Communications Associate of the REDD+ National Forest inventory and communication manager of the Forestry Development Authority, Communications and stakeholders Engagement Specialist of the

World Bank REDD+/Liberia forest Sector Project, and communication and Outreach Manager of the Multistakeholder Forest Governance and Accountability Project leading the component On transparency, accountability, rule of law and other general principles of good forest governance.

Edwin C. Mends-Cole, *Executive Director, Youth Climate Change Initiative- Liberia*



Edwin C. Mends-Cole is a Climate Change Activist and an Educator. He is currently the Executive Director of the Youth Climate Change Initiative-Liberia, a youth-driven environmental organization that is helping create public awareness and education on the adverse effects of Climate Change, and the National Coordinator for the Liberian Youth and Civil Society Environmental Secretariat, a conglomerate of over fifty (50)

environmental organizations. He holds a certificate in Civic Leadership Management, Natural Resource Management, and Coaching. He is a third-year student at the University of Liberia studying Economics. He is passionate about the environment and biodiversity and is taking action to create a resilient climate-smart and environmentally friendly generation.

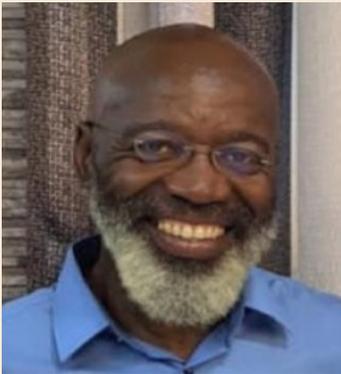
He is a highly organized, dedicated social worker with a proven ability to improve the working environment and commit to job responsibilities with strong interpersonal skills, supervise and organize activities and ensure that project goals and objectives are achieved. He has a clear and logical mind with a practical approach to problem-solving and to seeing things through completion. He is a result-oriented and passion-driven leader who has a huge interest in youth development, climate change, and waste management. He has over 6 years of experience working with CBOs and CSOs both at the community and national levels.

John Stelzer, *Partner, West Africa Blue*



John is a Partner at West Africa Blue, a developer of large-scale, community-centric blue carbon projects in West Africa. He is also a co-founder of Solon Capital Partners and has been building and investing in high-impact businesses in West Africa since 2010. Prior to Solon, John was a Senior Manager at Accenture where he developed and launched businesses across all sectors globally. He graduated with Honours in Business Administration from the Richard Ivey School of Business at Western University.

Augustine Kwame Jarrett,
Founder, Blue Earth Capital Inc



Augustine Kwame Jarrett is the Founder and Chairman of Blue Earth Capital Inc., a carbon trading company, that incorporates Liberia’s community forests in its carbon trading business by using cutting-edge technology to monitor, report, and verify carbon stocks, and adopting blockchain technology to record and trade carbon credits. Augustine has nearly three decades of experience in international finance and banking and an extensive background in natural resource management and has invested in both the mining and logging sectors in Liberia.

Zoquay Beysolow-Konneh,
Senior Reporter, Liberia Broadcasting System



Zoquay Beysolow-Konneh is a Liberian Journalist who currently works with the Liberia Broadcasting System as a Senior Reporter and News Caster for both Television and Radio. She is also the Secretary General of the Female Journalists Association of Liberia, a media and advocacy group under the Press Union of Liberia.

In recognition of her distinct performance in news anchoring, she was awarded among several other Journalists within the Republic of Liberia as the Press Union of Liberia’s Best Newscaster of the Year in 2020/2021. Zoquay hails from the Western Region of Liberia, specifically Bomi County.

Atty. J. Adams Manobah,
Chairman of the Liberia Land Authority



County of origin:
Grand Cape Mount County. His objective is to secure an employment/service contract with the Liberia Land Authority/R.L.

Knowledge/Experience:
Law; Planning (Program and Institutional); Customary Land Administration; Policy, law, regulation, and guideline formulation; Real Estate Administration; Tax reporting; Insurance Administration; Goal-focused, a self-starter and a team player, etc.

Education & Training:
Llb, Louis Arthur Grimes School Of Law University of Liberia – 2015M; MSc. Candidate (Taxation), Washington School of Law Utah, USA; Certificate, (Real Estate) Delaware County Community College

Media, Pennsylvania, USA – 2004; Certificate, (Insurance, Financial Planning & Mortgage) Primerica Financial Institute Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, USA – 2003; Certificate, (Income Tax Reporting, Estate & Tax Planning) H & R Block Tax & Financial Services Springfield, Pennsylvania, USA – 2002; BSc. (Economics) University Of Liberia Monrovia, Liberia – 1994

Work Experience:

(Chairman)Liberia Land Authority (LLA) Republic of Liberia 2019 - Present; (Vice Chairman) Commissioner, Administration and Customer Services Liberia Land Authority (LLA) Republic of Liberia 2018 - 2019 Commissioner, Land Policy and Planning Liberia Land Authority (LLA) Republic of Liberia 2017 - 2018; (Assistant Legal Officer), Department of Legal Affairs, Environment Protection Agency (EPA) Monrovia, Liberia 2004/2014; Expert (Guest Lecturer on Disaster Management) Kofi Anan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) Accra, Ghana – 06, 2015 to

present; (Assistant Manager) for Policy, Department of Planning and Policy, EPA, Monrovia, Liberia - 2011 – 2014; (Chief Internal Auditor), Internal Audit Unit, EPA

Monrovia, Liberia – 2010 to 2011; (Administrative Manager), Guthrie Rubber Plantation

Republic of Liberia – 2007 to 2009; (Tax Associate), H & R Block Tax & Mortgage Company

Upper Darby, Pa, USA – 2002 to 2006; (Sales Representative) (insurance and mortgage),

Primerica Financial Services Landsdale, Pa, USA – 2002 to 2004; (Executive Director), Man United

to Save Humanity (MUSH) Monrovia, Republic of Liberia – 1996 to 1999; (Camp Supervisor), Demobilization, United Nations Observers Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) Monrovia, Republic of Liberia – 1994 to 1995; (Teacher), Monrovia Consolidated School System (MCSS) Monrovia, Liberia – 1981 to 1989

Dr Mohamed I Bakarr,
Lead Environmental Specialist, Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat



Dr Mohamed Bakarr is Lead Environmental Specialist in the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat in Washington DC, where he oversees all major GEF programs designed to advance holistic and integrated solutions to global environmental challenges. His expertise covers a broad range of

issues related to the natural resource management in the tropics, but focuses mainly on linkages among biodiversity conservation, agricultural land use, and human well-being. Prior to joining the GEF, Mohamed was at Conservation International where he served in several capacities including as Senior Vice President and Executive Director of the Center for Applied Biodiversity Science. He also served as Director of Strategic Initiatives and Assistant Director General at the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) based in Nairobi, Kenya. Mohamed is from Sierra Leone and holds a B.Sc. degree in Biological Sciences from Njala University, and MS and PhD degrees in Tropical Ecology from the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida.

E. Abraham T. Tumbey Jr,
*Programme Coordinator, Inclusive Growth
and Sustainable Development, UNDP Liberia*



E. Abraham T. Tumbey Jr has more than fifteen years of experience in the field of environment, climate change and social development. He currently serves as Programme Coordinator in the Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development pillar at UNDP Liberia, managing programmes on resilient livelihood and employment for vulnerable populations, climate change and environmental governance. Between 2018-2020 Abraham was responsible for leading the implementation of Liberia's National Adaptation Plan. He also coordinated UNDP's support to the revision of Liberia's NDC 2020- 2021 through UNDP's flagship Climate Promise initiative.

Pierre Van Asbroeck,
*Environment & Social specialist, French
Development Agency*



Pierre, as an engineer in tropical agronomy, has been working for 25 years towards the promotion of sustainable practices in both the private and public development sectors, with a strong focus on forests and biodiversity conservation. His experience covers most of West and Central African countries. Pierre is currently based in Abidjan, at the regional office of the French Development Agency, where he is involved in the Agency's efforts to support sustainable natural resources utilisation and environmental and social risks management in the Gulf of Guinea.

Roberto T. Kollie,
Head of Secretariat NBST Board



Roberto joined the NBST Board in 2021 as Project Officer, and currently serves as Head of Secretariat of the Board. Prior to his appointment by the Board, he worked as Secretary and Auditor of the Ministry of Finance (now Ministry of Finance & Development Planning) between 2008 and 2015; Legal Secretary (2015-2018), and Human Resources Officer (2018-2021) of AccessBank Liberia. Mr. Kollie holds a BBA degree in Accounting from the University of Liberia. Mr. Kollie also holds a Diploma in Secretariat Science, advanced certificates in Internal Auditing and Management Development Programme, and Project Management. He has also acquired short term training courses in Advance Administrative Skills for Administrative Professionals and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

Louis Kuukpen,
Deputy Resident Representative,
UNDP Liberia



Louis Kuukpen is the Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Liberia. Louis is an international development professional with over 17 years of experience supporting countries to design and implement programmes and projects aimed at achieving peace, eradicating poverty, and reducing inequalities and exclusion. At the country level, he has been providing high level strategic leadership and advisory services, working closely with key state actors and development partners in the domestication and implementation of global development agendas such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Andrew Y.Y. Zelemen,
Head of Secretariat and National Facilitator
of the National Union of Community Forestry
Development Committees (NUCFDCs)



Andrew Y.Y. Zelemen is the Head of Secretariat and National Facilitator of the National Union of Community Forestry Development Committees (NUCFDCs) since 2016. During his 7-year stay at the NUCFDCs, Zelemen oversaw operations and strategic planning that resulted in making the NUCFDCs as one of the relevant stakeholder groups in Liberia forestry Sector. Before this role, Zelemen was director for communication and Public Relations for the community Forestry Development Committee in Forest Management Contract Area (FMC-A) Lofa, where his work for CFDCs and affected communities had made them the highest beneficiaries of forest resources under the government awarded forestry concessions in Liberia.

Zelemen holds a Bachelor of Science degree in General Agriculture from Cuttington University. He has led project management teams to implement 2 years projects under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations under FLEGT Programm from 2018 to 2020 and currently he is leading a project management team to implement 8month project under Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations which started in 2022. He loves promoting forest and biodiversity conservation, and improvement of livelihoods of forest dependent communities.

Andrew Y.Y. Zelemen lives in Gorlu Town, Salayea District, Lofa County, Liberia.

Loretta Alethea Pope Kai, Chairperson, National Civil Society Council of Liberia



Loretta Alethea Pope Kai is the Chairperson of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia, The Civil Society Council of Liberia is the Apex body responsible to coordinate the affairs of all civil Society Organizations in Liberia, It's membership is made up of organizations such as community based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), labour unions, student, and youth organizations, social movements, women's organizations, traditional groups or leadership, philanthropic organizations, faith based organizations, professional organizations and the media.

Loretta is also the Executive Director for the Foundation for Community Initiatives (FCI), FCI is a leading Liberian not-for-profit, non-governmental organization that promotes inclusive natural resource governance, Transparency and Accountability, Women's economic empowerment, women's protection, and peace building. FCI was founded in 2004 to help promote the rights of women and youth in achieving inclusive development at the community and National level. FCI also focuses on protecting women and youth from violence, as well as increasing their participation in decision-making and inclusive governance and democracy in Liberia.

Loretta holds a Masters of Arts (MA) in Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies from the Kofi Annan Institute for Conflict Transformation at the University of Liberia and a Bachelors of Arts (BA) degree in Sociology from the African Methodist Episcopal Zion University (AMEZU). Beyond the formal classroom experience, she has had a number of professional training certificates from several professional training institutes and capacity-building organizations from where she also acquired over twenty (20) professional training certificates in Liberia and abroad in different fields of studies.

Loretta is an experienced young woman, gender development and program professional and had delivered high-quality development services nationally and internationally. She has a soft skills mainly in areas of human relations, partnership and networking and building strong alliances for effective engagement, strategic program planning and management. She is a member of the women in Conservation regional network. A founding member of the women in conservation network Liberia chapter, a member of the NGO coalition of natural resource governance, member of the Community forestry working group, member of the CSO working group on land reforms, member of the women land rights task force, She's the Former regional Vice President for The West African Network of Young Women Leaders in the ECOWAS space (ROAJELF), Her institution FCI is an international and national award winning institute for its strong reputation in forest and land governance and advocacy for the economic, social and cultural rights of forest and land communities affected by the operations of concession companies in Liberia and over the years serve as one of the leading institution combating sexual and gender based violence and advocating for safe spaces for women and girls around political, social and economic issues.

Loretta is a dedicated advocate for inclusive Natural Resource Governance, women political participation, Women Peace and Security, leadership, women and youth empowerment with over fifteen years worth of experience in Leadership, advocacy and girls' mentorship. A board member of the Liberia Extractive industries, Transparency Initiative(LEITI).

Additionally, Loretta has made presentations at several National and International Fora and Meetings: She served as Panelist at Tenure Facility Learning Exchange Meeting in Columbia and discussed the implementation of policies in difficult environment with specific focus on women Land Rights and forest governance, Panelist at the Chatham house in UK to present her article on Land is Power: How land rights can enfranchise Liberia's Women, Panelist at the Defenders for Conservation and Nature and discussed deforestation, rights violations and curbing Oil Palm plantation expansion in DRC Congo. Made presentations at the European Commission Parliament Session and discussed the Voluntary Partnership Agreement lesson learned from the communities with specific

focus on Community Rights Law and Communities involvement in the UK. She served as Speaker on a Tour to highlight gender issues in the Forest and Land sector in Liberia in Belgium, Germany and Paris and presented paper at the European and Dutch Parliament on Gender and Natural Resource Governance the case of Liberia. Loretta is also the lead facilitator for the Foundation for Community Initiatives Training on advocacy and gender mainstreaming in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Loretta has provided leadership and mentorship training to over 1000 women and girls, Strong advocate against Gender Based Violence, protested against the repeal of the Rape Law, advocated for women and girls access to justice and for the speedy trial of the case involving the Sinoe women who were abused, rights violated and accused of witchcraft that led to seven men charged with aggravated assault, criminal facilitation, criminal conspiracy and were convicted. She also advocated for the passage of several bills to include the Land Rights Act, The Community rights law regulation of 2017, the Domestic Violence Act. and work closely with Civil society coalition and other women

network to create awareness around sexual and gender Based Violence and the promotion of Gender Justice.

Loretta is a founding member of the CSO budget platform which advocate for active citizen's participation in the national budget and has increased the knowledge of citizens on the national budget to hold their government accountable. Since September 2021, the platform has engaged in robust advocacy with the executive and Legislature on the National budget, fiscal transparency and accountability issues and has conducted sector working group meetings to engage the legislature and track the budget performance and held consultations with citizens on the national budget.

Loretta is a founding member of the CSO platform calling for an establishment of an Act to Establish a National County & Social Development Fund (CSDF). An Act to amend section 4 of the Public Financial Management Law to establish a National County and Social Development Fund (CSDF). In March 2021 the bill was passed by the Lower House and forwarded to the Senate for concurrence.

Harrison S. Karnwea, Sr., *Chairman of the Board, Forestry Development Authority*



Honorable Harrison S. Karnwea, Sr. is the current Chairman of the Board of the Forestry Development Authority. He was Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Liberia before becoming Managing Director of the Liberian Forestry Development Authority. He has over thirty years of experience in the private sector, managing rubber plantations in Liberia. He first entered the Public Sector as Superintendent (Regional Governor) of Nimba County in the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) in 2003. Mr. Karnwea holds a Bachelor's degree in management.

Tanneh Geraldine Brunson,
*Deputy Minister, Budget and Development
Planning at the Ministry of Finance
and Development Planning, Liberia*



Hon. Tanneh Geraldine Brunson is the Deputy Minister for Budget and Development Planning at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Liberia. Hon Brunson is responsible for preparing the framework and implementation of the National Budget and providing guidance and support in preparing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development plans, programs and projects. She brings to the job, significant experience in public financial management including the budget development and management policies, coordinating with all sectors, as well as development partners on translating government plans into reality.

Jeffrey N. Yates,
*Head of Secretariat, Liberia Extractive
Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI)*



Mr. Jeffrey N. Yates is a professional Financial Management, Auditing, Governance, and Administration Specialist. Before assuming the position of Head of Secretariat/ National Coordinator at the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI), he served as its Finance Director/ Comptroller and subsequently as Officer-In-Charge.

Before joining the LEITI in 2015, he served as the Professional Ethics and Anti-Fraud Consultant at the Proposed Liberia Revenue Authority Formation Office and, Supreme Auditor, Senior Auditor, Engagement Manager, and Performance Audit Manager at Liberia's Supreme Audit Institution, the General Auditing Commission.

He holds a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) in Finance from the University of Nairobi, Kenya, and a Bachelor's of Science Degree (B.Sc.) in Economics from the African Methodist Episcopal University, Liberia. He is a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) and a Certified Forensic Investigation Professional (CFIP).

His Excellency Michaël Roux, *Ambassador of France*



Born on September 6, 1966

Graduate of the National School of Statistics and Economic Administration

Career:

- Ambassador of France to the Republic of Liberia, since 2020

- Ambassador of France to the Kyrgyz Republic, 2016-2020
- Deputy Director for Southern Africa and Indian Ocean, 2012-2016
- Deputy head of mission (Ukraine), 2008 – 2012
- Deputy head of mission (Mauritius), 2005 – 2008
- Desk officer in the directorate for Africa and Indian Ocean, 2002 – 2005
- Expert for development projects (in Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa) financed by the European Commission or the World Bank, 1991 – 2002
- National Service (Bangui, Central Africa), 1989 – 1990

Languages:

- French
- English
- Russian
- Malagasy

Hans Brattskar, *Special Envoy, Ministry of Climate and Environment*



Since 1 September 2020, Hans Brattskar has been Special Envoy at the Ministry of Climate and Environment of Norway.

From 2016 until 2020 Brattskar was Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva.

He was State Secretary (Deputy Minister) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2013 to 2015.

Brattskar has worked as Special Advisor on Forests, Sustainable Development and Indigenous & Local Communities' Issues with the UN Development Program.

He has served as Ambassador to Kenya (and Somalia) and Permanent Representative to the UN organizations based in Nairobi.

From 2011-13 he was Director General and Special Envoy for Climate Change at the Ministry of the Environment and served as the first Director of the Government of Norway's Climate and Forest Initiative from 2008-11.

Brattskar has been Ambassador and Special Adviser for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Operations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chief Negotiator for the Peace Process between the Government of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front.

He was Norway's Ambassador to Sri Lanka for four years, prior to which he served as Minister Counsellor and Head of the Political Section at Norway's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York. Brattskar was also Coordinator in New York during Norway's 2001-2002 term on the UN Security Council.

He was Director of the Secretariat of the Minister for International Development (Chief of Staff) for

five years and has served at Norway's Embassies in Washington, D.C. and Malaysia.

Brattskar worked as Head of Department and Ass. Professor of Economics and Management at Østfold University College in Norway before joining the Foreign Service.

He has been a Visiting Practitioner at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a Visiting Scholar at the Center for International Cooperation at New York University.

Brattskar has been a Governor of the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank,

the Inter- American Development Bank and a Deputy Governor of the World Bank.

He served as President of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention from November 2018 to November 2019. The Convention has 164 member countries and aims to ban the use and production of anti-personnel mines.

From 2016 until 2020 he was a member of the Award Committee for the Nansen Refugee Award hosted by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Brattskar holds a Ph.D. in International Relations from Claremont Graduate University.

Prof. Victor Kwame Agyeman,
Former Director-General, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ghana



Prof. Victor Kwame Agyeman holds a PhD in Tropical Forest Ecology from the University of Aberdeen, UK.. He also holds an LLB (Law degree) and a Qualifying Certificate/Barrister of Law (QC(BL)) degree from the Ghana School of Law. Victor is currently a Professor at the University of Environment and Sustainable Development (UESD); Professor of the CSIR College of Science and Technology

(CCST); and a Solicitor and Barrister of the Supreme Court of Ghana. He is a former Director-General and Chief Research Scientist of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Victor is a Fellow of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences (FGA); Fellow of the Ghana Institute of Foresters (FGIF) and a Member of the Ghana Bar Association.

Victor's research work has over the years focused on long-term impacts of logging in West Africa and plant responses to environmental changes. He has authored several publications in high impact journals and books on tropical forest ecology and forest management. He has also consulted for several international organisations, including the World Bank (WB), African Development Bank (AfDB), International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricoles (CORAF).

Laurent Delahousse,
*Ambassador, Head of Delegation of the
European Union to Liberia*



Ambassador Laurent Delahousse arrived in Monrovia in October 2020. He comes from the French diplomatic service where he previously served twice as French Ambassador, to Burundi (2016-2019) and to Zimbabwe and Malawi, based in Harare (2013-2016).

He was also posted in Pretoria - South Africa, in Sydney - Australia as Consul General and in Washington DC - USA. Furthermore, he has a long experience of European issues, including as Adviser for Europe in the private office (cabinet) of two French Foreign Affairs Ministers, Hervé de Charette (1995-1997) and Dominique de Villepin (2002-2004).

He lives in Monrovia with his wife Sieglinde and they have three children who study in Europe. He is a graduate from Sciences-Po Paris and the National School of Administration – ENA.

8. ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS



United States Agency, *International Development*

USAID's development partnership with Liberia dates to the very founding of the Agency in 1961. As the largest bilateral donor in Liberia, the United States plays an influential and vital role in many aspects of Liberia's development.

USAID/Liberia strives to ensure that the Agency's development strategy for Liberia complements and supports the Government of Liberia's own development vision as articulated in its Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development and other national development strategy documents. Accordingly, USAID's development programming in Liberia is built around three highly interdependent pillars or development objectives (DO's) that address the areas of greatest need: 1) Market-driven inclusive economic growth that translates into job creation, especially for youth and women; 2) Effective and inclusive governance catalyzed through reforms and greater accountability; and 3) Foundation for growth strengthened through a healthy, productive, and educated population.

Market-Driven Inclusive Economic Growth That Creates Jobs

Liberia continues to face structural impediments to revitalizing its economy. The lack of basic infrastructure—roads, water, and electricity supply—makes it exceedingly difficult to attract private sector investment. A poorly developed agricultural sector contributes to food insecurity and extreme poverty, particularly among rural dwellers for whom subsistence farming is the principal source of food and income. USAID/Liberia is working to tackle these challenges by supporting programs and activities that help spur sustained, market driven growth through cross-cutting initiatives in agriculture and food security, humanitarian/emergency response, energy, workforce development, private sector and financial market development, and forestry and natural resource management.

Effective And Inclusive Governance Catalyzed Through Reforms And Greater Accountability

Liberia has made important strides towards improving its democratic governance over the last two decades, although major challenges remain. There is increasing space for citizens, civil society organizations, and the media to engage in public policy debates and service delivery, but there are few mechanisms for holding public institutions and officials accountable. Citizens, especially in rural areas, lack access to information, and thus do not have the means to understand and monitor their government. USAID is helping Liberia meet these democratic governance challenges by providing support for, among other things, the transparent and accountable management of public resources, civil service reforms, free and fair elections, the rule of law, domestic resource mobilization, decentralization, stronger civil society organizations, and a more professional media sector.

Foundation For Growth Strengthened Through A Healthy, Productive And Educated Population

USAID's education programs are focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning (especially in early grade reading) and increasing equitable access to learning opportunities for girls and for youth who missed out on education due to the Liberian Civil War. USAID is helping to train teaching and school management staff, develop curricula and policies essential to providing quality basic education services to all Liberians. At the center of USAID's health programming is a direct financing agreement with the Ministry of Health, which supports service delivery in health facilities in Liberia's most populous counties: Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Margibi, Grand Bassa, and Montserrado Counties. USAID also provides technical assistance

and support to the Ministry of Health at both the central and county levels to strengthen health system functions, including planning and management, procurement and supply chain management for medicines and health commodities. The Mission further supports maternal and child health service delivery at selected facilities in various counties. Family planning and anti-malaria interventions, as well as HIV AIDS treatment and prevention in all of Liberia's 15 counties are also important features of USAID's support to Liberia's health sector.

Mission Headquarters

U.S. Agency for International Development

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue,
NW Washington, DC 20004

Mission Director: Jim Wright

Phone: 202-712-1078

Email: jwright@usaid.gov

U.S. Agency for International Development

502 Benson Street
Monrovia, Liberia

Mission Director: Haider Haider

Phone: +231-776-777-274

Email: hahaider@usaid.gov



The Government of Liberia, (MFDP, FDA and EPA)

Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, or MFDP for short, was created in 2013 by an Act of the National Legislature, in line with international financial management best practices. The new MFDP effectively replaces the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, with the mandate to formulate, institutionalize and administer economic development, fiscal and tax policies for the promotion of sound and efficient management of financial resources of the government.

As custodian of the country's economy, the MFDP combines public finance, development planning and economic management expertise and experience to effectively manage the economy.

Forestry Development Authority

The Forestry Development Authority is a state corporation established by an Act of the Legislature in 1976 with the mandate of ensuring the sustainable management and conservation of Liberia's forest and related natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations. This mandate was further strengthened through the National Resource Law of 1979. The 2006 National Forestry Reform Law is the current legal instrument that guides the management of forest resources in Liberia.

FDA seeks to be guided by the following core values:

- **Transparency:** We value open and transparent relationships and strive to make information accessible to everyone with compromising the truth.
- **Teamwork:** Our team is supportive of each other's efforts, loyal to one another, and care for each other both personally and professionally.
- **Accountability:** We accept responsibility for our actions.

- **Efficiency:** We work to ensure efficiency and profitability while guaranteeing respect for our customers and other stakeholders.
- **Integrity:** We adhere to the highest standards of honesty, integrity, fairness, respect, and professional ethics

Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the regulatory Institution of the Government of Liberia for the sustainable management of the environment and its natural resources. The Agency was established by an act of the Legislature November 26, 2002 and published into hand bill on April 30, 2003. The EPA operates on three basic legal Instruments: The National Environmental Policy (NEP), The Environmental Management and Protection Law of Liberia and the Act Creating the Environmental Protection Agency. Of these three instruments, the National Environmental Policy ordered the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure sound environmental management and put in place measure to avoid irreparable damage to the country's natural resources. The NEP seeks to harmonize cross cutting functions between and amongst agencies. The NEP seeks to ensure long-term economic prosperity of Liberia through sustainable social and economic development of the generation without endangering the potential of future generation. The objective of the NEP is to improve the physical environment, the quality of life and the improvement of economic and social living condition of the citizenry present and future generations. It also seeks to ensure reconciliation and coordination between economic development and growth with the sustainable management of the natural resources. A National Environmental Policy provides a broad framework for the implementation of national objectives and plans.



United Kingdom, (UK)

The UK's COP26 Presidency has meant that the British Embassy in Monrovia has been particularly active on environmental issues over the last year. Through our International Programme, we have funded projects to train journalists to carry out investigations into environmental issues, to raise awareness amongst women on how to adapt effectively to climate change, and to directly engage communities in reducing threats to protected species and their habitats. We have also financed an environmental awareness campaign over several months with Capital Radio. Of particular note is the fact that the UK has been supporting Liberia's forest sector reform process for 15 years to the tune of over US\$20m through our Forest Governance, Markets and Climate Programme. UK-funded projects and grants are supporting the Government of Liberia to develop the necessary tools and systems to strengthen forest governance, thus helping to safeguard Liberia's precious natural resources. The Embassy is also delighted that the UK's Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund finances a number of key initiatives in Liberia; in recent years it has helped to develop a regulation for implementing the national wildlife law, set up transboundary committees and monitoring arrangements between Liberia, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire to protect migrating forest elephants, delivered training to ranger teams, and

implemented a communications strategy to educate citizens on the consequences of trading wildlife illegally. The Embassy is currently bidding for further funding for environmental initiatives in Liberia, including from the UK's new ARCAN programme, which will support African partners to access and utilise more and better climate finance.



World Bank Group

The Bank in Liberia

Liberia's poverty reduction strategy is supported by the rebuilding of core functions and institutions, rehabilitating, infrastructure, and facilitating growth.

World Bank Group (WBG) Engagement

The World Bank Group Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Liberia, guides the partnership between the Bank and Liberia over the FY19-FY24 timeframe. The CPF focuses on promoting inclusive and sustainable growth, human development, and bridging the infrastructure gap. It seeks to consolidate the successes of the previous Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) and reinforce the impact of the WBG program aimed at building human capital and boosting private sector development.

Specifically, the CPF places emphasis on strengthening institutions and creating an enabling environment for inclusive and sustainable growth through transparency and accountability in the public sector, support for commercial agriculture, and the development of micro, small and medium enterprises. The CPF supports infrastructure investments to foster more equitable nationwide development to improve access to basic services and will remain closely aligned with Liberia's PAPD.

The WBG Portfolio in Liberia

Currently, the World Bank active portfolio in Liberia is composed of 26 projects, financed from multiple sources including IDA (National & Regional) and sector specific/thematic trust funds. The value of the portfolio, including all sources of finance is above \$1.21 billion, 94% of which consist of IDA resources (National & Regional). Contributions from development partners to active projects through single and multi-donor trust funds account for \$270.18 million. Cumulatively, about 50% of the portfolio has been disbursed mainly towards the support of key infrastructure sectors (roads & energy), health systems strengthening & disease surveillance, agriculture, youth development, waste

management, water supply, urban development, and governance. The World Bank's health response to COVID-19 in Liberia is being supported by two World Bank projects, with a total \$23.5 million allocation. This support comprises procurement and deployment of vaccines, vaccine health system strengthening and vaccine-demand generation through the implementation of a robust communication campaign.

International Finance Corporation (IFC) in Liberia

As of 2021, IFC has an \$8 million committed investment portfolio and \$35 million investment pipeline across FIG and MAS. IFC has a \$6 million donor agreement with SIDA

(Swedish International Development Corporation Agency) to implement advisory programs across key sectors. With this advisory engagement, IFC will work with the World Bank, the Government of Liberia, and the private sector to improve the business climate and unlock key investment opportunities in the country.

IFC's on-the-ground presence since June 2007 has enabled it to scale up activities with discussions ongoing on several potential investments in agribusiness, manufacturing, petroleum services, and financial services. The IFC Liberia advisory program focuses on key areas (to be implemented 2019–2023) including: i) agriculture value chain development, ii) improving access to finance, and iii) business climate reform

Donor Coordination

The World Bank actively participates in the Consultative Partners Group (CPG), an in-country donor coordinating body formed by heads of agencies. The CPG is a forum formed around key development challenges in the country whereby financing is coordinated with an aim to enhance development impact. In addition, the Liberia country program has received significant contributions from

development partners. The Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund has been financed by Germany (KfW), the United Kingdom (DFID), the European Union, Sweden (Sida), Irish Aid and Norway in support of: transport, energy, and waste management. In governance and human development, key partners are the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Union, and Sida. In health and education, major multi-donor trust funds such as the Global Financing Facility (GFF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) have provided seed funding for core work in these sectors. Also in health, the GFF leads the dialogue (and convening joint missions) with development partners committed to the country's investment case for maternal, child and adolescent health (USAID, Global Fund, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Government of Japan, The Vaccine Alliance (GAVI), the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), International Planned Parenthood Federation and Last Mile Health). In productive sectors, Norway has been the only financier of the World Bank program, and in agriculture, a close partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) could double the recently approved START- IDA program.

Key Achievements

- From 2017–18, 740,000 people in urban areas were provided with access to regular solid waste collection and 134,784 tons of waste was collected.
- From 2012–18, 5,843 hectares of smallholder tree crop farms were rehabilitated or planted: new planting accounted for 530 hectares, 1,214 hectares were replanted, and 4,189 hectares were rehabilitated. Access to technologies and markets were enhanced and a long-term development program for the tree crops sector was created.
- 1.9 million people received essential health, nutrition, and population services in 2017, up from 1.3 million in 2013.
- From 2013–18, 17,200 people were provided with access to electricity by household connections. 45 kilometers of transmission lines and 50 kilometers of distribution lines were constructed or rehabilitated.
- From 2015–18, 7,224 benefited from safety net programs; 3,612 rural youths completed life skills training, and 105,360 days of public works were generated.
- During the same period, 786 youths were recruited from 10 urban communities in Montserrado county and were provided with entrepreneurship training and start-up grants to initiate or expand household enterprises. 100% of the targeted urban youths have developed business plans during entrepreneurship training.



Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative

Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI)

Norway has pledged up to 3 billion NOK a year to help save the world's tropical forests while improving the livelihoods of those who live off, in, and near the forests.

The Norwegian Government's vision is a more sustainable plastics value chain globally, regionally, and nationally. This strategy will assist in implementing the UN Environment Assembly's 2017 «zero vision» to end all discharge of plastic litter into the ocean in the long term. Norway's most important international climate endeavor is helping to preserve the rainforest and other tropical forests.

The rainforest is vital. By absorbing large amounts of CO₂, it helps to slow down global warming. Tropical forests also have many other important functions, such as being a source of water and food, and they are essential for both humans and animals.

But the rainforest continues to disappear at a rapid pace. We have to slow down deforestation quickly in order to solve both the climate crisis and the natural crisis.

Development cooperation with Liberia

Support for reconstruction/Focus areas: A comprehensive reconstruction plan, encompassing all sectors was established between Liberia, UN and other international partners. It is for this reason that Liberia became a partner of the Government of Norway for support to the reconstruction of the energy and justice- security sectors.

The country has since seen a steady economic growth. But the ebola epidemic that hit the country very hard in 2014 and 2015 had severe consequences, both economically and socially. The support today concentrates on the energy, climate and security sectors.

Renewable energy

Long-term Norwegian support to the electricity sector in Liberia has focused on both strengthening of public sector institutions, support in human capital and expertise, and investment in infrastructure.

Norway has contributed NOK 492 million to the rehabilitation of the 88 MW Mt. Coffee Hydropower Plant that will provide more environmentally friendly and sustainable electricity in Liberia, as opposed to the current use of costly diesel generators. The first turbine was commissioned in late 2016, and the project will be finalized by the end of 2017.

Support has been provided to the Government of Liberia to establish the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC) as a competent, professional and financially sustainable electricity utility and to significantly improve electricity services throughout Monrovia. Norway has done this through capacity building programs in LEC and provided financial assistance to the installation and construction of transmission and distribution infrastructure throughout Monrovia. To ensure professional implementation of the project Norway also supports LEC with financing the Project Implementation Unit. Other development partners for Mt. Coffee are the Government of Liberia, The European Investment Bank, the German Development Bank and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (US).

To increase the capacity and expertise in energy and water resource management in public institutions, Norway also funds a Technical Assistance Agreement between the Liberian Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy and the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE).

The goal of the partnership is to build capacity in MLME to increase knowledge and implementation of legal frameworks and updating and maintaining national hydro meteorological network and database.

Justice sector

The justice- and security sector is of vital importance to Liberia. UNMIL, the UN Security forces that have been present in the country since 2003, is currently in the process of drawing down, and plans to finish their operation completely in mid 2018. Norway has supported the strengthening of the justice- and security sector through capacity building of the national police.

Support to both infrastructure and human resources development has enabled the National Police Academy to train a number of police officers, which today totals is 5000, and of which 18 % are female. The curricula at the Academy are up to international standard, human rights included. Through the Peace Building Fund, Norway has provided financial support to setting up regional justice- and security hubs, a strategy chosen by the Government of Liberia in collaboration with UNMIL and other partners for the development of a decentralised justice- and security sector.

The Norwegian UNPOL contingent currently holds 4 officers. The Norwegian UN police officers have a very good reputation, for providing professional advice and guidance to Liberian counterparts.

Climate change / REDD

In September 2014, Liberia and Norway entered into a partnership to improve forest governance, strengthen law enforcement, and support efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in Liberia. Liberia holds 43 per cent of the remaining Upper Guinea forests of West Africa. The forests' biological diversity encompasses the last long-term viable populations of several endemic species including the Western Chimpanzees, forest elephants and leopards, in addition to over 2000 flowering plants and 225 commercial timber species. The country is listed as one of 34 global biodiversity hotspots.

However, the Liberian forest is under pressure from both commercial logging and chainsaw logging for local markets; shifting cultivation; the clearing of forest for permanent agriculture; and charcoal production.

The Norwegian-Liberian partnership aims at halting this trend by facilitating green growth through the development of a deforestation free agricultural sector in the country. Norway will support Liberia's efforts with up to \$150 million until 2020.



French Development Agency (FDA)

The French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement - AFD) is France's bilateral development finance institution. Its mandate is to contribute to economic and social development in its countries of operation. It finances and supports development projects and programmes and participates in research and policy dialogue with relevant stakeholders. The overarching goal of AFD is to make economic growth more sustainable and shared, to improve living conditions and to contribute to the preservation of the environment. AFD currently funds more than 4,000 projects in 115 countries. In 2021, AFD committed new funding worth EUR 12.15 bn. 1 billion euros/year were committed on average by AFD for agriculture, rural development and biodiversity since 2017.

AFD started re-operating in Liberia in 2018 and has committed close to EUR 40 MEUR in the country since then. AFD aims to support the Republic of Liberia in particular in three sectors of intervention : i) education and professional training ; ii) sustainable urban development; and iii) sustainable agriculture and forest protection. These sectors of intervention are at the heart of the Liberian national development plan, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) 2018-2023, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding that was signed between the Republic of Liberia and AFD in November 2018. In order to improve the coordination of conservation efforts, AFD recently launched the Forest Territories Facility (FTF), a framework that aims at fostering the emergence of more concerted interventions in the Gulf of Guinea and Congo Basin Region. Within this framework and, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, AFD is currently designing forests and biodiversity project

in Liberia and across the region. AFD is currently supporting the implementation of FLEGT VPAs programme across the region to improve forest governance and law enforcement in VPA implementing countries, including Liberia, in order to limit illegal logging operations and promote sustainable forest management.



Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

A Better World Together

Sida is Sweden's government agency for development cooperation. We strive to reduce poverty and oppression around the world. In cooperation with organizations, government agencies, and the private sector we invest in sustainable development for all people.

SIDA International Work

Sida has developed cooperation with a large number of countries and regions around the world. We also provide humanitarian assistance where the needs are most urgent. We work across several thematic areas.

Countries and Regions SIDA work with

Sida has long-term development cooperation with some 35 countries around the world. Sida also supports regional projects on most continents. We also support organizations that work globally. See where Sida works and what we do in different countries.

The Swedish government decides which countries Sida should have long-term cooperation with. These are some 30 countries in Africa including Liberia, Asia, Latin America and Europe. Sida also supports regional and global projects. Here you can read about Sida's work in different countries and regions.

Thematic Areas

Sida's work is focused on thematic areas that are of particular importance for combating poverty around the world, such as democracy, gender equality, climate and peaceful societies. Read about our work in different thematic areas.

Sida's work is focused on thematic areas that are of particular importance for combating poverty around the world, such as democracy, gender equality, climate and peaceful societies.

Agriculture and Food Security, Employment, Health, Private sector development, Democracy, Human rights and freedom of expression, Environment, and

climate, Mitigation and development, Research and innovation, Education, Gender Equity, Inclusive and peaceful society, and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Development cooperation in Liberia

Liberia is one of the poorest countries in the world – more than half of the population lives in poverty (with less than USD 2 per day). Since its 14-year-long civil war ended in 2003, the country has gradually evolved towards peace and stability. The country is slowly building its public sector and its justice system and strengthening the rights of its citizens.

Liberia is rich in natural resources and has a climate that is well-suited for agriculture. However, the agricultural sector is inefficient. A lack of infrastructure limits people's access to markets, health care and education.

Democracy, gender equality, and political and human rights

Despite the strengthening of peace in recent years, the public sector is weak and the respect for human rights remains low. Political power is concentrated to the capital of Monrovia, where a small minority governs the country.

Liberian women and girls are particularly vulnerable – they have less access to care, ownership, justice, and education. Rapes are common and the majority of the victims are children.⁵ However, awareness about violence against women has increased. For example, reporting rape is less shameful than it was in the past. Yet, the justice system functions poorly.

Stronger justice system

Gradual improvements are being made to Liberia's judicial system, but major challenges persist – among them corruption and the paying of criminal organizations to protect a person or business from threats.

Through the Carter Center, Sida helps strengthen Liberia's justice system. The center works with the informal justice system and educates traditional leaders about human rights and Liberian law, supports mediation in conflicts, and offers legal aid via civil society organizations.

Increasing tax revenues

The lack of popular participation and economic inequalities create problems in Liberia, and there is little political will to implement necessary reforms. Sida supports a reform aimed at increasing Liberia's tax revenues and improving the Ministry of Finance's governance of the public sector. This support is channeled through the World Bank.

Improved living conditions and economic development

Urban unemployment is high, especially among young people. The majority of the jobs are found in the informal sector.

Liberia's economy has been hit hard by falling market prices for rubber and iron ore, the country's biggest export commodities. One of the greatest challenges in the country is the lack of infrastructure a consequence of the civil war. It hampers economic development, particularly in rural areas, and makes it harder for people to get to school and health care providers, especially during the rainy season.

Productive jobs for young people

Liberia is currently one of the most difficult countries in the world in which to run a business. This is due to convoluted regulations, corruption, limited access to electricity, poor infrastructure and trade barriers. Among other efforts, Mercy Corps works to promote the employment of young people in Liberia. Inter alia, the organisation provides career support, matches companies with jobseekers and helps young people start their own businesses – so that more young people can have meaningful and productive employment.

Upgrading rural roads

Four out of ten work in agriculture,⁶ where there is a great need for streamlining. Almost two thirds of the population are farmers, and most grow food for their own use. Sida supports efforts to increase productivity in the agricultural sector and to provide farmers with increased access to markets where they can sell their products. Examples of this work include the Liberian-Swedish Feeder Roads Project, which

upgrades rural roads to improve the opportunities for people to sell their goods and services, while simultaneously improving access to care and education.

Access to renewable energy

More than half of all people in Sub-Saharan Africa lack access to electricity. Sida supports several efforts that increase access to renewable energy. Liberia is part of the Power Africa initiative, which gives more people in Sub-Saharan Africa access to Human security and freedom from violence.

Liberia is steeped in patriarchal norms. The judicial and security systems are weak and impunity is widespread, and there is little political or institutional will to change this.

Although fewer women in the country than before are subjected to genital mutilation, the percentage remains high – nearly one third of all women have been genitally mutilated.⁸ The practice was temporarily banned from 2017 to 2018, but the ban was not renewed.

Court for gender-based violence

Gender-based violence is one of the most frequent crimes in Liberia, and a majority of the victims are women and children. Through such organisations as Kvinna till Kvinna, UN Women, UNICEF and Action Aid, Sida supports efforts that both prevent and address gender-based violence and improve the situation of LGBTQ people. This work is accomplished, inter alia, through a special court for gender-based violence (Court E) and the establishment of support centres around the country where victims can meet police investigators and receive medical and psycho-social care.

Meditation for local disputes

The wounds of the civil war are deep, and there is a great risk of further conflicts. Through the organization ZOA, Sida supports the road to reconciliation at the local level. Through a kind of social group therapy, participants learn how to deal with difficult memories and traumatic experiences and get tools for resolving conflicts, fostering social community and trust, which contribute to reconciliation. Sida also supports Liberia's own peace-building institution: the Peace Building Office, which collects and reports incidents that could lead to conflict and helps resolve local disputes through mediation.

<https://www.sida.se/en/sidas-international-work/countries-and-regions/liberia>



European Union

Policy areas

The EU addresses global challenges through international partnerships that uphold and promote European values and interests and contribute to peace and prosperity in the world.

Climate, environment, and energy

As a global leader, the EU continues to lead on international efforts, and in conjunction with our partners, we address environmental challenges and promote the implementation of ambitious climate, environment and energy policies across the world. Through bilateral efforts, we accompany partners to transition towards more sustainable development pathways.

The Green Deal is an integral part of this Commission's strategy to implement the United Nation's 2030 Agenda and the sustainable Development Goals.

Our programs

The Multiannual Indicative Programmed (MIP) is based on the national development plan and includes provisions to support jobs and the economy, governance, women's and youth rights, and social inclusion. However, there is as yet no agreed joint plan between the EU, the TE countries, and the Liberian Government.

In the current MIP, three priority areas have been identified for action:

Priority 1: *Enhancing and preserving natural resources for sustainable growth* targeted at agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and environment protection. Specific objectives under this priority include ensuring sustainable food systems and increasing access to food and effective governance of the ecosystem.

Priority 2: *Promoting decent jobs and inclusive growth* focusing on technical and vocational education and training, SME development, and transport and storage. Specific objectives under

this priority include enabling youth to respond to economic opportunities; increasing the amount of decent, formal employment in the private sector, and enhancing linkages to local, national, and international markets.

Priority 3: *Improving financial and democratic governance* focusing on economic governance, democratic participation, and women's rights. Specific objectives under this priority include improving economic stability and financial management; promoting inclusive and transparent democratic practices and ensuring a violence-free level playing field for women and girls.

Funding for the first three years of the program amounts to €191 million. Priority 1 will receive €46 million (24%), priority 2 €85 million (45%), and priority 2 will receive €48 million (25%). The balance of €12 million will go to support measures.

Support measures and Team Europe Initiatives

France, Germany, Sweden, and Ireland are the countries involved in the Team Europe initiatives. There are two TE initiatives in the areas of 'safe and sustainable food systems' and 'forestry and diversity' and their objectives are closely aligned with the MIP.

Regarding 'safe and sustainable food systems' the actions aim to intensify and commercialize sustainable agriculture and also to diversify the rural economy coupled with agribusiness.

Regarding 'forestry and diversity' the actions aim to transform the forestry sector to include sustainable management and practices. Other activities aim to improve the management of critical terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems.

The MIP and TEIs are aligned with several EU policies, specifically, the European Green Deal, trade agreements, the EFSD+, and the Gender action plan.

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/liberia_en



United Nations Development Program

UNDP has been working in Liberia since 1977 with commitment to helping Liberia achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as the country's national development priorities. UNDP provides technical assistance within the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSCDF) which is fully aligned with Liberia's National Development Agenda. UNDP's work on Climate & Forests contributes to both [SDG 13 \(climate action\)](#) and [SDG 15 \(forest ecosystems\)](#), addressing their close linkages. When promoting forest and climate policies and investments, UNDP employs a social inclusion approach, wherein effective stakeholder engagement is ensured, the rights of indigenous peoples and forest communities are promoted, gender equality and women's empowerment principles are mainstreamed, and policy reforms towards more equitable land use and tenure systems are encouraged.

UNDP Liberia's Country Programme Document (CPD 2020-2024) and its portfolio on Green and Inclusive Growth strongly supports sustainable forest management and strengthening action against climate change. UNDP's role as an integrator and connector, as illustrated by its ability to bring together governments with citizens, the private sector, civil society, and

other partners plays a catalytic role in facilitating partnerships. This includes, for example, UNDP's key role in aiding the government to achieve its national priorities (PAPD) and developing Liberia's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). UNDP is currently supporting various programs on resilient livelihoods and forestry, including the Community-Based Forestry and Protected Area Management (CBFM) project funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, which seeks to address policy, planning, livelihood, and knowledge barriers by effectively promoting community-based conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

9. OVERVIEW OF LIBERIA FOREST SECTOR PROJECT

Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP): Improved management of, and increased benefit sharing in, targeted forest landscapes.

About the Project

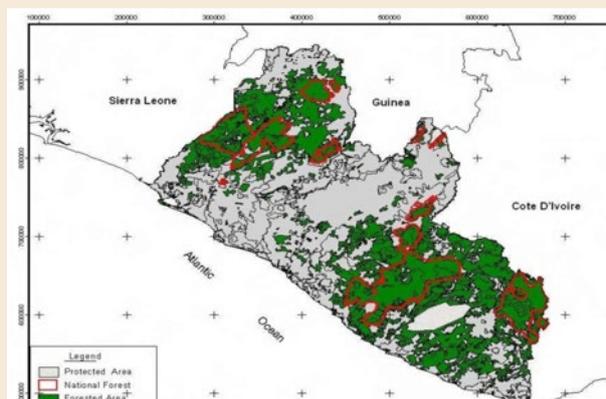
The Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP) was approved on April 19, 2016. Got effective August 30, 2016, and its Trust Fund is (Single Donor): \$37,500,000.

The program is designed to contribute to Liberia's transition from the purely commercial management of forests to one that integrates sustainability. The (LFSP) represents a paradigm shift in forest resource management insofar as it includes using climate finance as a catalyst for forest conservation and continued carbon sequestration. The project consists of four components.

Component 1. Strengthened Regulatory and Institutional Arrangements for Implementation of REDD+ (US \$8.0 million)

This component will finance the TA, works, consultants, and non-consultant services, goods, training and workshops, and operational costs needed to reform and harmonize the existing legal regime and to strengthen institutional and professional capacities for improved management of forest landscapes. This component will be supported by the following subcomponents

- Subcomponent 1.1: Strengthened Capacity in Institutions (Public, Private, CSOs) for Improved Management of Forest Landscapes will provide the following:
- Subcomponent 1.2: Legal Reform.



Component 2. Strengthened Management of Targeted Forest Landscapes (US\$23.7million)

The component will finance TA, works, goods, training and workshops, subprojects, and operational costs for land use planning, conservation, community forestry, sustainable agriculture, and forests management to support local communities and their organizations within the targeted landscapes to improve the sustainable management and conservation of natural resources and improve the economic and social benefits they obtain from them. This component will be supported by the following subcomponents

- Subcomponent 2.1: Improved Land Use Planning
- Subcomponent 2.2: Strengthened Management of Protected Areas of Targeted Forest Landscapes
- Subcomponent 2.3: Community Forestry in Targeted Forest Landscapes
- Subcomponent 2.4: Strengthened Capacity for Sustainable Agriculture

Component 3. Forest Monitoring Information System (US\$2.3 million)

The component will finance TA, consultant and non-consultant services, goods, workshops, and operational costs to establish and support an operational and successfully tested national system for MRV and an information system for safeguards.

- Subcomponent 3.1: Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) and Reference Level Development
- Subcomponent 3.2: Development of an information system for safeguards

Component 4. Project Management, Monitoring, and Communication (US \$3.4 million)

Support will be provided for the FDA's day-to-day project implementation and management including procurement, FM, M&E, preparation of annual work plans, and organization of audit reports. The component will provide support for office operating costs for the existing FDA RIU after current FCPF support for the same ends in January 2019, as well as the operating costs for joint quarterly meetings to be held by the implementing agencies. The component will also support the operationalization of an M&E system that will report on the expected project results, systematizing the project's lessons learned. The project-level M&E will be integrated into Liberia's M&E Framework for the national REDD+ readiness process that has been designed to track readiness progress and be able to report comprehensively at national and international levels including the different donors and implementing partners supporting Liberia's REDD+ process. The component will also support the implementation of a communication strategy to inform different and diverse stakeholders about the project and its results, building on results achieved with FCPF support as well as other projects. In addition, the component will provide resources for management and supervision of the Bank's environmental and social safeguards, in addition to costs related to the project's GRM

function. Subcomponents 2.3 and 2.4 will offer livelihood alternatives to potentially affected communities, while this component will include the hiring of safeguard specialists, operational costs, training on safeguards management (implementation procedures, monitoring, reporting, and documentation), technical support, and monitoring workshops, travel, and goods. Finally, the component will provide support for the preparation of the midterm and project completion reports. Specific activities included in this component are the following:

- Support to operational costs of the RIU including staff
- Support to safeguards supervision
- Implementation of a communication strategy
- Conducting project audits Conducting project evaluations

INPUTS

Technical assistance, Consultancy services, Non-consultancy services, Works, Goods, Operational costs

REPRESENTATIVE OUTPUTS BY COMPONENT (DETAILS IN ANNEX 2)

- Component 1: Institutions and policies**
 - Technical and operational training, resources and infrastructure provided to FDA, EPA, LC, MOA, and LISGIS
 - Delivery service partners (including CSOs) trained
 - Interagency meetings held on coordination and implementation
 - Operational protocols and procedures for land boundary demarcation, community forest management planning, and agro- forestry enterprise developed
 - Procedures for award of concessions reviewed and established
- Component 2: Protected Areas, Forest management and sustainable production**
 - Land use map and roadmap for land use planning produced
 - Training in protected area management provided
 - Pre-gazetment activities conducted, management plans produced, offices constructed and and operational costs provided of targeted forest for selected proposed PA's
 - Conservation Trust Fund for Liberia designed
 - Forest communities supported through the CFMA process
 - Community Action and land use Plans produced
 - Farmers supported on tree crops and conservation agriculture
- Component 3: Forest monitoring systems**
 - Activity data on forest degradation assessed
 - Historical GHG inventories for LULCF /AFOLU assessed and streamlined
 - Information system for safeguards set up
- Component 3: Forest monitoring systems**
 - Management and support for implementation of component 1 to 3
 - Environmental and social safeguards supervision
 - Communications Strategy implemented
 - Feedback and Grievance Redress mechanism operational
 - Annual project reports, and mid term and completion evaluation prepared

SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

- Strengthened regulatory and institutional arrangements for implementation of REDD+
- Strengthened capacity for management of targeted forest landscapes
- Strengthened forest monitoring system
- Project management, monitoring and communication

MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES

Improved management of and increased benefit-sharing in targeted forest landscapes
 LSFP Project Development Objective (PDO)

Effectiveness/Development result

LONG TERM IMPACT

Reduced deforestation and degradation in targeted forest landscapes
 Program Goal

Efficiency/Implementation performance

Strategic Approaches

The Project pursues an integrated approach to the development of the forestry sector aligned to the “Three C’s”. The project provides for:

- I. Institutional capacity building of the Forestry Development Authority and other key institutions involved in forest management.
- II. Empowerment of communities in ownership and management of forests for income generation through production and conservation.
- III. Support Liberia’s aspirations to protect its forests.
- IV. Investments in forests and tree crops based on production and enterprises for rural livelihoods; and
- V. Increasing the forest cover through reforestation of degraded lands.

Project Beneficiaries

The main beneficiaries of the (LFSP) are the Liberian communities most directly dependent on forest resources. The direct beneficiaries will be the communities located in the targeted landscapes in

- I. **Northwest region** (Bomi, Lofa, Gbarpulo, and Grand Cape Mount Counties);
- II. **Southeast region** (south section of Grand Gedeh County and Sinoe, GrandKru, River Gee, and Rivercess Counties). Communities located in the north Nimba region will benefit from the support provided by the project for regulatory and institutional strengthening.
 - a. Other beneficiaries include youth and women in rural communities that are adjacent to existing and proposed targeted protected areas.
 - b. The government at the national, county and local levels will benefit from clearer regulations for decentralized forest management and linkages between spatial planning and forestland use planning.

Project Achievements

Despite the challenges, the Liberia Forest Sector Project is delivering tangible investments in interventions for sustainable management and use of forests to contribute to improved management of protected areas, community forests, agricultural land use, land use planning, and sustainable livelihoods for communities. The project contributes significantly to improving the enabling environment for these interventions by strengthening institutional capacities, government, and non-government organizations, CSOs, community organizations, and regulatory frameworks. Besides, the project supports a forest monitoring system and safeguards information systems to address the limited capacities in data collection, data management, tracking, and reporting for natural resource-related information. All these interventions are geared toward addressing deforestation and forest degradation.

The following significant results have been achieved during project implementation:

- A Strategic Vision and Plan for the FDA was developed and endorsed by the FDA Board. The Plan is launched and under implementation nationwide.
- Inception and draft review reports of the Liberia Forest Concession Review were completed.
- Relevant mining laws reviewed. Three artisanal mining cooperatives have been established in the North-West and South-East Forest landscapes. Miners in these cooperatives have received training on forest-smart mining processes from the MME.
- The project is providing capacity support for the Union of Community Forest Management Bodies and support to a number of CFMBs to strengthen their governance practices.
- 106 FDA staff (national and sub-national levels) trained by the Forest Training Institute (FTI) under an MOU.
- FDA and other institutions received support through the provision of office equipment, vehicles, and motorbikes, and a budget for decentralized operations. The project has also provided vehicles and motorbikes to FDA regional offices and targeted protected areas by

increasing the mobility of FDA staff working on the project.

- Renovation of five FTI campus buildings has been completed and construction of two regional FDA offices and accommodations for forest rangers completed.
- Feasibility studies/surveys towards the establishment and formalization of five new Protected Areas (PAs) (Krahn-Bassa, Foya, Grand Kru- River Gee, Cestos-Senkwehn and Kpo Mountains) satisfactorily completed.
- Preparation of gazettelement packages for Krahn-Bassa PPA, Foya PPA and Kpo Mts. PPA is ongoing.
- Demarcation of the Gola Forest National Park has been completed and harmonization of the Sapo National Park boundary has been successfully finished, paving the way for boundary flagging and subsequent steps and processes in accordance with national laws and regulations.
- Sustainable Tourism Action Strategy/Plan for Liberia's PAs network was developed, and initial operations that would involve communities, have been identified for subsequent support through the LFSP.
- 40 communities are being supported at different levels of the nine-step process. Currently, 3 communities that have completed the 9-step process and have signed Community Forest Management Agreements (CFMAs) are piloting the new draft community forest management plan (CFMP) guidelines. Lessons learned from the pilots will be used in finalizing the draft CFMP guidelines.
- A scoping study for the formation of community forest cooperatives (CFCs) has been finalized. The follow-up feasibility study that includes developing business plans for the established CFCs has been contracted. The proposed livelihood assessment for community forestry has been finalized.
- 30 temporary field staff (eco-guards) for FDA were recruited and trained (and another 12 extension agents/eco-guards are under recruitment) to support field operations – the FDA intends to recruit these as full-time staff after project completion.
- Farmers in over 50 communities have been supported in diversifying incomes at the community level, and reducing pressures on forests. To date, 738 farmers including 148 females benefitted. The project has also provided support for the establishment of farmers' cooperatives.

- Initial support on bee-keeping practices and marketing for 33 communities in the South-East landscape.
- Supported the establishment and validation of a functional MRV and framework, and forest reference emission level (FREL). MRV framework has been endorsed by FDA. A validated FREL for REDD+ has been finalized and duly submitted to the UNFCCC at the last COP in December 2019. Liberia's national forest definition was endorsed by the FDA Board and put into a resolution.
- Trainings have been carried out in-country on National Greenhouse Gas Accounting.
- A Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM) was developed and committees responsible for the implementation of FGRM were set up in key project landscapes.
- National forest definition finalized.
- National Forest Inventory completed.

Development Partners

Norway, as the project funder and as a long-term supporter of the forestry sector, including through budget support.

European Union through its support for the development of certified timber markets (under the Voluntary Partnership Agreement).

United States Agency For International Development (USAID) through its support to community forestry and conservation forestry.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the **United Nations** which was engaged by the FDA to conduct the National Forest Inventory and establish the National Forest.

Implementing Partners

The **Forestry Development Authority (FDA)** is the Project Implementing Agency. Other agencies involved in the project implementation include the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**, **Liberia Land Authority (LLA)**, **Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME)**, **Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-information Services (LISGIS)**, **Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)**, and **Ministry of Finance and Development Planning**. The **University of Liberia** and the **Forestry Training Institute** are important partners in institutional capacity-building support.

10. ABOUT LIBERIA

Liberia is a country in West Africa, bordering Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. On the Atlantic coast, the capital city of Monrovia is home to the Liberia National Museum, with its exhibits on national culture and history. Around Monrovia are palm-lined beaches like Silver and CeCe. Along the coast, beach towns include the port of Buchanan, as well as laid-back Robertsport, known for its strong surf.

A lush, green, friendly and vibrant land, Liberia offers everything from excellent surf spots and shops selling wares by edgy local designers to days spent lolling in a comfy hammock on the edge of the rainforest while listening to tropical birds sing. It's home to one of West Africa's best national parks, and still hangs on to a confident American spirit mixed with West African roots. And despite the ravages of the past, it is a fantastic place to travel, full of hope and energy.

After a decade of dusting themselves off and resuming normal life following their

brutal civil war, Liberians experienced another deadly conflict in 2014 – the Ebola virus. While the nation is officially Ebola-free per the WHO, it's struggling economically to recover. With travel restrictions lifted, tourism can play a huge role in this.

Monrovia is a quintessential tropical city.

The city is a low-rise capital by the sea, lined with palm trees and paint-chipped buildings of no more than three stories. The city streets are full of life with traders plying all kinds of merchandise: used clothes, household wares and an interesting selection of pirated DVDs. There are several large, well-stocked supermarkets in the city center that offer a surprising selection of western food. Liberians are friendly and extremely welcoming of strangers. Newcomers usually quickly adapt to the Liberian way and after a short time fit right in. It is not uncommon to receive an invitation from a Liberian upon arrival to dine to local Liberian dishes at his/her home or a local restaurant.





Shopping

The major shopping areas are Waterside, downtown central Monrovia, Redlight district and Duala. Harbel Supermarket, Stop and Shop, UN Drive, Exclusive Super Store, Greenland and UN Drive supermarkets are the major shopping centers all located in Sinkor and downtown central Monrovia. All shopping centers operate from 8:00am to 8pm. Electronic appliances can be purchased at Eagle, Power Tech, Sharp Showroom, and Sunny Brothers, all of which are on Randall Street in downtown Monrovia.

Recreation

Most sports centers and bars are located in the heart of the city and in the suburbs of Sinkor and Paynesville. Arts centers are located throughout the city, especially at hotel facilities. Water Side hosts one of the local art centers in Monrovia. There are many places for nightlife in Monrovia. Dubai Club at Old Road Junction provides much entertainment in African, and Western music. Chinese Club in Paynesville provides Oriental and Western style night. Once out at night, there is a lot to see in Monrovia.

Dining

Liberians eat plenty of rice, on a daily basis. Popular traditional dishes comprise of potatoes leaves, cassava leaves, okra sauce, torborgee, palm butter, jollof rice, checked rice and gravy amongst other delicacies. Traditional dishes are normally served with rice. Dining options in Monrovia are pretty good, all things considered. Anything other than Lebanese and Liberian tends to be expensive, but there are a few reasonable places that serve Western and Oriental food.

Culture

Generally Liberians greet each other with a short handshake and a smile. Liberians tend to be blunt and will not hesitate to express themselves when the occasion arises. Liberians seek genuine friendship from strangers and will go at great length to protect their friendship. Liberians take pride in being appreciated or complimented in whatever way possible.

Practical Tips

Generally Liberians greet each other with a short handshake and a smile. Liberians tend to be blunt and will not hesitate to express themselves when the occasion arises. Liberians seek genuine friendship from strangers and will go at great length to protect their friendship. Liberians take pride in being appreciated or complimented in whatever way possible.

Cross Culture

Liberians like to think of themselves as very liberal and accepting. There are very few "Dos and Don'ts. Strangers are considered an integral part of the society and are strongly encouraged to adapt themselves to the Liberian way. As first step, learning and speaking Liberian English is a strong signal that a visitor wants to belong. Learning to speak like a Liberian will send a strong message to Liberians that you appreciate their culture which will eventually open windows of opportunities for you in Liberia. Do not be surprised to hear Liberians speak with an American accent; Liberia has been heavily influenced by America from its foundation. There are several country specific challenges you will face whilst living and working in Liberia. Lodging, fuel, transportation, and telephone services are unevenly available in Liberia, and are nonexistent or severely limited in rural areas. Water and electricity is commercially available only in some parts of the Monrovia. The national grid is still being worked on. Most hotels have in Monrovia have utilities available on a 24-hour basis. There is no working landline telephone system in Liberia. Several cell phone companies provide service in Monrovia and some areas outside the capital. U.S. cellular phones do not always work in Liberia and it is advisable to rent or purchase a local cellular phone. The postal system is picking up. Commercial air courier service is available through UPS, Federal

Express (FedEx), and other companies. The U.S. dollar is readily accepted in Liberia, and there is no limit on the amount of foreign currency that can be transported into and out of the country, provided one follows the specific regulations for such transfers. Sums in excess of US \$10,000 must be reported at the port of entry and no more than US \$7,500 in foreign currency banknotes can be moved out of the country at one time.

Places to Visit

Mt Nimba is Liberia's tallest peak, 1362m above sea level, and you can feasibly climb it if you have a few dayxs on your hands (it's a rewarding way to beat the heat of Monrovia). You can camp along the way if you have your own equipment, hiking along the peaks. Bring a GPS and warm clothing as it can get misty and very cool at night.

The jumping-off point is the curious town of Yekepa, a 10-hour drive from Monrovia and a Truman Show-esque mining town owned by Arcelor Mittal. The road to Mt Nimba is paved for almost three-quarters of the way to the top; you can drive to the peak using a 4WD. The Noble House Motel is the only sleeping option of note in Yekepa.



Waterside Market in Monrovia offers almost everything for sale, including colourful textiles, shoes, leather goods and pottery, all with a dose of foul smells and lots of noise. Haggle hard, smile, and embrace raw Monrovia to its fullest.



Monkey Island, a small archipelago, is home to chimpanzees that were evacuated from a hepatitis research lab during the war. Enquire in town about the most up-to-date options for viewing the island and chimps from a canoe (US \$5 to US \$10) – it can be hit or miss, but there will usually be someone around who can take you.

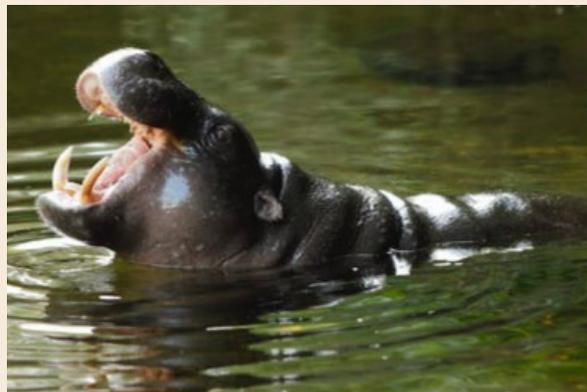
Don't get too close; these chimps know how to throw mangoes.



Liberia National Museum's collection was depleted during the war years, but renovations (always ongoing) have created space for photo and art exhibitions as well as the ethnic and historical exhibits. Check out founding father JJ Roberts' dining table – a gift from England's Queen Victoria – as well as paintings and items representing Liberian tribal cultures. The building was the former legislature.



Sapo National Park is a lush 1808-sq-km tract containing some of West Africa's last remaining primary rainforest. Within it lurk forest elephants, pygmy hippos, chimpanzees, antelopes and other wildlife, although these populations suffered greatly during the war. It's located in the Sinoe Province; you'll need to take a 4WD from Monrovia to Greenville, then head north to Juarzon and then south-east to Jalay's Town. You'll need to allow at least a full day's travel to here from the capital.



Robertsport has positioned itself firmly on the forefront of the country's new tourism drive, as the king of all Liberia's surfing spots (and there are quite a few).

Long-haired wave riders with board wax in hand now flock to join the surfing troupes and hit the rolling Atlantic swells that buffet the likes of Fisherman's Point, Cotton Trees and Cassava. Surf schools are also popping up to get beginner travelers out and onto the waves, while others will just come to hike the coastal stretches to see the pretty reaches of Cape Mount Bay, and see the trademark timber and stone churches that pepper the shore.



The Gola National Forest is the new name for the Lofa-Mano National Park: a great dash of primeval rainforest that sprawls out along the northern border of the country with Sierra Leone. One of the densest remaining tracts of Upper Guinean woodland in the region, the area has everything you'd expect of a real West African wilderness.

Yep, you can expect verdant canopies and seemingly endless stretches of colossal tree trunks and boughs, hidden fern fields where exotic dragonflies flit between the flowers, swinging chimpanzees, rare pygmy hippopotamus – the list goes on!

The seaside city of Buchanan, located around just three hours by rumbling bush taxi south out of the capital at Monrovia, is a fine introduction to the coastal character of this part of West Africa.

The beaches are all undeveloped to the T, with swaying palm trees and groups of local children playing in the shallows.

Many opt to camp here, while others will hit the city itself, seeking out one of the few guesthouses that lurk between the frenetic markets and streets.

There is also a stretch of beach bars to enjoy, found nestled between the crumbling bamboo shacks along the shore.



Bushrod Island gets its name from one of the few American politicians that actually advocated the resettlement of slaves on the continent back in the 1800s.

But that's about as deep as the erstwhile politician, Bushrod Washington's, influence runs in this mangrove-fringed port town on the edge of the Atlantic.

Today, streets of tooting vehicles run in and out of the jetties and docks, the ramshackle slums of New Kru Town sprawl close to the shoreline, and there's an indelible energy of life throughout. It's not the most comfortable place to visit, granted, but it is an interesting glimpse at working, modern Liberia nonetheless.



The city of Harper has its fair share of both natural and human attractions, situated in the extreme south of Liberia, where the turns of the African panhandle give way to the beaches of the Ivory Coast.

For starters, the shores to the north-west and south of town are fringed with gorgeous Robinson Crusoe sands, with swaying coconut palms bristling against the Atlantic breezes at their back.

And then there are the remnants of Liberia's old slave settlers, who are thought to have first begun crafting the modern state on the

lands of Cape Palmas where Harper now stands. You'll see this legacy in the age-stained colonial frontispieces and arcaded plantation-style homes.



Kpatawee Waterfall: Just three hours' drive from Monrovia, the Kpatawee Waterfall is a favorite swimming and picnic spot for locals although it remains blissfully untouched and uncrowded. Clamber across the black boulders to the sound of rushing waters, dipping in and out of the cool water along the way – an epic adventure you'll not forget in a hurry.

