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PRELIMINARY BIODIVERSITY AND TROPICAL FOREST CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT FOR USAID/LIBERIA



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Liberia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2003)

Overall goal

To sustainably use biodiversity on a long-term basis in order to meet the requirements of present generations without endangering the potential of future generations to meet their own needs.

Specific goals

1. To take appropriate measures to protect critical ecosystems against harmful effects or destructive practices for conservation of biological diversity;
2. To create biodiversity awareness among sectors of the society and promote international cooperation;
3. To commit the people to the sound and sustainable use of biological diversity to bring about socio-economic development;
4. To promote rational utilization and conservation of biological diversity;
5. To promote access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization;
6. To contribute to the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals through poverty alleviation, food security, and women empowerment in biodiversity conservation by 2015.

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Acronyms

ASB	Alternatives to Slash-and-Burn Programme
AU	African Union
CEFDHAC	Conférence sur les Écosystèmes des Forêts Denses et Humides d'Afrique Centrale
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CI	Conservation International
CIFOR	Centre for International Forest Research
CIMMYT	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center
CMM	Conflict Management and Mitigation
ECOWAS	Economic Community of Western African States
EFA	Environmental Foundation for Africa
EFI	Environmental Foundation, incorporated
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FACE	Farmers Associated to Conserve the Environment
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization (of the UN)
FDA	Forest Development Authority
FFI	Fauna and Flora International
FSN	Foreign Service National
GEMAP	Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Project
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre-International Centre for Research in Agroforestry
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IUCN	World Conservation Union
LIFE	Liberia Indigenous Forum for the Environment
LFI	Liberia Forestry Initiative
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NGO	non-governmental organization
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Products
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
NWP	Nature, Wealth and Power
PA	Protected Area
SDI	Sustainable Development Institute
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WARDA	West African Rice Development Association
WMA	Wildlife Management Area

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Executive Summary

Conflict over and corruption in natural resource management (NRM) is a major cause of state fragility in Liberia. The resources generating the most conflict are timber and diamonds but all land and resources are part of the equation including tree crop plantations, food crops and wildlife. Either they become sources of sustainable development and conservation for the benefit of Liberians or they generate wealth and value that is removed from the country and contributes to instability and conflict.

The two most important direct threats to Liberia's biodiversity and forests are logging and the trade in bushmeat, with agricultural clearing and charcoal production contributing to deforestation, and pitsawing and mining depleting both flora and fauna as camps are set up for these activities. While selective logging practices may not extract large numbers of trees, roads attract agriculturalists and hunters into the forests. Additionally, the practice of "high grading"—taking the largest, most robust trees—is likely contributing to overall genetic decline in high value tree populations.

A major priority is assessment of the state of flora and fauna in Liberia in the wake of the recent years of violence and chaos. The last rigorous field-based assessments were carried out in the late 1980s. Rapid but thorough inventories are needed for targeted threats assessment and land use planning, ideally before the lifting of logging sanctions.

Pro-poor conservation cannot be a buzzword in the case of Liberia, which is among the most destitute nations on earth. USAID/Liberia should assist Liberian planners to study and adapt economic incentive models from other African nations in community forestry, wildlife management, and environmental services as well as working toward more secure land and resource tenure for rural dwellers during the process of land use planning.

Underlying tensions in Liberian society entail rural disenfranchisement and alienation of youth. Warlords will continue to try and exploit these fissures in society and some if not many local elites will use a changing regulatory environment as a chance to grab resources. In the process of reconstruction, Liberia must do all it can to avoid "perverse policy incentives" that deepen poverty, provoke conflict and accelerate resource mining. Enforcement has to target real criminals and not be used to harass local people and threaten their livelihoods. Conservation and land use planning has to build in multiple feedback loops between planners and diverse stakeholders. Without such a process, good technical and scientific planning will be corrupted on the ground and not lead to conservation and sustainable development outcomes.

USAID/Liberia is in an excellent position to improve NRM governance as the foundation of sustainable development through its work in anti-corruption, democracy, community and civil society strengthening, capacity building, expansion of economic opportunities for youth, support to the Liberia Forest Initiative (LFI) and to the smallholder tree crop sector. To assure that negative impacts on biodiversity and forests are minimized, it will need to monitor the effects of new NRM regulations and practices, as well as the physical impacts of road construction, plantation rehabilitation, and agricultural development.

Background

The USAID Mission in Liberia has been providing assistance to Liberia since 1952 to support sustainable development, ensure food security, promote peace and reconciliation, and provide emergency assistance in times of political crisis and humanitarian need. The Mission is currently operating under an extended transition strategy, “Community Reintegration and Revitalization,” which is coming to a close. The Mission is preparing a new three-year strategy statement. USAID/Liberia’s intention over these next three years is to build on its successes and meld elements of the existing strategy into one that will target value-added and growth-oriented sectors, and promote economic and political governance.

The Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961 requires that the President take fully into account the impact of foreign assistance programs and projects on environmental and natural resources. Sections 118 and 119 of the FAA require that all USAID operating unit strategic plans include an analysis of: 1) the actions necessary in that country to conserve biological diversity and tropical forests; and 2) the extent to which current or proposed USAID actions meet those needs. USAID/Liberia is completing the Section 118/119 analysis requirement in two phases: This document represents the first phase of the process. Phase 2 will be a more comprehensive and detailed assessment, building upon this report, and will be completed during the early part of 2006.

Liberia has extensive forest resources despite its modest size: it contains about 43% of the remaining Upper Guinean Forest ecosystem, a coastal rainforest belt covering six countries from eastern Sierra Leone to western Togo (Annex 1, Map 1). This forest is exceptionally diverse, biologically speaking, with high rates of endemism and many more species that are nearly extinct outside the country (FFI 2003). The West African Conservation Priority-Setting Exercise for the Upper Guinean Ecosystem (1999) identified Liberia as the top priority country in humid West Africa for conservation purposes (Map 2).

Liberia's forests play a vital role in the nation's economy, generating up to 60 percent of the nation's foreign exchange earnings and employing around 7,000 people as recently as 2002. Under the regime of Charles Taylor, forests in Liberia were not managed sustainably or transparently, and revenues generated through commercial logging were used to fund armed conflict in the region (Bode and Streed 2005).

Sapo National Park and Nimba Nature Reserve are Liberia’s only fully protected areas. Biological surveys since 2001 have demonstrated that Sapo Park is among West Africa’s least disturbed lowland rainforest areas, with populations of free-ranging forest elephants, tool-using chimpanzees, pygmy hippos and other species whose West African ranges have been severely reduced outside of Liberia (FFI 2003). Liberia’s Nimba Nature Reserve is contiguous with the Nimba Nature Reserves of Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire, which together were declared a Natural World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1981. Additionally, up to twelve other sites have been proposed for protected area status throughout the country, linked through corridors to create continuous habitat (Map 3).

Principle Threats

This section is divided into three parts: the first addresses direct threats to species and populations in Liberia, the second focuses on priority ecosystems/biomes and the third to the “system level” threats. Root causes and underlying factors shaping both threats and opportunities within the Liberian context are addressed in the system level.

Threats to Priority Species

Fauna

Despite the small size of Liberia, it is a biodiversity significant country. There are over 2000 flowering plants (225 timber species), 600 bird species, 150 mammals and 75 reptiles (NBSAP 2003). Liberia harbors the largest remaining proportion of the Upper Guinean Ecosystem, which Sayer *et al.* (1992) estimated at 42% of the remaining forest, followed by Côte d’Ivoire estimated at 28%, Ghana estimated at 16%, Guinea estimated at 8%, Sierra Leone estimated at 5% and Togo 1%.

Liberia contains 14 threatened and endangered mammals, according to the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) (2003):

- African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)
- Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*)
- Diana Monkey (*Cercopithecus diana*)
- Liberian Mongoose (*Liberritia kuhn*)
- Nimba otter shrew (*Micropotamogale la mollier*)
- Red colobus (*Procolobus badius*)
- Allens’s round leaf Bat (*Hipposideros marisae*)
- Buettikofer’s Epauletted fruit Bat (*Epopops buettikoferi*)
- Jenktins Duiker (*Cephalophus jentinki*)
- Pygmy Hippopotamus (*Choeropsis liberiensis*)
- Sperm whales (*Physeter catodon*)
- Spotted-necked otter (*Lutra maculicellis*)
- West African Manate (*Trichechnus senegabnsis*)
- Zebra Duiker (*Cephalophus zebra*)

The major threats to these species are the bushmeat trade and habitat loss. Table 5 (Annex 1) depicts threatened primate species prioritized by threat level; however these data are likely to be outdated. There is some evidence that the commercial trade in bushmeat is increasing and it is highly likely that militarization fuels this trade. In addition, the inability of Liberians to gain livelihoods from farming or other means over the last years has driven them to intensify hunting.

Trade in exotic animals and cross-border bushmeat trade are part of the equation but the extent and how these have changed with both conflict and peace is unknown. At least 31 animal species are consumed by Liberians (Frayne 2002: 37) with the most common species being duikers. However, there is evidence that many people would replace bushmeat with other protein sources, especially fish (Figure 1, in Annex). In addition to

protected species, a recent study showed unsustainable harvest of the black duiker, Ogilby's duiker and giant pangolin and possibly yellow-backed and zebra duiker (Frayne 2002: 30, 45, 50). This trend to overharvesting has implications for both conservation and food security.

In addition to threatened mammals, there is an estimated 11 threatened birds out of 694 total species (Figure 2 and Table 6 in Annex) and several threatened reptile species. The extent and locations of threats to specific species are not adequately documented and there is disagreement in the earlier literature concerning the severity of threat to different species. It will be important to trace market chains and identify key actors in the trade including financing. The data available do not provide specificity for targeted threat-reduction activities and thus rapid assessments are needed.

Flora

Timber Species

Relatively large areas of forest remain intact in Liberia but this situation is almost certainly going to change and change rapidly. Historically, Liberia's forests were conserved through low-impact selective-logging, strong forest governance through a well-staffed and supplied Forest Development Authority (FDA), low population density in forest areas, and alternative national economic growth sources. Since the 1980s, the percent of GDP from the forest sector has increased significantly, indicating an increased dependence on Liberia's forests. This increased dependence has created greater pressure on biodiversity and threatened the maintenance of forest cover in the country (CI 2005).

Despite Liberia claiming 43% of the remaining Upper Guinean Forest, only an estimated 40-45% of the country's original forest cover survives of which, according to the FDA, approximately 35% is "undisturbed," 45% is "disturbed but productive" and 20% is "disturbed and unproductive." These figures date from before the war and do not account for re-growth during the war and intensive logging since the war. Map 1 in Annex presents more recent data on forest cover. As far back as twenty years ago, foresters alerted the FDA that certain timber species were being overexploited (Table 1), which led to the passing of Forest Regulation 18 and the ban on harvesting ten of these species.



Photo 1: Stockpile of Niangon logs at the Port of Greenville, Sinoe County
Source: Ben Donnie, NBSAP

Table 1. Overexploited timber species

SCIENTIFIC NAME	TRADE NAME
<i>Entandrophragma utilis</i>	Sipo
<i>Entandrophragma cylidricum</i>	Sapele
<i>Entandrophragma candole</i>	Kosipo
<i>Entandrophragma angolenses</i>	Tiama
<i>Tieghemella heckelii</i>	Makore
<i>Lovoa trichiliodes</i>	Lovoa
<i>Triplochyton schleroxylum</i>	Wawa/Obeche
<i>Aniengre robusta</i>	Aniengre
<i>Khaya anthotheca</i>	Khaya
<i>Holea ciliate</i>	Abura
<i>Piptadeniastrum africanum</i>	Dahoma
<i>Tetraberlinia tubmaniana</i>	Tet
<i>Chlorophora regia</i>	Iroko
<i>Heritiera utilis</i>	Niangon
<i>Lophira alata</i>	Ekki
<i>Nauclea diderrichii</i>	Kusia

Source: NBSAP 2003 and LIFE

Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPs)

There is scant information concerning the exploitation of non-timber forest products such as rattan, traditional medicines, indigenous fruits or other products. Rattan shops can be found in Monrovia and some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are involved in beekeeping and honey production. Some NTFPs are important famine foods in times of conflict when farming is hazardous and so exploitation can increase in time of instability.

In degraded areas, forest rehabilitation and agroforestry will need to be harnessed to replenish important products from trees and shrubs. With population growth and the expansion of agriculture into forest areas, some NTFPs can become scarce; particularly higher value ones such as rattan and forest foods. Another consideration is timber species that also produce NTFP valuable to local people. Logging regulations should take into account these products and limit the cutting of important NTFP trees, especially mother trees and trees near settlements.

There is some concern that with the development of communal and community forests, NTFPs may be overexploited (Suter, J. n.d.). Over-regulation of NTFPs, on the other hand, can exacerbate poverty and create opportunities for corruption in sales and transportation of these products. Boom and bust cycles can affect NTFPs that are traded internationally and regionally and thus good market analysis and private sector linkages are needed before groups decide to embark on NTFP enterprises.

Forest and tree products include charcoal and firewood, which can drive deforestation around population centers and are going to be critically important for many years to come. Sustainable charcoal and fuelwood production in woodlots and community forests can be a source of income but there are many lessons that need to be applied for this to work effectively and benefit communities as well as forests (Russell and Franzel 2004).

Thus in the context of community or communal forestry, sustainable production and commercialization of NTFPs and fuelwood/charcoal needs to be based on the best models and lessons from Africa and other parts of the world.

Agrobiodiversity and Agricultural Systems

Major crops grown are rice, cassava, maize, oil palm, cocoa, coffee, rubber and sugar cane. The Asian rice species (*Oryza sativa*) and the African species (*Oryza glaberrima*) are the two rice species grown. *Oryza glaberrima* is nowadays rare. Twenty-two aquatic varieties (19 exotic and 3 indigenous) and thirty-two terrestrial (25 exotic and 7 indigenous) are available. Nearly all the exotic varieties were brought from the West African Rice Development Association (WARDA) (NBSAP 2003).

In times of crisis, agricultural systems may become simplified or even abandoned as people turn to wild foods. Livestock die and go astray. Plantations are abandoned. Unsustainable harvesting of rubber has certainly taken place, and the rubber trees are old, thus degrading the value of the rubber resource. Weak markets mean that people have no incentive to adopt improved technologies or intensify, thus systems tend toward “extensification”: burning and clearing larger areas to counteract declining productivity. These trends are important for tropical forests and biodiversity because they relate to land and resource use choices. A more productive and profitable agricultural sector is a complement to conservation.

It will be important to document how the years of war have affected the quality, quantity and diversity of germplasm available to farmers: often people are forced to consume their seed stocks and fields and plantations are poorly managed. Some important food crop varieties may be lost. Invasive species such as *C. odorata* may crowd out native species in forest succession, thus reducing biodiversity (Box 1). Some informants mentioned farmers’ inability to grow rice and increasing reliance on cassava. NGOs such as Africare and Environmental Fund for Africa (EFA) are promoting swamp rice to reduce slash-and-burn practices but the agronomic and ecological dimensions of this choice do not seem to be well considered by these groups. Swamp areas may be important habitats for threatened or protected species such as crocodiles and birds. It is also important to remember that only 6% of Liberia’s land is devoted to agriculture (Earthtrends 2005) so

Box 1: Invasive species in Liberia
There are many floral and faunal species that invaded Liberia over the last several decades. Invasion here means accidental and unplanned introduction of plant and animal species. Some of the plant species are: the water hyacinth, the Nile salad, *Leucenea leucocephalus* and *Chromoleana odorata*. *C. odorata*, a perennial shrub is a typical pioneer species of secondary forest succession with a strong heliophilic character and vigorous vegetative development (NBSAP 2003).

an overemphasis on preventing slash and burn may not be warranted. A more productive strategy would be to work within the upland systems on increasing diversification and productivity.

Diversified tree crop plantations hold promise for both economic growth and biodiversity in areas surrounding and connecting forests (Table 7 in Annex).

These complex systems can provide habitat for animals as well as environmental services such as protected waterways. Management objectives can shift when economic growth

ramps up and such systems are under pressure to reduce diversity and maximize the tree crop value (Omont, Nicolas and Russell, forthcoming). Use of chemical inputs can increase, including copper-based fungicides for cocoa which may affect soil micorrhyza, mushrooms and other species.

Threats to Priority Habitats/Biomes

Forest Margins of Globally Significant Forests

Priority forests have been identified as Gola-Lofa-Mano complex (bordering Sierra Leone), Upper Krahn/Bassa, Cestos-Sehwen, Grebo, Sapo-Putu Range (including Sapo National Park and bordering Cote d’Ivoire) (Conservation International 2001). Sapo is a priority for invertebrates, mammals, birds, and reptiles while Cestos-Senkwehn and Lofa-Mano very high for invertebrates. A slightly different set of priorities was presented in the NBSAP (Table 2).

Table 2. Priority forest areas

Forest area	A– Conservation priority	B – Urgency of response	Priority for action (columns A + B)
Gola-Lofa-Mano	3	2	5
Cestos-to-Sapo corridor	2	2	4
Wologizi	2	2	4
Wenegisi	3	1	4
West Nimba	1	2	3
Grand Kru	2	1	3
North-west Zwedru	1	1	2

Source: NBSAP 2003

Apart from defaunation, which is covered above, forest fragmentation is the biggest threat to these forests. Forest margins are extended through population growth from towns and villages and infrastructure development, particularly logging roads. Some species thrive in forest margins and secondary even relatively disturbed forests while others require undisturbed habitat. Conversion of forest to agricultural use further fragments forested areas (Map 4 in Annex).

Waterways and Watersheds

Thirteen and a half (13.5) percent of Liberia’s total area is covered with water. There are six major rivers, which flow from mountains in the north and empty into the Atlantic Ocean: Cavalla, St. John, Mano, Lofa, Cestos and St. Paul (NBSAP 2003). Major threats to waterways include logging of forests on riverbanks, which can cause siltation, pollution from mining tailings, overfishing and use of poisons to kill fish.

Watersheds are located in Mount Nimba, Wologosi-Ziama (both border Guinea). Nimba is an important area for bird diversity. It is also extending into Guinea highlands that are the headwaters for major rivers of West Africa. As river headwaters are not in Liberia there is need for a *transboundary approach* to protecting major watersheds.

Coastal/Mangrove and Wetland Systems

The coastline of Liberia is 560 km (350 miles) long and about 58% of the population lives along this coast. With a continental shelf of 14,894 sq. km, and territorial sea of up to 159,200 sq. km, it produces annually 7,616 metric tons of fish and 126 metric tons of marine invertebrates, including mollusks and crustaceans.

The marine/brackish fish species are all native species. Fishing effort, both freshwater and marine employed 5,143 people, and between 1995 and 1998, the number of docked fishery vessels recorded was 14. Since 1998, it is highly likely that the number of fishing vessels using Liberia's waters has increased exponentially. A helicopter flyover by UNMIL in 2005 revealed a dozen unmarked fishing vessels in Liberian waters within a one hour flight (Simpson Pers. Comm. Nov 8 2005). CI is interested in both freshwater and marine biodiversity, including the mining of Liberia's coastal fisheries by these illegal fishing operations. Fisheries could be an important sustainable development option for Liberia.

There are four wetland types: inland riverine, inland swamp, coastal and coastal lacustrine. Presently only eight wetlands have been identified (Table 3), three of which have been proposed for conservation status (NBSAP 2003).

Lake Piso is a high priority for conservation. It is a lagoon about 100 km² on the border with Sierra Leone. Richard Sambolah of FFI feels that Lake Piso should be a conservation priority in part because communities have been well organized in the past for collective action of this common-property resource but neglect and war started to break down this system.

Table 3. Wetlands of Liberia

Wetland	Type	Size (acres)	Conservation Status
Lake Piso	Coastal Lacustrine	76,091	Proposed Nature Reserve
Marshall	Inland Riverine	n/a	Proposed Nature Reserve
Mesurado	Coastal	n/a	None
Lake Shepherd	Coastal	n/a	None
Bafu Bay	Coastal	n/a	None
Cestos-Senkwehn	Inland Riverine	n/a	Proposed Nature Reserve
Gbedin	Inland Swamp	n/a	None
Kpatawee	Inland Riverine	n/a	None

Source: Kromah 2002

System Level Threats

Environmental Services (Biophysical Systems)

Conservation and land use planning should take into account environmental services, especially protection of major watersheds. The strategy may not necessarily be in the form of a protected area but in local and community-based regulations of waterways, including restrictions on cutting vegetation and logging of riverbanks and polluting waterways.

It is important to get the science right in watershed planning. There is at present a great deal of controversy about the role of forests in watershed functions, with a recent study (Bruijnzeel 2004) claiming that forests do not play a major role in flooding at the landscape level. As CIFOR Direct General David Kaimowitz puts it, “building roads and houses may be the real culprits when it comes to sedimentation... governments and NGOs have wasted a lot of money on watershed projects that had clear ideas but fuzzy thinking” (POLEX listserv October 21, 2005). He notes also that poor people in the uplands can often be blamed for floods or erosion when their tree and food crop systems may be sustainable. Focusing too much attention or blame on slash-and-burn agriculture may not be warranted, as mentioned above.

Land use planning will identify areas of higher agricultural potential where intensification of agriculture can proceed. Improving and maintaining soil fertility is a major challenge in many African countries. There are significant scientific resources to draw on devoted to this problem within the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) such as Soil Fert Net, hosted by CIMMYT. (www.soilfertnetsouthernafrica.org/what_new/new.htm).

Institutional Environment (Sociopolitical Systems)

All conservation and land use planning has to be done within an institutional structure. Liberia is one of the weakest countries in the world in terms of functioning institutions. Violence and conflict have wreaked havoc on institutions that had structural weaknesses and general lack of capacity to begin with. The FDA is the most significant Liberian institution for management of forests and biodiversity yet it has been oriented heavily toward commercial timber extraction and even for that function lacks key skills and expertise. New institutions for biodiversity and parks as well as community forestry are likely going to be needed but creation of these institutions will not come easily.

The forest sector of the country is in extreme transition as of this writing. There is a recommendation to suspend all logging concessions, which has not yet been acted on by the National Transition Government of Liberia (NTGL). It will likely then be one of the most critical decisions facing the new government because it will affect the lifting of logging sanctions from Liberia; in turn the recommendations of the UN Security Council on the sanctions will shape both economic growth and conservation strategies in Liberia.

The following constraints are common to nearly all Liberian institutions, according to the NBSAP (2003):

1. Inadequate trained personnel and misplacement of available personnel
2. Lack of basic facilities and infrastructure
3. Low level of public participation
4. Poverty
5. Inadequate public education
6. Insufficient political will
7. Inadequate policy and legislation
8. Lack of coordination and cohesion

According to informants, these weaknesses have led to corruption and participation of officials in the accelerated extraction of the resources of the country. Putting into place the rule of law is a first step to institutional reform but there must also be leadership and cultural norms in place, most particularly respect for national patrimony. If people feel that there is corruption at the top and weak enforcement, resources will continue to be “up for grabs.”

Market Systems

Liberia has a comparative advantage in timber and rubber, with potential for cocoa, oil palm and other tree crops. At the national and regional level Liberian forests contain valuable products such as rattan, bushmeat and other forest products that can be traded to neighboring countries. Lifting the logging ban will bring a flurry of activity in the timber sector that may also activate other sectors.

Pitsawing provides important products to the local economy but is wasteful of the product and environmental damaging. Banning it will continue to drive it underground. Communities should have some access to the timber market and to locally produced timber (Kaimowitz 2003).). Simple and transparent permitting processes are one solution but must be monitored so that they do not become sources of graft and corruption. A major threat to fauna is intensification of market organization of bushmeat trade, shotgun hunting (Frayne 2002: 40) with the opening up of logging roads and markets for loggers and other immigrants.

Another economic development that could have a significant impact on biodiversity and forests is mining. Chinese investors interested in iron mine are planning to build a railroad up to mine and to redevelop port of Buchanan. Our visit to the Ministry of Lands and Mines was canceled in favor of Chinese visitors who entered as we were ushered out without seeing the Deputy Minister. Immigration for mining is taking place.

A large threat is presented if youths and marginalized rural people are left out of the market as it expands with peace and government control. Reigning in predatory private sector actors is another huge challenge. If these threats are not met, economic activity that mines and degrades Liberia’s resources will continue leaving little benefit to the people.

Priority Actions

This report provides a preliminary list of priority actions to address the threats to flora and fauna species, ecosystems/ biomes, and system level threats.

- Develop *pro-poor conservation approaches* that have dual and equal objectives of alleviating poverty and conserving habitats and species (Slide 1).

By this we do not mean integrated conservation and development projects (ICDP), but rather crafting complementary and harmonized national and regional strategies that address root causes of poverty, many of which also contribute to environmental problems (Scherr 2003).

Environmental governance lessons show for example that failure to resolve ownership and access rights and responsibilities leads to “open access” situations and resource mining (land and resources being “up for grabs”). Lack of secure rights and responsibilities also contributes to poverty because people cannot make sustained productive investments in their land. Uncertainty about what can be sold or transported contributes to poverty. Corruption in forest and wildlife authorities means that local

people will not respect the rule of law.

What is pro-poor conservation?

- Defined by **outcomes**: conservation that delivers net benefits (at very least, does no harm) to poor people
- Defined by **process**: a progressive change in practice of conservation organisations – from using poverty reduction as a tool for better conservation through to using conservation in order to deliver on poverty reduction
- Defined by **actions**: conservation strategies that are explicitly designed to address the challenge of poverty reduction and development strategies that recognise the role of biodiversity conservation
- Defined by **drivers**: conservation that puts poor people and their priorities at the centre of decision-making

Another key element of such an approach is building social capital around conservation and sounder NRM. Trust and confidence is needed among local actors because for the foreseeable future law enforcement will not have the capacity to catch all or even many poachers or encroachers, some of whom may be highly organized and well-financed.

Slide 1. Definition of Pro-poor Conservation.

Source: IIED

Elements of pro-poor conservation include more secure access to land

and forest resources, rights to harvest and sell forest products, the crafting of contracts/agreements between protected areas and adjacent villages, and exploration of the potential for wildlife management areas (WMA) (DFID 2002). One approach tried at a USAID-funded site in Indonesia involves “negotiation support systems” between local villages and protected area (PA) authorities, leading to “villages with a special conservation designation” (Fay and Russell 2002).

- Sponsor scientific and participatory assessments of biodiversity for priority setting and planning. Within this process, tighten up and target threat analysis. Data are lacking for accurate and targeted analysis and action.
- Clearly analyze proposed threats and incentives. Often major threats come from “off-site” actors such as commercial bushmeat hunters, immigrants doing mining or pitting, traders or logging camps. Local actors usually are relatively powerless to stop these threats. Incentives to and capacity building of local actors may be necessary but not sufficient to counter threats from “outsiders.” Some threats can be addressed at a national or regional level (migration, logging policies) while others require law enforcement. The challenge is for law enforcement to concentrate on major threats and not harass locals or pose threats to local security; they must be monitored carefully at the outset. Local people must feel that conservation brings increased security for them. Restrictive forestry laws such as bans on bushmeat, trade in NTFPs or locally produced timber can pose a major threat to local people’s

security and livelihoods even as they are well-intentioned. They are often also a major source of corruption as they are easily bypassed by wealthier agents.

- Apply African NRM lessons to Liberia. The mission should commission a thorough analysis of local governance options and processes in the context of decentralization of NRM and land tenure reform, drawing lessons from other African countries through knowledge resources such as FRAME and Nature Wealth and Power (NWP).
- Continue to work within a *sustainable economic growth strategy* that provides viable alternatives to youth and promotes investment in rural areas in non-extractive industries: diversified smallholder outgrower plantations, community forestry, biodiversity research “tourism” and community monitoring, small-scale artisan and other industries.
- Move ahead with logging concession reform and other anti-corruption measures related to NRM. Devise strategies for returning logging benefits to communities in transparent manner. Apply lessons on decentralized NRM (Ribot 2004).
- Develop institutional capacity building for wildlife and conservation management, drawing on African resources such as the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), Mweka College of Wildlife (Tanzania), resources in South Africa and other countries. Integrate Liberia into African conservation forums such as CEFDHAC.
- Promote constituency-building for conservation and improved forest management at all levels. This strategy should avoid “awareness” approaches (telling people about nature) but rather tap into national and local pride in and knowledge of forests and natural resources through methods such as participatory mapping, participatory forest resource inventories, stories and legends that highlight people’s relations to nature, and training of para-taxonomists to assist researchers.

Jim Fairhead and Melissa Leach (n.d.: 29), who have studied the ecological and social history of the Upper Guinea region for decades, make the point that many forests were heavily populated and farmed before the late 19th century. When CI identified priorities in the region for conservation, “all of the areas prioritized were as of ‘exceptionally high’ and ‘very high’ importance for conservation cover formerly populous areas. These are thus forests rich in cultural heritage as well as natural heritage, and conservation attempts would do well to acknowledge this.”

Assessment of Current USAID/Liberia Program

USAID and Liberia Mission staff members were amidst preparing the new three-year strategy statement during the writing of this report. Our assessment of how the USAID/Liberia program affects biodiversity and tropical forestry resources is based upon a review of a draft strategy and program structure. The extent to which proposed USAID programs meet actions needed to conserve Liberia's tropical forests and biodiversity is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Extent to which USAID/Liberia strategy meets actions needed

Actions Necessary	Activities Proposed
1. Pro-poor conservation approach	community-based reconciliation, CDC, community forestry
2. Sustainable economic growth strategy	RFTF, restore agriculture sector, community forestry
3. Reform forest sector/other anti-corruption	GEMAP, LFI, anti-corruption reforms
4. Institutional capacity building	AJP, improve education sector, cross-site visits
5. Scientific assessment of biodiversity	LFI (partnership with CI and FFI)
6. Build constituency for conservation	CDC, LFI, local NGOs and CBOs

Threats and Opportunities of Proposed USAID Activities

The USAID/Liberia strategy for 2006-2008 is comprised of four strategic objectives. There is at least one, but often more, activities designed to address each strategic objective. Proposed activities have been evaluated against two criteria:

- 1) What, if any, are the threats (direct and/or indirect negative impacts) to forests and biodiversity that would result from implementing the activity and how could it be mitigated; and
- 2) What are the additional opportunities for USAID to better contribute to meeting conservation needs?

A brief summary of the proposed activities and analysis of threats and opportunities is presented below, organized under each of the four strategic objectives¹.

2.1 SO: Reinforce African conflict mitigation capacity

2.1.1. Support Results Focused Transition Framework (RFTF)

In collaboration with other donors and the international community, USAID will support the following strategic interventions: develop financial self-sufficiency of war affected persons particularly youth and women, contribute to social cohesion in the communities, and help link communities to government.

¹ Activities are not numbered or differentiated in the draft strategy however, SOs are numbered from 2.1 to 2.4. The numbering of activities is based upon the SO numbering system and was developed by the consultants as a way to better organize this discussion.

Threats: There are no direct negative impacts expected from this activity. Indirect negative impacts could occur if agriculture or other economic activities are promoted in the forest zone without adequate land use planning.

Opportunities:

1. Include NRM as a key focus of social cohesion, including water resources management, agricultural and plantation rehabilitation and involvement in conservation.
2. In terms of linking communities to government, the Mission can study the Landcare approach to involving farmers in better NRM and working with local government. Landcare has been used in the Philippines to rehabilitate degraded lands through collective action and rewarding those who manage well by stronger tenure. It is used in Uganda to negotiate between farmer groups and Protected Area management as well as to strengthen markets for organic and agroforestry products.
(see: www.landcareus.org/pdf/LandcareFAQs.pdf.)

2.1.2. Establish Community Development Committees (CDC) to help prioritize development activities in targeted communities.

Threats: There are no direct negative impacts expected from this activity. Indirect negative impacts could include “elite capture” of committees leading to poor NRM outcomes. An example of this is when local committee leaders (elites) capture the benefits of activities and also use this platform to sell or rent collective resources.

Opportunities:

1. Using the CDCs to advance better NRM through sound and transparent representative processes that takes into account intergenerational, gender and other local social dynamics.
2. Encouraging a CDC network so that groups are interacting and working with each other within civil society.
3. Ensuring a community-led process so that people are empowered to find solutions themselves. These solutions will likely be closely linked to livelihoods and thus to NRM.

2.1.3. Advance a Community Based Reconciliation Program

This program will aid communities in identifying potential conflict triggers and stress points, improve human rights protections, and end the culture of impunity in Liberia’s most vulnerable communities.

Threats: There are no direct negative impacts expected from this activity. Indirect negative impacts could include jealousy of groups not receiving benefits and resulting in conflicts. Conflict can mean weak collective action to address NRM.

Opportunities:

1. Land will certainly be a critical dimension of any reconciliation and the most vulnerable communities will have the weakest access to land and resources. Hence in

land use planning, these communities have to be identified and targeted for assistance, as they negotiate rights and responsibilities to land and resources. Vulnerable populations whose land and resource access can be at risk include widows and female headed households, child-headed households, remote dwellers and ethnic minorities. Immigrants can also be at risk and these cases have to be carefully analyzed.

2. Demilitarization, demobilization can assist in reducing arms in rural areas thus mitigating threats to both animals and people; it can also help conservation planners track and monitor groups that have arms and present higher level threats to endangered species.

2.2 SO: Increase access to essential services

2.2.1. Improved Community Health Program

A package of integrated health sector services with three components: family planning support, prevention and control infectious diseases, and reducing transmission and impact of HIV/AIDS.

Threats: There are no direct negative impacts expected from this activity. Family planning will indirectly benefit conservation needs by slowing population growth. Indirect negative impacts could include spraying pesticides or clearing vegetation for malaria or tse tse control.

Mitigating actions: Use of pesticides requires an EIA

Opportunities:

1. Mobilization of women for health can be related to NRM especially around the issues of clean water, food diversity (nutrition) and sanitation. Use of locally derived plant medicines can be integrated into the health system as these are used by the vast majority of Liberians.

2.2.2. Improve educational sector

Efforts will support and extend the quality and availability of basic education through: educational policy reform, teacher training and provision of education materials, and improving the quality of the workforce through vocational and technical education.

Threats: There are no direct negative impacts expected from this activity. Indirect impacts could include young people setting their sights on migration to towns and cities and neglecting agriculture—this could be positive or negative.

Opportunities:

1. Integrate environmental education into the curriculum focusing on local knowledge and use of local species.

2.3 SO: Advance inclusive governance

2.3.1. Support Access to Justice Program (AJP)

Specifically, USAID will work to: establish legal advice centers and national referral network, strengthen judicial reformers of civil society, integrate alternative dispute mechanisms, and provide incentives to attract public defenders.

Threats: There are no direct or indirect negative impacts expected from this activity.

Opportunities:

1. This activity presents another opportunity to deal with land and resource issues in a just and transparent manner.

2.3.2. Promote anti-corruption reforms

Programs in all sectors will help address corruption by increasing transparency, public oversight, and governance reform. There will be a special focus on re-exerting legitimate control over the exploitation of Liberia's natural resources, especially timber.

Threats: There are no direct or indirect negative impacts expected from these reforms.

Opportunities:

1. Reducing corruption, especially in the management of natural resources, may be one of the best approaches to addressing a root cause of tropical forest decline and decrease in biodiversity. Close collaboration with LFI on this activity is essential.

2.4 SO: Restore and maintain basic economic activity and livelihoods

2.4.1. Support the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP)

GEMAP is designed to ensure prudent and transparent revenue collection, including those generated through sustainable harvest and sale of forest resources.

Threats: There are no direct negative impacts expected from this activity. One indirect negative impact could be that during the transition period of defining and setting into place regulations there is conflict and confusion over jurisdiction and control of revenue, which could result in accelerated "mining" of the resource. In short, everyone scrambles to use the resource before access and regulation gets fully into place. In other countries these transitions have taken years to accomplish with many steps and negotiations along the way.

Opportunities:

1. Bring in lessons from other countries on reducing conflict and confusion in regulating access to and benefit from forest products including timber. Experience shows that simpler, more transparent regulations are likely to lead to less confusion. Translating regulations into local languages is a good step.

2.4.2. Support the restoration of agriculture sector-led economic growth in Liberia
Specifically, USAID will: help rehabilitate smallholder tree crop farms/plantations (cocoa, coffee, rubber, oil palm) via the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP), promote the growth of micro- and small business enterprises, reactivation of livestock and selected inland fish ponds, and multiplication and distribution of germplasm, and help farmers/producers improve governance and responsiveness of Liberian farmers/producers organizations.

Threats: expansion of agriculture into forest areas (however Mission says that this is not in the plan); possible reduction in agrobiodiversity with widespread germplasm distribution of a few varieties; introduction of exotic tree species
Direct negative impacts: forest degradation through expanded agricultural area
Indirect negative impacts: reduction of biodiversity in plantations and farms with economic growth-led strategy (concentration on one or a few crops)

Mitigating actions: Land use planning at local level to conserve forest areas and promote sustainable management. Use and quality improvement of local germplasm where possible.

Recognize that the tree crop and food crops systems are not always unified either spatially or in management within a household and family: often the former is managed by men and the latter by women. This division has implications for extension and targeting seeds, tools and other inputs.

Opportunities:

1. Integrate agroforestry practices to help encourage more permanent, sustainable farming systems and reduce shifting cultivation-induced pressure on forests. Use particularly the lessons from the Alternatives to Slash and Burn (ASB) program: www.asb.cgiar.org.
2. While promoting animal husbandry and fish farming for protein and revenue, consider any environmental impacts of these practices. Understand also the cultural and social uses of animals within any given area—in many areas of rural Africa animals are important gift and ceremonial items.

Liberian Forestry Initiative (LFI)

While not tied to a specific strategic objective, USAID/Liberia has been participating in LFI, whose long-term goal to reform the forest sector so that forests are managed sustainably and to the benefit of all Liberians. Many of LFI's existing programmatic activities fall under the overall objectives of GEMAP.

The community forestry axis of the LFI remains undeveloped and the Mission hopes to work in this area over the next couple of years, which will include a significant amount of local capacity building and building on lessons from other West African countries such as Guinea, Mali, and Senegal.

Threats: There are no direct or indirect negative impacts expected from this activity.

Opportunities:

1. Within the land use planning exercises there is potential for incorporating governance, conflict mitigation, and livelihood analysis as well as conservation and concession management.
2. This process can build capacity of local resource managers through activities such as community mapping, natural resource inventories and options exercises.

Other Considerations

Activities Requiring an EIA

There are certain activities that USAID/Liberia may engage in that will require a more extensive environmental analysis under regulation 22 CFR 216. Possible activities that could require an environmental impact assessment (EIA) include:

- Any construction activity but especially road construction
- Distribution of seeds and tools in forest areas and to ex-combatants returning to forest areas
- Agribusiness in forest areas, especially expansion of oil palm
- Reducing diversity in smallholder rubber plantations
- Promotion of swamp rice
- Food security: agricultural intensification strategy, input provision (esp germplasm)

Areas of Further Study

- The Mission may consider providing conflict training and Do No Harm training to partners through the CMM office:
www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/conflict/
www.cdainc.com/publications/dnh/do_no_harm_handbook.php
- Strengthen links to West African NRM, decentralization and community forestry experience through FRAME, NWP
- Sponsor a study of the environmental impact of accelerated mining
- FFI will be carrying out a program on links between conservation and humanitarian assistance managed by USAID/Washington through the Biodiversity Team (Mary Rowen, CTO)
- To build local constituencies, consider sponsoring a study or review of cultural factors in conservation: sacred groves, hunting bans, taboos on eating certain animals (e.g., chimpanzee, *Profelis aurata*/golden cat, African lisang)

Recommendations for Comprehensive Assessment in 2006

Proposed composition of team (2 external, 2 host country nationals):

Forester/social forester

Wildlife biologist

Ecologist/environmental sociologist
Institutional or policy specialist

Proposed site visits:

Sapo, Mt Nimba and Lake Piso

Bushmeat markets

Timber concessions

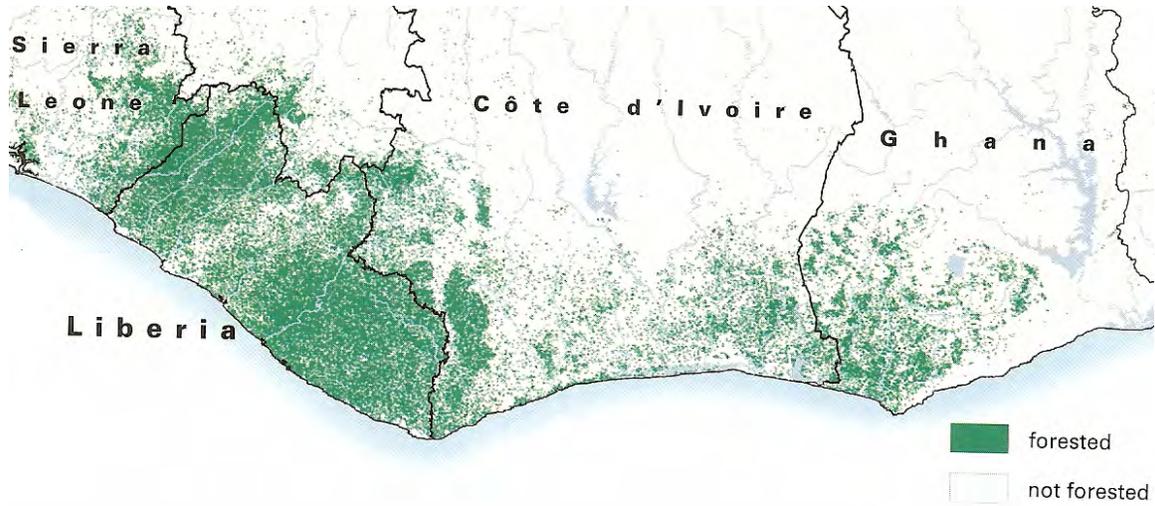
Plantations (small and large)

Other considerations for the comprehensive assessment:

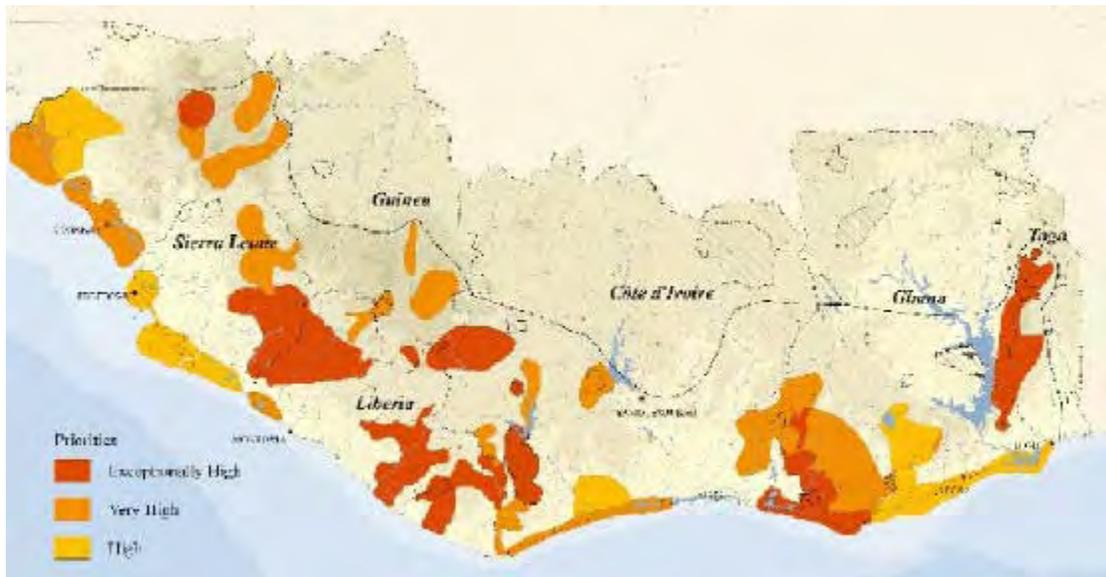
- Build capacity through this study by involving FSNs, FDA and local NGOs
University of Liberia, and Cuttington University
- Complete a comprehensive table of threats to species including locations, actors,
market chains and impacts on populations
- Link the assessment to forest and wildlife inventories
- Study the potential for community-based hunting regulations (bylaws)
- Study social capital in rural areas-both “negative” and “positive” (traditional,
government, religious, youth, women) (Richards et al. 2004)
- Consider immigration and cross-border issues

Annexes

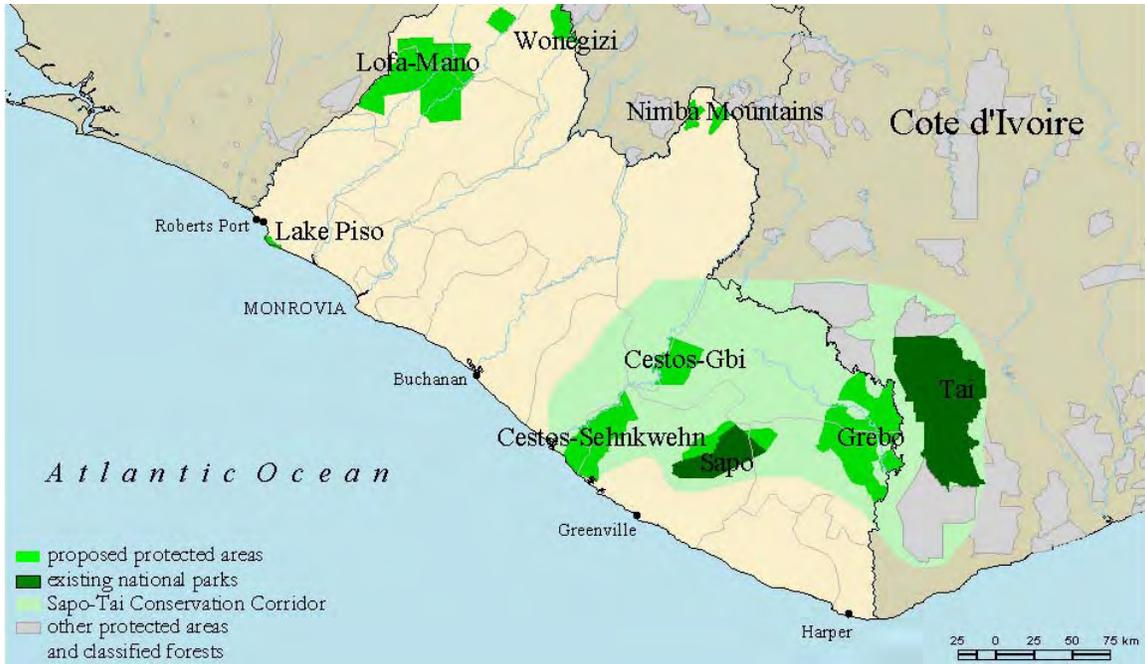
1 Maps and Figures and Additional Tables



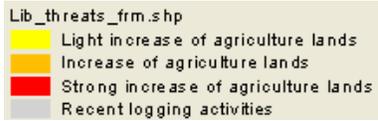
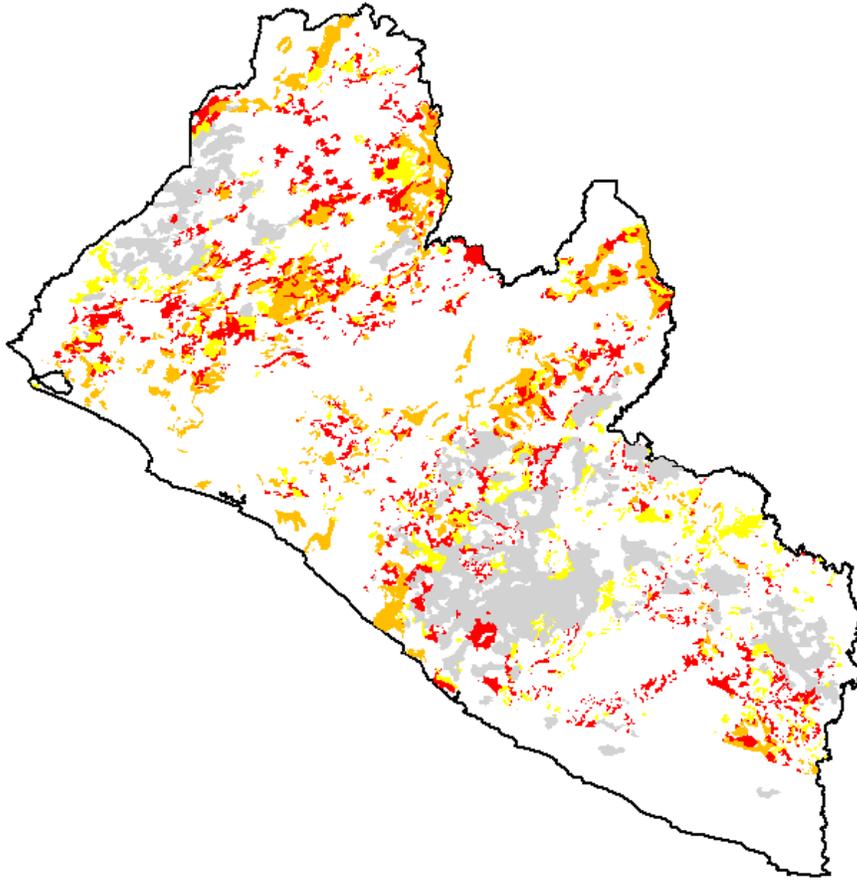
Map 1: Forest cover 2001
Source: FFI/Conservation International



Map 2: Conservation Priorities of Upper Guinea Region
Source: Conservation International 2001



Map 3: Proposed Protected Areas (CI-GoL MOU)
Source: Conservation International



Map 4: Location of major agricultural threats to forest
Source: World Bank

Question 20: If the cost were the same, which would you prefer to eat?

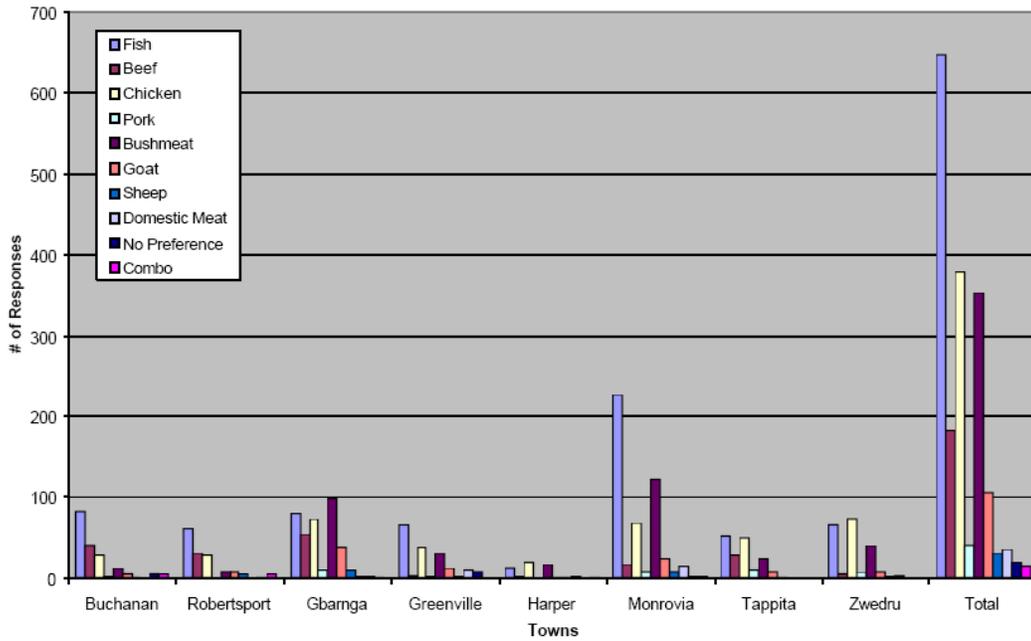


Figure 1: Preference for bushmeat and substitutes
 Source: Hoyt and Groff 2002: 30

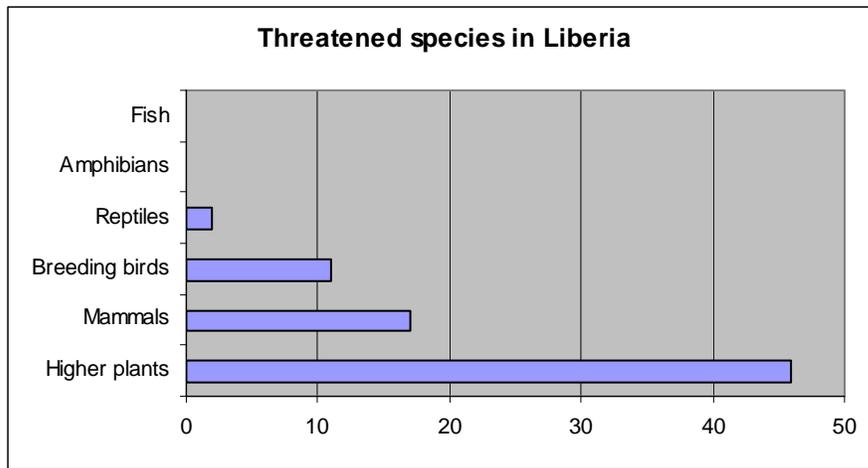


Figure 2: Threatened species, major taxa
 Source: Earthtrends

Ecosystem Areas by Type, Liberia, 1992-93

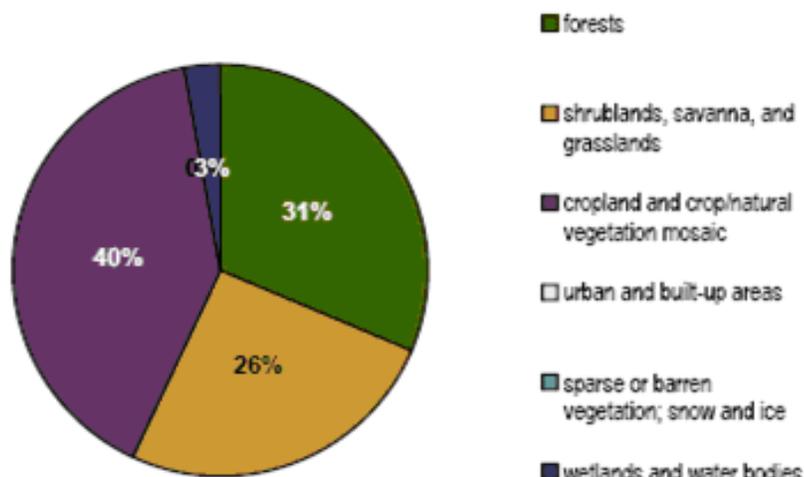


Figure 3: Ecosystem types in Liberia

Source: Earthtrends

Table 5. Ranking threatened primate species

	A	B	C	Total
Diana Monkey	4	2	2	8
Olive Colobus	3	2	2	7
Chimpanzee	3	3	1	7
Red Colobus	3	1	2	6
Black and White Colobus	3	1	2	6
Potto	1	3	1	5
Dwarf Galago	1	2	1	4
Green Monkey	1	2	1	4
Campbell's Monkey	1	1	1	3
Sooty Mangabey	2?(1)	2	2?(1)	6(4)
Putty-Nose guenon	2?(3)	2	2	6(7)
Spot-Nose guenon	1	1	2?(1)14(3)	

A = degree of threat 1-6, B = taxonomic uniqueness 1-3, C = association with other threatened forms

Source: Oates 1985 in NBSAP 2003

Table 6: Threatened bird species in Liberia

Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>	Vulnerable
White-breasted Guineafowl	<i>Agelastes meleagrides</i>	Vulnerable
Rufous Fishing-owl	<i>Scotopelia ussheri</i>	Endangered
Western Wattled Cuckoo-Shrike	<i>Lobotos lobatus</i>	Vulnerable
Liberian Greenbul	<i>Phyllastrephus leucolepis</i>	Critical
Green-tailed Bristlebill	<i>Bleda eximius</i>	Vulnerable
Yellow-bearded Greenbul	<i>Criniger olivaceus</i>	Vulnerable
White-necked Picathartes	<i>Picathartes gymnocephalus</i>	Vulnerable
Sierra Leone Prinia	<i>Prinia leontica</i>	Vulnerable
Nimba Flycatcher	<i>Melaenornis annamarulae</i>	Vulnerable
Gola Malimbe	<i>Malimbus ballmanni</i>	Endangered

Source: African Bird Club (www.africanbirdclub.org)

Table 7. Species found in plantations

SPECIES	Provenance	EXOTIC/INDIGENOUS
<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	S.E. Asia	Exotic
<i>Tectona grandis</i>	Cote d'Ivoire	Exotic
<i>Pinus caribaea</i>	Honduras	Exotic
<i>Pinus oocarpa</i>	Central America	Exotic
<i>Terminalia ivorensis</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Terminalia superba</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Triplochiton scleroxylon</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Khaya ivorensis</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Cordia alliodora</i>	Nicaragua	Exotic
<i>Pterogata macrophyla</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Eucalyptus spp</i>	Australia	Exotic
<i>Ochoma bicolor</i>	Fiji	Exotic
<i>Entandrophrama spp</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Techmeila heckeli</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Cieba pentandra</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Hieriteira utilis</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Nesodogondia papaverifera</i>	S.E. Liberia	Indigenous
<i>Acacia spp</i>	S.E. Asia	Exotic

Source: NBSAP 2003

2 Liberian Environmental Laws and Regulations

Forestry

- An Act Creating the Forestry Development Authority (1976)
 - By-laws of the Board of Directors of the Forestry Development Authority (Draft)
 - Forestry Regulations Nos. 1-25 (1978-2000)
 - Forest Management Plan (2000)
- National Forestry Act (2000)

Environmental Protection

- Environment Protection Law (2002)
- Environment Protection Agency Act (2002)

Protected Areas

- Protected Forest Area Network Law (2003): Amended the National Forestry Act of 2000 and defines a series of eight protected area types and the uses permitted and prohibitions for each.
- Nimba Nature Reserve Act (2003): Created the Nimba Nature Reserve (approx. 12,400 hectares) out of the former Nimba East National Forest.
- Sapo National Park Act (2003): Expanded Sapo National Park (Liberia's only fully protected area created in 1983) from 130,845 to 180,500 hectares, an increase of 38%.

Participation in Regional and International Treaties

- African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (1968)
- Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (2003) (not yet in force)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (1973)
- International Tropical Timber Agreement (1983 and 1994)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (1992)
 - Cartagena Biosafety Protocol (2000)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)
 - Kyoto Protocol (1997)
- UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) (1994)

3 Interviews and Contact Information

Scott Bode, EGAT/ESP, several occasions re: LFI, community forestry:
sbode@usaid.gov

Briefing on advocacy by local environmental groups for forest reform at Forest Service, September 2005

Lydia Hall, Desk Officer for Liberia (briefing on Liberia), October 2005

Mohamed Bakarr, Director of Strategic Initiatives, World Agroforestry Centre, October 31. re: threats and opportunities in Liberia (Mohamed is a conservation biologist who was with Conservation International when they developed their strategy for the region; he is from Sierra Leone). M.bakarr@cgiar.org

Reg Hoyt, Forest Partners, November 1, 2005 (by telephone) re: socioeconomic work around Sapu NP, capacity building

Jessica Donovan, West Africa Division, Conservation International, re: CI's Liberia program November 2, 2005

Bruce Byers, Associates in Rural Development, author of document on lessons learned and best practices in 118/119 reports. November 4, 2005

Robert Simpson, LFI

Bill Massaquoi, Program officer, Ag/NRM, USAID/Liberia

Wilbur Thomas, USAID/Liberia Mission Director

Sharon Pauling, Supervisory Program Officer, USAID/Liberia

Anyaa Vohiri, Flora and Fauna International

Tyler Christie, Country advisor, Conservation International

Noelle O'Brien, Manager, Capacity building and services, Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFT), consultant in community forestry

Art Blundell, United Nations timber sanctions monitor (formerly AAAS fellow with USAID)

Bahiru Duguma, USAID, strategy team member, agriculture

Ben Donnie, UNDP Environmental Officer

Silas Siakor, Sustainable Development Institute

Dr. Lebbio Aiah, Environmental Foundation for Africa

Jeannette Carter, Africare

Franklin King, Environmental Foundation International and staff

Jemee Tegli, Project Officer, 06-583774

Eric Sirleaf, Research Officer, 06-543503

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Richard Sambolah, FFI and consultant to FACE 231-(0)6515814

Daniel S. Clarke, FACE program officer 06522568
Ministry of Agriculture: Edwin Kennedy Tetteh, Deputy Minister, Planning and
Development. Phone: 0522694



4 Donor Priorities and Investments

USAID

Other USG: State Dept, USFS

EU in 1999 approved \$750,000 for forest assessment (re-assessment?)

The United States and the European Union are the two leading donors in Liberia.

In the two-year period 2004-2005, the United States Government will contribute over \$500 million to support the peace process, humanitarian efforts, disarmament and demobilization, reintegration, and other aspects of Liberia's reconstruction. This includes approximately \$27.8 million provided to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and other organizations for refugee repatriation and reintegration in Liberia, \$22.2 million for the care of Liberian refugees in neighboring countries, \$23.5 million towards the needs of internally displaced persons within Liberia, and contributions of 33,860 metric tons of food valued at \$21.5 million.

Between 2003 and 2005, the European Union contributed \$313 million (EUR 241 million) to support humanitarian aid, reconstruction, reintegration and peace efforts in Liberia. This amount includes \$55 million (EUR 42.1 million) in humanitarian aid managed by the European Commission (\$8 million - EUR 6.15 million - for UNHCR and \$3,9 million - EUR 3 million - for ICRC), \$25 million (EUR 19 million) for food aid and \$160 million (EUR 123 million) for additional needs. EU Member States contributed \$74.1 million (EUR 57 million) between 2002 and 2004. Between 2003 and 2005 the European Commission also allocated \$22 million (EUR 17 million) to support Liberian refugees in the neighbouring countries of Guinea and Sierra Leone.

The United States and the European Union share an interest in creating stable and peaceful conditions in Liberia so that refugees and internally displaced persons can return to their homes and contribute to the rebuilding of their country. The United States and European Union work cooperatively to address humanitarian needs in many countries worldwide.

For more information see: <http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/Archive/2004/Jul/02-562028.html>.
http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/field/coastal_west_africa/index_en.htm
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/publications/rep98/pdf/fr/rz.pdf#zoom=100>
http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/index_fr.htm

UNDP in 1999 pledged \$350,000 to establish the National Environment Commission

FAO

World Bank

Darwin Initiative

ITTO Diagnostic Mission in Liberia has identified proposed priority actions to be implemented over the next 9 years (p. 14).

Conservation International is working with FDA's Conservation Department to help rebuild their capacity for conservation. The FDA and CI have formulated an ambitious strategy for expanding protected areas in three general regions in the country: Sapo-Tai, East Nimba Highlands, and Gola-Lofa-Mano corridors.

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6 Terms of Reference

SOW – PRELIMINARY BIODIVERSITY AND NATURAL FOREST CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT – USAID/LIBERIA

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

For the current strategic planning process, USAID/Liberia will conduct a preliminary assessment of Liberia’s biodiversity and tropical forest conservation to inform Mission planning. The findings from the assessment are intended to assist the Mission effectively determine impact of programs on biodiversity and natural forest conservation and incorporate mitigation measures in program design. The findings will also be used to program resources for biodiversity conservation and forest management if and when appropriate.

1.2 Background

The Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, Sections 118/119, requires that the President take fully into account the impact of foreign assistance programs and projects on environment and natural resources. Sections 118 and 119 of the Act states that country-specific operating units as part of their strategic planning process are required to assess biodiversity and tropical forest conservation needs in their country and the extent to which proposed programs address those needs identifies. Each country development strategy has to include an analysis of i) the actions necessary in that country to conserve biological diversity and ii) the extent to which the actions proposed for support by the Agency meet the needs thus identified. Liberia is due for a comprehensive 118/119 study, but the unique circumstances and timing under which the current strategic planning exercise is taking place (all African Missions are preparing a new, 10 page strategy at the same time – all due in final by December 2, 2005) makes the completion of a such a report untenable. Therefore, the work required to satisfactorily complete this assessment is divided into two steps: 1. a short preliminary report that will be submitted with the strategic plan and highlights major issues (as described in “3. 2”); and, 2. a comprehensive and detailed assessment, which builds on the preliminary work, and will be completed during the early part of 2006.

2. USAID/LIBERIA’S PROGRAM

The USAID Mission in Liberia has been providing assistance to Liberia since 1952 to support sustainable development, ensure food security, promote peace and reconciliation, and provide emergency assistance in times of political crisis and humanitarian need. The Mission is currently operating under an extended transition strategy, “Community Reintegration and Revitalization”, which is coming to a close.

The Mission is presently preparing a new strategy for three years. USAID's intention over these next three years is to build on its successes, and meld elements of the existing strategy into one that will target value-added and growth-oriented sectors, and promote economic and political governance. The new strategy will focus on two goals:

Conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution and
Promotion of stability, recovery and reform

3. SCOPE OF WORK

The consultants will perform the following functions:

3.1 Conduct a preliminary analysis of the status of Liberia's biodiversity and tropical forest conservation. Specifically, the consultants will:

- Meet with USAID DC staff and conduct a preliminary Stateside literature review of existing materials; collect and review copies of other relevant materials once in country;
- Meet with USAID/Liberia Mission and the Strategic Planning Team consultants for briefing on Mission's program goals and objectives under its planned strategy;
- Complete workplan (by day 2 in country).
- Hold meetings with relevant organizations including donors, NGOs, government agencies knowledgeable about bio-diversity conservation and forest resources.
- As necessary, and as time permits, conduct select priority site visits that would help supplement the analysis.

3.2 Prepare a preliminary report on the status of biodiversity and tropical forest conservation in Liberia, which includes guidelines for USAID programming. Specifically, the following key points to address include:

- Principle threats to Liberia's biodiversity and tropical forests (general description, 2-3 pages);
- Preliminary list of priority actions to address the threats (2 - 3 pages);
- A brief assessment of how the current USAID program contributes to biodiversity and natural forest conservation (2 - 3 pages);
- Highlight areas for further study where the new strategic plan could further enhance biodiversity and natural forest conservation – this work will be expanded during the comprehensive assessment in 2006 (1-2 pages);
- Any other considerations for the comprehensive assessment (1page).

4. QUALIFICATION

The consultants should be natural resources management specialists with at least 10 years combined international experience related to the subject.

5. DELIVERABLES

The consultants will provide a report on electronic copy addressing the points specified in the listed above (“ SOW - 3. 2”). The final report should have a one page executive summary and be no more than 10-15 pages long. In annex, the consultants will also list materials referenced, people and organizations contacted and sites visited. The final report will be submitted to the Mission no later than Nov. 21.

6. MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Management responsibility for this study is with the USAID Director for Liberia.