



REDD+ in Liberia

Liberia is covered with 7.5 million hectares of tropical forest which sustain communities and contribute to the national economy. However, the country is facing a challenge to lift incomes and create jobs for a rapidly growing population, whilst simultaneously sustainably managing the forest for future generations. Deforestation is an increasing threat. Those who depend most on the forest will suffer most from its loss. To prevent this, the country has worked with national and international partners to reform the forestry sector so that it can deliver community, conservation and commercial benefits. Liberia's domestic reform agenda is supported through international agreements on climate change and voluntary partnership agreements that provide funds for reducing emissions from the loss of forests. Liberia is party to the UNFCCC and is committed to the REDD+ process. The country has made great progress with REDD+ and is currently graduating from readiness to the results-based payment stage (proposed from 2020 onwards).



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Document: **REDD+ National Strategy (2016)** | Produced by: **REDD+ Implementation Unit, Forestry Development Authority**.
 The National Strategy sets out Liberia's ambition for implementation of REDD+ through the Liberia Forest Sector Project. The strategy complements the existing pilot project in Wonegizi, Lofa County, by preparing core elements of the governance framework for REDD+. The Strategy guides REDD+ developments with 5 strategic priorities: (1) Support communities to manage forests sustainably, (2) Sustainably manage commercial forestry, (3) complete protected areas network, (4) Protect high carbon stock and high conservation value forest in agricultural and mining concessions, and (5) generate fair and sustainable benefits from REDD+.

Document: **National Forestry Monitoring System & Monitoring, reporting and verification (pending 2019)**
 Liberia's Forest Monitoring and REDD+ MRV system has included the implementation of a National Forest Inventory System, the development of a Satellite Land Monitoring System and finally the production of a Forest Reference (Emissions) Level. The institutional arrangements for effectively implementing and managing an MRV system for forest carbon accounting and REDD+ are still undergoing development.

To access Liberia's REDD+ documents and updates, follow:

<https://liberiaredd.blogspot.com/2019/11/COP25.html>

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Document: **Safeguard Information System (2019)** | Produced by: **Environmental Protection Agency**.

The Safeguards Information System provides information to stakeholders on how social and environmental safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of REDD+ in Liberia, ensuring that no harm is done and that benefits are delivered to people and the environment. The **Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (2019)** is especially important to Liberia as it was developed from the “bottom to the top”, learning from an example of conflict in Sapo National Park to build a system through which conflicts can be dealt with responsively & fairly according to the communities on site.

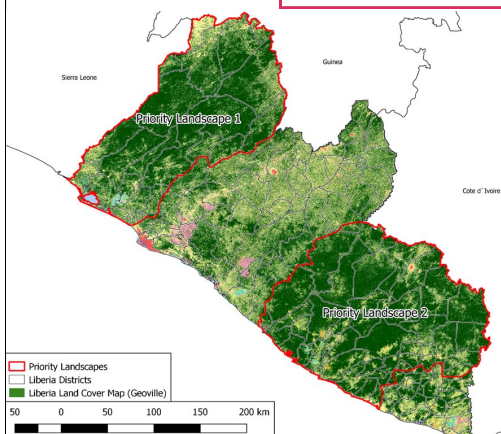
Document: **Forest Reference Emissions Level** | Produced by: **REDD+ Implementation Unit, Forestry Development Authority**.

The FREL outlines the (subnational scale) reference emissions levels for the two priority landscapes in Liberia: (1) the North West; (2) the South East. The reference period is from the start of 2007 to the end of 2016. The large-scale threats to Liberian forests are from agriculture, mining and commercial logging. The small-scale threats are shifting cultivation, chain-sawing, and charcoal and fuelwood production. Leakage from the landscapes is unlikely due to limited mobility of deforestation drivers. Liberia reports its Forest Reference Emissions Level to be 20,140,744 tCO₂eq per annum for priority landscape 1 and 13,042,260 tCO₂eq per annum for priority landscape 2. The FREL has been submitted for review by the UNFCCC in 2020.

Pilot Project: **Wonegizi Landscape, Lofa County** | Implemented by: **Fauna & Flora International (FFI)**.

In 2016, FFI began a five-year project which aims to deliver a fully operational National REDD+ pilot and support the Liberian Government to gazette the Wonegizi Proposed Protected Area as community-state co-managed Multiple Sustainable Use Reserve, and to help at least 3,000 households to sustainably manage land and natural resources. The pilot is supporting the ongoing gazettement process through conducting extensive community consultation, including participatory flagging of the area boundaries and a Free Prior Informed Consent process, with those communities that have possible customary claims to the area. These communities are project stakeholders and will share in the benefits of the project derived from carbon finance. The pilot has given training on sustainable agricultural practices that enable the communities to avoid deforestation, using comparative plots to demonstrate improved yields from more sustainable practices.

▼ Liberia's two priority landscapes



What next? Having developed the core elements of the National REDD+ governance systems, the Government's aim is to socialize these efforts to ensure the rights of people living around the forests are protected, the forests are protected, and set up systems to ensure the benefits from REDD+ flow to the right people. Liberia also wants to increase the number of REDD+ projects in communities vulnerable to unsustainable use of natural resources. These could be for forestry, mangroves, or reforestation.