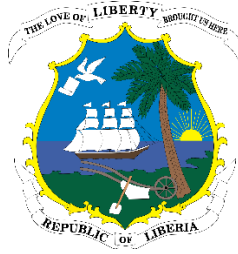


REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA



**Forestry Development Authority
REDD+ Implementation Unit**

ROADMAP FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR REDUCING EMISSIONS FROM DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION (REDD+) IN LIBERIA

October 2016



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ACRONYMS

AfT	Agenda for Transformation
AML	Arcelor-Mittal Liberia
BSM	Benefit Sharing Mechanism
CDF	County Development Fund
CDSC	County Development Steering Committee
CSDf	County Social Development Fund
CFMA	Community Forest Management Agreements
CFMB	Community Forestry Management Body
CI	Conservation International
CLDMA	Community Land Development and Management Authority
CRL	Community Rights Law
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFC	Dedicated Funds Committee
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
FAPS	Food and Agriculture Policy and Strategy
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FDA	Forestry Development Authority
FFI	Fauna and Flora International
FGRM	Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism
FIFES	Forest Incomes for Environmental Sustainability
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FMC	Forest Management Contracts
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
FREDDI	Fund for REDD+ in Indonesia
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GoL	Government of Liberia
GRIF	Guyana REDD+ Investment Fund
HCS	High Carbon Stock
HCV	High Conservation Value
IDH	Sustainable Trade Initiative (Dutch)
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions



IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
LDA	Liberian Development Alliance
LFSP	Liberia Forest Sector Project
LoI	Letter of Intent (Norway-Liberia)
LISGIS	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services
LRA	Land Rights Act
LVD	Legality Verification Department
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NBSTB	National Benefit Sharing Trust Board
NCCSC	National Climate Change Steering Committee
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring System
NFRL	National Forestry Reform Law
NORAD	Norwegian Development Agency (Norwegian)
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
PROSPER	People, Rules, Organizations Supporting the Protection of Ecosystem Resources
REDD+	Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (with sustainable management of forests, conservation of forest carbon stocks and enhancement of forest carbon stocks)
REL/RL	Reference Emissions Level / Reference Level
RIL	Reduced Impact Logging
RIU	REDD+ Implementation Unit
R-PIN	Readiness Program Idea Note
R-PP	Readiness Preparation Proposal
RREA	Rural Renewable Energy Agency
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
RSPO	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil
RTWG	REDD+ Technical Working Group
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
SFMP	Strategic Forest Management Plan
SNCL	Society for Nature Conservation in Liberia
TSC	Timber Sale Contracts
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WCF	Wild Chimpanzee Foundation



1 INTRODUCTION: IMPLEMENTING REDD+ IN LIBERIA

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) is a global initiative that incentivizes a change from historic trends of deforestation and forest degradation rates and the resulting greenhouse gases emissions. Participating countries will receive results-based payments if they succeed in reducing deforestation, conserving forests or enhancing their forests.

Liberia has chosen to participate in REDD+ because it has a large area of forest that is important for the subsistence and future prosperity of its people. This resource is threatened by rising population and increasing levels of consumption, coupled with the reduction of land available to communities as it is developed for logging, agriculture, mining and other concessions. Such pressures on the remaining forest make it difficult for Liberia to achieve its sustainable development goals and realize its policy of maintaining forest resources for the benefit of future generations. REDD+ can help to solve this problem by providing a new income stream that enables communities and countries to benefit from their forests without cutting them down.

Liberia is currently in the first ‘*Readiness*’ phase of the REDD+ process, preparing a national REDD+ Strategy and a Roadmap for implementing the Strategy. This document is the Roadmap. There are a further two phases to achieve REDD+. Phase II ‘*Investments and reforms*’ focuses on piloting and demonstrating land use changes that reduce emissions while also strengthening the policies and laws that support these efforts. Liberia can move into Phase III ‘*Results-based payments*’ when it can demonstrate that its changes to land use have resulted in a measureable and verifiable reduction of emissions from forest loss - and that environmental and social safeguards are being met. It then becomes eligible for results-based payments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Liberia’s national REDD+ Strategy has five priorities:

1. *Reduce forest loss from pit sawing, charcoal production and shifting agriculture.*
2. *Reduce the impacts of commercial logging.*
3. *Complete and manage a network of Protected Areas.*
4. *Prevent or offset clearance of high carbon stock and high conservation value forest in agricultural and mining concessions.*
5. *Ensure fair and sustainable benefits from REDD+.*

Most of the interventions required to start implementing this Strategy are already planned and funded:

- The Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP) administered by the World Bank and funded through the Liberia-Norway Letter of Intent is a comprehensive program of community forestry and sustainable agriculture activities at both community and landscape levels. The LFSP will also build capacity for the implementation of a REDD+ program at the national level.
- The Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) project has complementary activities to improve the sustainability of the commercial forestry sector and improve the implementation and enforcement of forestry laws and governance.



- There is a strong package of measures for forest conservation in the country's Protected Areas, in community forests and in commercial concessions that is led by international and Liberian Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and funded by a variety of bilateral and multilateral donors.

These programs and the REDD+ Strategy take a practical and step-by-step approach to developing and implementing REDD+, beginning with actions on the ground that will demonstrate how land use changes can be achieved that protect forests and benefit forest-dependent communities. Successful activities can then be scaled up to produce measurable reductions in emissions at a landscape level and possibly at the national level. Ultimately, the ambition is to have a national REDD+ program that earns results-based payments on a substantial scale, enough to transform the economics of sustainable forestry in Liberia. But this goal is some years away and the scale of operations and results-based payments cannot be known until the readiness and investments phases are completed.

This Roadmap for implementation therefore focuses on the short (1-5 years) and medium (5-10 years) term, although it includes the steps that should be taken towards the long-term destination of a national REDD+ program. The emphasis is on strengthening and expanding existing institutions and processes, and adding to the national framework for REDD+ only when there is a clear need. This is important in order to avoid creating a complex and expensive infrastructure for REDD+ that distracts from practical action.

Section 2 of this Roadmap describes the interventions under the priorities and Strategy Options from the national REDD+ Strategy. Section 3 explains how implementation of REDD+ will progress from projects, to landscape, to national scale, with a timescale for the main phases. Section 4 identifies the actions that need to be taken to establish an enabling framework for REDD+ implementation, including strengthening the national framework of laws and policies, land use planning, coordination, and institutional arrangements.



2 ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE REDD+ STRATEGY

Implementation of REDD+ in Liberia is focused on the five priorities set out in the REDD+ Strategy. These priorities address the most important causes of deforestation and their related social, economic and ecological issues. Under each of the priorities there is a selection of Strategy Options, by which the priorities can be achieved (*See*



Table 2 in Appendix 1). Interventions for each of the Strategy Options are listed in tables 3-6 (Appendix 1); one for each priority. An overview of the interventions in the tables is given in the following sections. Gaps, along with potential new initiatives to fill these gaps, are also identified.

The REDD+ Strategy does not by itself bring new funding for initiatives, so the interventions in the tables come largely from existing or planned programs that will be implementing REDD+ relevant activities in the next five to ten years. The Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP) is the main vehicle for implementing REDD+ in the short term. It has interventions for strategic priorities 1, 3 and 5 as well as cross-cutting measures such as the strengthening of forestry sector governance and institutions.

Because the evidence on causes of deforestation and forest degradation is limited, and because evidence on the effectiveness of interventions is also limited, these interventions focus largely on research, demonstration, policy development and institutional strengthening. This reflects the fact that Liberia is still in the 'Readiness' phase and is about to enter the 'Investment phase' of learning and demonstrating. The LFSP and other current and planned programs will generate information that can be used to refine the Strategy Options and develop new policies and measures for achieving them.

2.1 REDUCE FOREST LOSS FROM PIT SAWING, CHARCOAL PRODUCTION AND SHIFTING AGRICULTURE

REDD+ strategic priority 1. Reduce forest loss from pit sawing, charcoal production and shifting agriculture.

Strategy Options

<i>1.1 Reduce impact of pit sawing (chain saw logging) on forest through better regulation, improved efficiency and developing alternatives.</i>	<i>1.2 Reduce impact of charcoal industry on forest through better regulation, improved efficiency and the development of alternatives energy sources.</i>	<i>1.3 Reduce expansion of shifting agriculture in forest areas by promoting permanent food and cash crops in non-forest areas and through conservation agriculture.</i>	<i>1.4 Locate services and new infrastructure development beyond a 3 km buffer from areas of dense forest and Protected Areas (including proposed PAs).</i>	<i>1.5 Integrate hunting, artisanal mining and forest restoration into community-led livelihood and sustainable forest management practices.</i>
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2.1.1 Interventions

For pit sawing, there are planned initiatives to study the scale and impact of the industry and to develop regulations to reduce those impacts and improve the sustainability of current practices. There will be a study of the domestic timber industry, which will include the development of a reference emissions level (LFSP, VPA). The existing regulation on chainsaw milling is being revised with the aim of eventually including pit sawing under the timber Legality Assurance System (LAS) through the VPA.

For managing charcoal production, the planned approach is largely the same: a study of the industry, impacts and reference emissions level, accompanied by improvements to regulation (LFSP, VPA).



Shifting agriculture is addressed directly in the LFSP, which has a component focused on developing sustainable agriculture practices and reducing slash-and-burn farming in targeted landscapes. This initiative is associated with interventions coming from the agriculture sector. This is important because if visible changes in farming practices are to be achieved it will require concerted effort with the larger budgets and projects from the agricultural sector, coordinated with the forestry sector.

Similarly, reducing pressure on densely forested areas from expanding settlements and roads requires interventions from beyond the forestry sectors so that services, infrastructure and enterprise are encouraged to expand in less forested areas. The LFSP provides a starting point for this with a component to improve land use planning, through the preparation of land use maps for the targeted landscapes and at the national level.

Other forest uses, such as hunting and artisanal mining, are less significant as drivers of deforestation (based on the current limited evidence) but are important in an implementation plan like this Roadmap. This is because they make up a package of livelihood options for communities, along with pit sawing and charcoal, and because attempts to establish good governance of forest resources are more likely to succeed if applied consistently to all activities. Planned interventions in the LFSP to strengthen local institutions, support productive natural resource management and improve livelihoods from forest resources address this issue,¹ as do activities in the PROSPER/FIFES projects to develop forest-based enterprises in 17 forest dependent communities.² There are also various projects in and around Protected Areas led by NGOs that support community forestry, sustainable forest management in community forests and improved livelihoods³.

The FDA developed forestry plantations for the supply of timber in the past and there is interest in doing so again. However, the restoration of forest areas and afforestation projects - either for conservation or to improve the supply of forest resources - is likely to be relevant in the long-term only, given the quantity of natural forest remaining. However, pilot demonstration projects would be valuable. These need to be done as part of community forestry management operations. Large state-owned plantations are unlikely to work given the extent of community ownership and the limited capacity of the state. There is currently one initiative in Lofa County to examine the feasibility of forest enhancement.⁴ This will indicate the potential for reforestation as a means of enhancing forest carbon stocks, and potentially the feasibility of using forest plantations for fuelwood and/or timber production.

2.1.2 Gaps and recommended additional measures

Planned interventions on pit sawing and charcoal mainly seek to change practices through regulation. Improved regulation of industries such as pit sawing and charcoal will not be effective without compliance and enforcement, hence the LFSP and other projects include measures to build capacity for enforcement by FDA and EPA. Even with stronger enforcement, compliance depends upon the regulations being seen as fair and workable by forest users. Regulations must therefore strike the right balance between controlling damaging practices (e.g., unsustainable levels of felling for pit sawing) and allowing demand for domestic timber, charcoal, or other goods to be met. For example, current legislation allows pit sawing only in permitted

¹ See LFSP Project Appraisal Document subcomponent 2.3. *Community Forestry in Targeted Forest Landscapes (US\$10.5 million)*

² FIFES (2016) Project description

³ NGO Working Together document, Activity 4. Community Action for Conservation.

⁴ Funded by Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), this project started in April 2016.



community forests and private land. If enforced, it would probably not allow enough timber production to meet demand, hence the result would be scarcity, higher prices and popular and political opposition. The need for incentives as well as regulations is recognized in the planned community forestry/livelihoods initiatives. The success of these initiatives depends upon whether the incentives provided – through conservation agreements for example – are sufficient to change land use practices and outcomes, when coupled with stronger regulatory controls.

Planned interventions are mainly supply-side measures. The planned measures seek to improve the sustainability of rural production but not to reduce urban demand. The need to reduce the growth in demand for charcoal and firewood is recognized in Liberia's Intended policy of promoting renewable energy alternatives but is not accompanied by funded initiatives. There are projects for off-grid renewable energy and improved cooking stoves, overseen by the Rural and Renewable Energy Authority (RREA), but they are currently small-scale and are not linked to REDD+.

Recommended additional interventions to fill gaps in the current package of interventions are:

- Integrate plans for targeted landscapes into county development plans, as a way of connecting REDD+ objectives and measures into the broader planning process.
- For pit sawing, identify and appraise options to regulate and incentivize improved efficiency through more effective milling equipment and logging techniques.
- Identify forest types and areas particularly vulnerable to loss from charcoal, firewood or timber production, including coastal mangrove forests.
- Explore the scope for additional incentives for land use change, to balance the regulatory approach.
- Promote measures that reduce demand for timber and charcoal in urban areas and identify opportunities to integrate renewable energy projects into LFSP targeted landscapes to complement REDD+ actions.

2.2 REDUCE IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL LOGGING IN FORESTRY CONCESSIONS

REDD+ Strategic Priority 2: Reduce impact of commercial logging in all forestry concessions

Strategy Options

2.1 Ensure that all commercial logging is practiced to high conservation standards in keeping with national regulations and international standards.

2.2 Conserve and maintain areas of highest conservation value within commercial forestry concessions, such as important wildlife corridors.

2.3 Review Timber Sales Contracts to ensure compliance with forestry laws and ELA standards and establish a strong presumption against further TSC contracts on dense forest and within 5 km of Protected Areas.

2.4 Prevent unregulated pit sawing and charcoal production within forestry concessions.

2.5 Manage commercial forestry in community forests to achieve sustainable logging standards as apply to FMCs.



2.2.1 Interventions

Current and planned interventions to improve the sustainability of commercial logging come mainly from the VPA-FLEGT process funded by the European Commission and other partners. This is focused on developing forestry regulations, assisting FDA and other bodies involved in the enforcement of forestry laws, and introducing a new Legality Assurance System that includes a legality definition, verification of compliance with the legality definition, chain of custody system, FLEGT licensing and independent audit (See Table 3, Appendix 1).

For Strategy Option 2.2, current standards for forest management plans and environmental impact assessment require timber operations to avoid ecologically sensitive areas but these are neither adequate nor complied with.⁵ The VPA project aims to uphold existing standards and the Liberia-Norway Letter of Intent puts forward a policy of improving standards by developing a Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) standard for use in Liberia.⁶ The improvement of forestry practices would lead to forest being set aside, but without additional measures, it does not protect this forest from other pressures (such as pit sawing and shifting agriculture), or give it a status within forest conservation policy.

The deforestation threat posed by Timber Sales Contracts (TSCs) is addressed by a measure in the Norway-Liberia Letter of Intent to review status and legality of TSCs and to place a moratorium on the award of new industrial logging concessions. Also, the Letter of Intent initiates a more general review of the legality of existing logging and other land use contracts, leading to the cancellation of illegal and non-performing concessions.⁷ These reviews will clarify the status of the existing concessions and provide the foundations for new and more specific interventions to manage the impact of TSCs and other concessions.

The threat of unregulated pit sawing and charcoal production within forestry concessions is addressed by a VPA initiative to support a pending regulation on third party access to concession areas, and by the actions to study and manage these industries noted in the previous section.

The fifth REDD+ Strategy Option, of managing commercial forestry in community forests to achieve sustainable logging, is addressed by an initiative in the Letter of Intent to extend Reduced Impact Logging standards to community forests. Also, the VPA process will support integration of community forests into the Legality Assurance System, to ensure same standards as in FMCs.

2.2.2 Gaps and recommended additional measures

Operational practices

There is not yet a project with the aim of demonstrating how commercial forestry can contribute to REDD+. In order to test the feasibility, costs and benefits of Priority 2 in the REDD+ Strategy improved practices in and around logging concessions must comply with policies, laws, regulations and codes. New public-private partnerships should have the following components:

⁵ Most forestry concessions have not complied with the requirement to produce forest management plans, an issue that is being addressed by the VPA Support Unit (VPA-SU).

⁶ Letter of Intent.

⁷ Letter of Intent, section iii Legal reform and law enforcement



- Full application of the Legality Assurance System, including the chain of custody system, and forestry regulations to uphold current logging standards.
- Production of forest inventory for whole concessions, including carbon, reference emissions level, HCS/HCV forest.
- Development of a 25-year Strategic Forest Management Plan (SFMP) and 5-year Forest Management Plan (as required under existing FDA guidelines for forest management planning).
- Monitoring of economic, social and environmental impacts of sustainable forestry practices, including the Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of emission reductions.
- An effective benefit sharing mechanism, possibly with a localized system for distributing benefits to affected communities that by-passes central government control.
- Funding of additional investment, including incentives to the concession holder, at an amount equivalent to the expected value of reduced emissions.

Interventions for this priority take a largely regulatory approach, especially in relation to concession-holding logging companies. In order to change practices, it may also be necessary to provide additional incentives to private logging companies who are willing to meet high standards. This will be essential if the new expectations on logging companies exceed those in their original contracts. The incentives that come to communities through the existing benefit sharing arrangements for forestry concessions are not tied to specific actions such as upholding forest laws and conserving set-aside forest lands. This is at odds with the approach being adopted in Protected Area programs and in oil palm concessions, where benefits are increasingly linked to conservation agreements.

There is a large gap between community expectations for logging and the pace of reforms. There is high demand amongst communities – often in conjunction with logging companies – to commence logging on community lands. Yet the progress expected from initiatives to form ‘authorized communities’ and strengthen regulations and enforcement will be slow. The solution to this cannot be to accelerate and scale up the planned initiatives, even if additional funding for larger programs were available, because there is not a working model that can simply be rolled out. Community forestry is a new and complex venture that will inevitably be slow to develop and lessons must be taken up and incorporated into implementation over time. The expectations of communities and companies must therefore be managed in the meantime through visible demonstration projects and through the enforcement of forestry laws.

There is a regulatory gap for logging on community forests below 5,000 ha. The intention of Strategy Option 5 is that logging on community forests of 1,000 ha should be subject to the same standards as apply to FMCs. However, existing regulations only apply to larger holdings. Only medium and large-scale commercial logging operations – on community forest lands larger than 5,000 ha and conceded out to a third party – are subject to the Core Regulations for commercial logging and competitive bidding rules (the same rules apply to FMCs). This leaves commercial forestry on community forest land less than 5,000 ha less regulated.⁸ The proposed solution is to subject all commercial logging proposals to EIA screening if they are larger than 50

⁸ Based on interpretation of the 2011 regulations to the Community Rights with Respect to Forest Lands.



ha and to subject all logging operations larger than 100 ha to the same forestry standards that apply to FMCs. This needs to be taken forward on a pilot basis to test its effectiveness, cost and feasibility, before making alterations to the existing regulations.

Recommended additional interventions are:

For Strategy Option 2.1:

- Develop a REDD+ pilot project based on a commercial logging concession.

For Strategy Option 2.2:

- Explore feasibility of incentives to logging operators to provide additional conservation of HCV/HCS, beyond that required in existing forestry regulations.
- Integrate logging management plans into wider landscape plans in LFSP targeted areas.

For Strategy Option 2.3:

- Refine current safeguards (e.g. EIA) and align with a potential new policy for locating TSCs away from dense forest.
- Review provision in logging concessions for managing pit sawing and charcoal production, building on the 'third party access' regulation.

And for Strategy Option 2.5:

- Develop project selection criteria used by National Benefit Sharing Trust Board to encourage projects that meet sustainable development and REDD+ objectives.
- Review costs and benefits of extending regulations for sustainable forestry to community forests smaller than 5,000 ha but larger than 1,000 ha.
- Review feasibility (financial and capacity) of conducting EIA screening of all proposed commercial forestry operations larger than 50ha.

2.3 COMPLETE AND MANAGE A NETWORK OF PROTECTED AREAS

REDD+ Strategic Priority 3: Complete and manage a network of Protected Areas

Strategy Options

3.1 Complete the Protected Areas Network and strengthen management to prevent forest degradation.

3.2 Expand the Protected Areas Network to conserve 30% of forest land.

3.3 Reduce pressure on PAs from surrounding communities (using priority 1 measures).

3.4 Develop and implement land use plans at landscape scale, to integrate production and conservation.

2.3.1 Interventions

A) Protected Areas



Planned interventions in the LFSP include a subcomponent for the expansion, improved management, and more sustainable funding of Liberia's Protected Area Network.⁹ It will strengthen management of the existing Sapo and Lake Piso PA and help Gola and Wonegizi to complete the gazettment process and establish effective management frameworks. This complements ongoing projects for these two areas being implemented by the Society for Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SNCL) and Fauna & Flora International (FFI) respectively. East Nimba, the third existing PA, is being strengthened through the Arcelor Mittal Biodiversity Program and with extra support through the Initiatief Duurzame Handel (IDH) landscapes project. Grebo, in the North East, is close to being gazetted under an initiative by FDA and the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF). Thus the current set of initiatives aim to consolidate and establish six protected areas.

Completion of the proposed Protected Area Network, which currently consists of a 14 PAs in total, needs in the first instance a review of the suitability of the proposed areas. This is addressed in the LFSP which includes an assessment of selected proposed protected areas that fall within the LFSP targeted landscapes: Foya and Kpo Mountains PPAs in the northwest forest landscape and the Grand Kru-River Gee, Gbi, and Senkwehn PPAs in the southeast. There appears to be no planned and funded initiative to assess the suitability of the remaining 3 proposed protected areas.

Strategy Option 3.2 is for the expansion of the Protected Area Network to 30% of Liberia's total forest area, which is national policy. The current proposed Protected Area Network is estimated to cover less than 20% of total forest cover.¹⁰ The LoI supports the development of an overarching strategy for the allocation of selected forest areas to Protected Area status and NGOs working together in Liberia also aim to support the establishment of Protected Areas based on the proposed network and in community forests. There is not, however, a planned and funded initiative to deliver the aim of creating a strategy to achieve the 30% target. Such a strategy can include set-aside forest in forestry concessions (as proposed in Strategy Option 2.2) and in agricultural and mining concessions (Strategy Options 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3).

The need to reduce pressure on Protected Areas from communities is already a feature of the current initiatives, as described under strategic priority 1. Conservation organizations such as Conservation International have pioneered the use of conservation agreements and a wide range of projects have built on or contributed to this approach. The LFSP has a strong livelihoods and community forest management components, and similar agreements are a feature of the IDH Sustainable Landscapes project. Such conservation and livelihood projects typically address the need for integrated land use plans, thereby contributing to Strategy Option 3.4. The LFSP brings

Name	Area (Ha)
Sapo	154,966
East Nimba	12,154
Lake Piso	96,094
B) Proposed Protected Areas	
Bong Mountain	24,821
Gbi	88,404
Gola	97,975
Grebo	97,135
Kpo Mountains	83,667
Margibi Mangrove	23,813
Senkwehn	80,347
Wonegizi	37,978
Zwedru	64,249
Foya	164,628
Grand Kru-River Gee	135,000
TOTAL	1,161,231

⁹ LFSP Project Appraisal Document. Subcomponent 2.2. Strengthened Management of Protected Areas of Targeted Forest Landscapes (US\$8.2 million).

¹⁰ Estimated vary due to inconsistencies in boundary data.



strong additional support through a subcomponent to support the preparation of current land use maps at the subnational (for the targeted landscapes) and national levels.¹¹

2.3.2 Gaps and recommended additional measures

- Commission review and strategy for completing the proposed Protected Areas Network and achieving the national policy to conserve 30% of total forest area, under LFSP program.
- Include in review/strategy a proposed approach to managing areas of forest set-aside for conservation within forestry concessions, agricultural concessions and community forests.

2.4 PREVENT OR OFFSET FOREST LOSS IN AGRICULTURAL AND MINING CONCESSIONS

REDD+ Strategic Priority 4: Prevent or offset clearance of high carbon stock and high conservation value forest in agricultural and mining concessions.

Strategy Options

<i>4.1 Conserve HCV-HCS forest within agricultural concession areas, including developing and implementing a policy for the sustainable management of these conserved areas (using priority 1 measures)</i>	<i>4.2 Apply policy of conserving HCS-HCV forest to all agricultural concessions, including large private farms.</i>	<i>4.3 Ensure that mining result in zero-net deforestation, through mechanisms such as biodiversity offsets.</i>	<i>4.4 Locate future large-scale agriculture and mining concessions in less dense and non-forest areas.</i>
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2.4.1 Interventions

Companies engaged in large-scale palm oil, rubber or mining concessions are already required to conserve High Conservation Value (HCV) forest or High Carbon Stock (HCS) forest, through a combination of industry standards (e.g., Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil) and environmental safeguards guided by lenders/donors and national environmental policy. The Letter of Intent signed by Liberia and Norway established a higher zero-deforestation commitment for multinational companies with agricultural concessions; not just palm oil. This is defined as a commitment no less than that of the Palm Oil Innovation Group, which includes High Carbon Stock (HCS) in addition to a High Conservation Value (HCV) assessment, and social considerations through a process of obtaining Free, Prior and Informed Consent to use land (FPIC)¹².

Work to interpret this standard for the palm oil sector in Liberia has been done through the Tropical Forest Alliance's (TFA 2020) Africa Palm Oil Initiative. This has established the principle that "Liberia should achieve net zero deforestation by 2025 through the adoption of HCS and HCV designations".¹³ A zero net deforestation approach means that offsetting will be

¹¹ LFSP Project Appraisal Document. *Subcomponent 2.1. Improved Land Use Planning (US\$1 million)*.

¹² This is the standard established by Wilmar and other members of the Palm Oil Innovations Group (POIG), including Golden Agri-Resources. See Palm Oil Innovation Group. POIG Verification Indicators, March 2016.

¹³ National Workshop of the TFA 2020 African Palm Oil Initiative, 26-28 May 2015



permitted; i.e. some HCS/HCV forest may be cleared as long as an equivalent amount is conserved elsewhere.

The combination of standards for HCV, HCS and processes like FPIC provides the basic framework for landscape planning in concessions. For REDD+ in Liberia, the next steps required are to agree and achieve this standard, and then apply it to all multinational agricultural concessions as the Liberia-Norway Letter of Intent states, not just palm oil.

A further challenge is how to conserve the forest in concessions that is set aside for conservation from pit sawing, charcoal, shifting agriculture or other uses that lead to deforestation. The IDH Sustainable Landscapes project addresses this issue in the two palm oil concessions where the greatest deforestation for plantation is expected to occur. It will pilot the use of Production-Protection agreements whereby communities and companies can benefit from investment in palm oil outgrowing and other productive activities, in exchange for a commitment to conserve HCS/HCV forest.

The LFSP addresses sustainable agriculture (food and tree crops) amongst landowning communities in targeted landscapes, so may support communities in or beside the palm oil and other concessions that sit within these landscapes. It does not, however, include direct interventions for concession agriculture. Similarly, various projects supporting community forestry, as described under strategic priority 1, may enable communities who own and use forests areas within agriculture and mining concessions to reduce deforestation and forest degradation.

For the mining sector, biodiversity offset schemes have been initiated in several sites and enacted in the Arcelor Mittal iron-ore mine in northern Nimba. Research has been done to develop a national policy for an aggregated offset scheme – whereby all mines would contribute to the establishment and protection of the Protected Areas Network – but there are currently no planned and budgeted initiatives to advance this policy or put it into practice.

2.4.2 Gaps and recommended additional measures

There is a shortage of initiatives to conserve forest within agricultural concessions, despite the high threat of deforestation and the large area of forest that could potentially be conserved. Strategy Options 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 require policy development and, on the basis of agreed policies, the formulation of suitable projects for implementation. Specific actions that would assist this policy development are:

For Strategy Option 4.2:

- Support the mapping and inventory of all large estates and the area of HCV/HCS forest within, so that concessions can be integrated into land use maps and plans for the LFSP targeted landscapes.
- Develop a policy and regulation for management of set-aside forest in agricultural concessions and large farms.
- Review costs and benefits of extending regulations for sustainable forestry to all agricultural operations larger than 1,000 ha and of conducting EIA screening of all proposed commercial agricultural operations larger than 50ha.

For Strategy Option 4.4:



- Commission scoping study of potential scale and timing of development of mining sector and consequent impact on forest.
- Further develop policy and financing mechanism for an aggregated offset scheme, linked to the proposed Conservation Trust Fund supported by LFSP and NGOs.



2.5 FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE BENEFITS FROM REDD+

<i>Strategic Priority 5: Fair and sustainable benefits from REDD+</i>			
Strategy Options	5.1 Define carbon rights and develop policies and regulations for upholding these.	5.2 Establish benefit sharing mechanisms for REDD+, in harmony with those operating in the forestry, mining, agriculture and other relevant sectors.	5.3 Operate a robust monitoring, reporting and verification system for demonstrating reductions in emissions achieved through REDD+ policies.

2.5.1 Carbon rights

REDD+ gives economic value to the carbon embedded in forests, so clarity on who owns the carbon and who can benefit from results-based payments is essential. This clarity and security is contingent upon how carbon rights are treated in existing land and forest tenure regimes. These regimes are undergoing great change in Liberia; new categorization of land under the Land Rights Policy and draft Land Rights Act will have significant implications for how carbon rights are defined in the existing legal framework.

The current UNFCCC framework for REDD+ requests State Parties to address land tenure issues when developing their national REDD+ strategies. However, it does not provide a clear or commonly accepted definition of carbon rights and nor does international law. The conclusion of a review of the legal framework for REDD+ is that carbon is included in the broad definition of ‘forest resources’ in the 2006 Forestry Reform Law.¹⁴ This is in line with National Land Rights Policy, which states that the ownership of customary land should extend to ownership of natural resources on the land, including forests, carbon credits, and water.

Liberia may therefore approach the necessity of defining carbon rights by developing existing (and pending) laws and policies. This is not an immediate task. The underlying land rights law needs to be clarified (e.g. with enactment of the Land Rights Bill) and practical experience with establishing REDD+ pilot projects is needed to clarify the legal requirements. The REDD+ pilot project in Wonegizi, for example, will establish a legal basis for carbon ownership and trading over the next few years. In such cases, carbon rights can be agreed on an *ad hoc* basis, in a similar way to that which Government transfers rights to resource use with concession agreements, without the need for overarching national carbon rights legislation.

Although immediate action to clarify carbon rights at a national level is not required, four options for strengthening national law and policy are presented and analyzed in the REDD+ legal and policy review, as a guide to how the future legal requirements for large-scale REDD+ can be met.

- Option 1: Enactment of new legislation that is specific to REDD+ and carbon rights.
- Option 2: Amendment to existing legislation with a view to accommodate provisions relating to carbon, carbon ownership and carbon rights within existing legislation.

¹⁴ LTS-Niras (2016) Liberia REDD+ Policy, Legal and Institutional Framework. Report to FDA, 27 June 2016.



- Option 3: Development of regulations under existing law such as the Forestry Reform Law to further define carbon rights and carbon ownership, through a Miscellaneous Amendment Bill.
- Option 4: A combined approach, which involves creating a new carbon rights law accompanied with amendments to existing legislation either through this new law or through a Miscellaneous Amendments Bill.

2.5.2 Benefit Sharing

A benefit sharing mechanism is required to allocate fairly the rewards of REDD+. Liberia already has such mechanisms for distributing the rent from logging, mining and agricultural concessions. These are well established in law and regulation but are all in need of further development before they become effective.

The LFSP will support the development of a functioning and effective National Benefit Sharing Trust Board (NBSTB), which is the central body for distributing logging revenues to affected communities. The LFSP will also support action to establish and/or strengthen existing benefit-sharing arrangements for forestry at local level. There is no commitment in the LFSP to use the forestry benefit sharing mechanism for results-based payments, or to the development of a national system for carbon accounting and payments distribution – also known as a REDD+ Registry. The intention in the LFSP is to demonstrate satisfactory progress toward generating emission reductions, before attempting to design the structure for the disbursement of proceeds from results-based payments.¹⁵

A national REDD+ investment fund has been created through the Letter of Intent between Norway and Liberia¹⁶. The substantial funds pledged to this are conditional on results from the pilot and demonstration phase of the LFSP.

The Wonegizi REDD+ pilot aims to establish a benefit sharing mechanism in the next few years. This is specific to that project, although it follows the principles of the national forestry benefit sharing mechanism. A common feature of the NBST mechanism and the REDD+ pilot is that community benefits are delivered in the form of projects, for sustainable agriculture for example, and not in cash.

The REDD+ Strategy is concerned also with benefit sharing from mining and agriculture concessions. It looks, in the long-term, towards a financial arrangement in which REDD+ payments form part of a package of income streams for socio-economic development linked to forest conservation. There are several reasons for integrating sectoral benefit sharing mechanisms:

- REDD+ payments will not, by themselves, be sufficient to fund the transformation of land use practices.
- Benefits from agriculture, forestry and mining concessions can be used to help fund forest conservation inside concessions (through conservation agreements) and outside concessions (through offsets or out grower schemes).

¹⁵ LFSP Project Appraisal Document, p.20.

¹⁶ As stated in the Letter of Intent "Contributions will initially flow through the World Bank Liberia REDD+ Investment Program. Contributions will gradually develop into payments for verified emissions reductions to finance Liberia's full green growth development portfolio"



- For communities and project implementers especially, it is confusing and inefficient to have multiple funds and management committees. Integrated funding is required for integrated management plans at local and landscape level.

The policy of an aggregated offsets scheme for mining that feeds into a conservation trust for managing Protected Areas (in Strategy Option 4.3) fits in with this approach, as does the work of NGOs, now supported by LFSP, to develop a Conservation Trust Fund. This is initially for East Nimba Nature Reserve but with the ambition that it becomes a national fund for the Protected Areas Network.

The implementation of a benefit sharing mechanism for REDD+ is therefore an incremental process with a series of possible steps, each of which needs to be tested:

- Strengthen the existing benefit sharing mechanisms for forestry (and mining and agriculture) and demonstrate that they can work fairly and efficiently.
- Establish a benefit sharing mechanism for results-based payments within the LFSP project that is in harmony with the principles of the forestry benefit sharing mechanism.
- Explore the possibilities for aligning the LFSP system for results-based payments with the forestry benefit sharing mechanism; through a pilot scheme in a chosen landscape(s) where forestry and REDD+ funding is combined and project approval criteria are developed to reflect sustainable development and REDD+ objectives.
- Test the potential for streamlining multiple funds into a single benefit sharing mechanism in a landscape(s) where there are multiple income sources; from Protected Areas, forestry concessions, agriculture concessions, LFSP results-based payments and, possibly, mining offsets.

Options for REDD+ benefit sharing models are examined in detail in the REDD+ legal and policy review. The ideal model depends upon the geographical scale and the conditions for disbursing REDD+ income.

With a sub-national ‘nested’ approach¹⁷, a combination of sub-national input-based and sub-national performance-based benefit sharing is appropriate. This can use either existing benefit sharing mechanisms (e.g. National Benefit Sharing Trust) or new ones created at sub-national level (e.g. Conservation Funds for specific PA/PPAs like East Nimba Nature Reserve or Wonegizi).

If REDD+ in Liberia grows into a national program, a national benefit sharing system is appropriate. This entails the creation of a National REDD+ Fund, similar to other countries like the DRC REDD+ Fund, GRIF (Guyana) and FREDDI (Indonesia). The initial steps to establish a national REDD+ fund are to develop a national fund investment plan and operational manual. The sub-national benefit sharing mechanisms are then eventually merged into the national fund.

¹⁷ The term ‘nesting’ is variously used to refer to state- and province-level accounting integrated into national level systems, as well as to project-level activities sitting within broader national (or subnational) systems.



2.5.3 Measurement, Reporting and Verification System

To qualify for results-based payments, REDD+ projects in Liberia must be able to measure, report and verify the reduction in emissions that result from REDD+ interventions. To be eligible for international FCPF or UN-REDD funding, countries must develop a national MRV system, even if the REDD+ activities are happening at project or landscape scale.

The three primary components of a MRV are (1) satellite land monitoring system, (2) forest inventory, and (3) Greenhouse Gas inventory. Countries are expected to progressively develop and operationalize these components over the three phases of REDD+, and align them with monitoring systems, so that by the third phase of REDD+ they have a fully functional National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS).

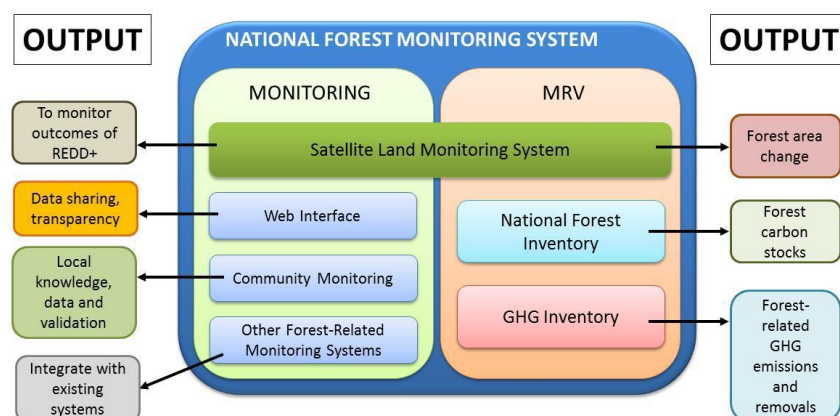


Figure 1 - Components of a national forest monitoring system

Source: Liberia MRV Road Map, 2015

Liberia's road map to a MRV system

A road map for preparing a MRV system has been produced.¹⁸ Implementation involves the following activities, planned to take place between 2016 and 2019 (from MRV road map)

1. Establish institutional arrangements;
2. Improve national forest monitoring: activity data;
3. Improve national forest monitoring: carbon stocks and emission factors;
4. Improve estimation and international LULUCF, GHG inventory and REDD+ reporting capacities;
5. Prepare for MRV of REDD+ activities on the national level;
6. Implement a program for continuous improvement and capacity development;
7. Continued national and local communication mechanism on REDD+ monitoring.

The FDA, through the REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU), takes the lead role in implementation. It will be partnered by the national statistics body – Liberia Institute of Statistics

¹⁸ Herold, M. et al (2015) Terms of reference for developing capacities for a National Forest Monitoring and Measurement, Reporting and Verification System to support REDD+ participation of Liberia: Background, Capacity Assessment and Roadmap. Report to FDA January 12 2016.



and Geo-Informational Services (LISGIS) – and guided by a new national steering group for MRV/NFMS. Capacity building support is required for the FDA to oversee the technical work and serve the national MRV steering group. Preparation of the MRV needs to happen quickly, so that it can be applied to pilot activities during the ‘transformation’ phase of REDD.

REDD+ Implementation Phase		MRV Activities
Phase 1	Readiness	No MRV required. Preparation only.
Phase 2	Transformation	MRV of project and landscape level demonstration activities.
Phase 3	Full Implementation	National forest monitoring and MRV system; fully operational to report emission reductions resulting from interventions.

Figure 2 - MRV activities in each phase of REDD+ implementation

Source: Adapted from MRV Road map, 2015

Planned actions to implement MRV

Implementation of the MRV system will be supported by the LFSP (Component 3. Forest Monitoring Information System). Specifically, subcomponent 3.1 supports the establishment of a successfully tested and operational national system for MRV. Subcomponent 3.2 will finance the operationalization and update of an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). The ESMF is a safeguard against the potential negative impacts of REDD+ interventions identified in the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA).

The development of a reference level – a baseline and ‘business as usual’ scenario for deforestation and forest degradation – is an important part of preparing the MRV system. A reference level study has been completed as part of its REDD+ readiness activities.¹⁹ The LFSP and MRV Roadmap supports the further development of the Reference Level, with actions to estimate activity data and develop forest emission reference levels for forest degradation, deforestation, conservation and restoration practices, including charcoal, pit sawing, and shifting agriculture.²⁰

The VPA process will complement this MRV preparation with the following activities:

- GIS, mapping and forest management planning support to FDA, to improve commercial and community forestry practices.
- Updating of forest concession maps and development of a comprehensive Forest Management System (VPA).
- Capacity building for the Liberian NGO coalition to support independent forest monitoring and assistance to Community Forestry Development Committees and Community Forestry Management Boards.

¹⁹ Winrock International (2015) Assistance for development of reference scenario for REDD+ Readiness. Interim Report December 2015.

²⁰ Described in LFSP Project Appraisal Document and in MRV Road Map sections 2.4 and 2.5.



In addition, conservation NGOs and CSO partners will contribute data to the MRV process by carrying out biomonitoring of Protected Areas, community forests for conservation, and key landscapes, through various projects²¹.

Liberia is in a strong position to develop a comprehensive national forest monitoring system, because it is benefitting from both the LFSP MRV project and the VPA. Guyana, which has some 6 years of experience of implementing a REDD+ MRV, provides an example of how this may develop. It is the first country to achieve annual monitoring of deforestation and forest degradation. As the system has developed there has been a growing emphasis on strengthening Community Measurement, Reporting and Verification (CMRV) and integrating local data with national remote-sensing. This has included information on land allocation and land titles. Improvements in data have created the opportunity to improve benefit sharing arrangements, by locating and quantifying forest areas, carbon stocks and land use changes more accurately. Better data has also allowed the original Reference Level to be revised²².

2.5.4 Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism

A Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM) is currently being developed as one of the components of the REDD+ readiness process. The purpose of this is to effectively address disputes that may arise during REDD+ planning and implementation phases. It is a requirement of participating REDD+ countries to have a FGRM in place²³.

Feedback is intended to ensure effective engagement of communities and other interests. It involves the active solicitation and serious consideration of stakeholder feedback, interests and input on REDD+ activities, and respectful responses and implementation of feasible and acceptable measures to address them. It serves to improve the planning and implementation of REDD+ and to anticipate and prevent potentially adverse impacts on project-affected communities. It thereby complements the ESMF (see MRV section above). By highlighting problems, it will be an important input to future revisions of the REDD+ Strategy

The grievance address element is required in case a conflict arises, despite the feedback. Those affected by REDD+ activities must have a formal route for dispute resolution. Such mechanisms are familiar in Liberia, for example Local Peace Committees (UNMIL), Customary courts (Ministry of Internal Affairs) and Local Dispute Resolution Committees (Liberia Land Commission).

2.5.5 Gaps and recommended additional measures

Considering the three areas of interventions; on carbon rights, benefit sharing and MRV, the main gaps in the current set of planned initiatives are:

Carbon rights:

- There are no current initiatives directly addressing the defining of carbon rights in law, although legal review/reform measures in LFSP will cover some of the preparatory work.

²¹ Working together for conservation in Liberia. Joint Document Prepared by Conservation International, Fauna & flora international, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds with the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia, the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation, AND ACDI/ VOCA-FIFESNGO. March 2015 (see activity 9.)

²² Wageningen University (2014) The way forward with Guyana's MRV: Consolidating and expanding capacities for REDD+ monitoring and MRV. June 17, 2014.

²³ FDA (2016) FGRM to support REDD+: Inception Report. Prepared by Parley Liberia, June 2016.



Benefit sharing:

- Review how the different benefit sharing systems are managed at national and local level and how they can be aligned to avoid overlapping local institutions and so that they can contribute to integrated land use plans for REDD+ targeted landscapes.

MRV

- The REDD+ MRV is an opportunity for Liberia to establish a forest management information system that helps management of the forestry sector as a whole. Even without REDD+, this is required so that progress on national forestry policy objectives can be monitored. The REDD+ MRV should therefore be designed and implemented with this dual purpose in mind. This would involve up-front work to develop data management processes and protocols for LFSP, VPA and all key forestry monitoring data (including REDD+), so that the FDA could work on a consistent data platform with other organizations. It would involve building a comprehensive National Forest Monitoring System around the REDD+ MRV. This is a complex and technically demanding task so it is recommended that the initial focus is only on the essential REDD+ MRV components. The additional action to take at this stage is to ensure that MRV systems for other forestry initiatives (e.g. VPA) are developed so that they are compatible with the REDD+ MRV.

2.5.6 The role of research institutions

Managing development and conservation in Liberia's forest land requires a firm evidence base. The REDD+ process requires detailed information to measure and verify emission reductions. The piloting and demonstration phase of REDD+ requires evidence on the effectiveness and impacts of measures. Research and academic institutions therefore have an important role to play in the national REDD+ Strategy's implementation, particularly on MRV and monitoring, evaluation and learning. This is recognized in the LFSP's Subcomponent 1.1 (\$7.57 million), which includes support to skills development, training, scholarships, study visits and development of forest management curricula.²⁴

²⁴ LFSP Project Appraisal Document, pp.46-48.



2.6 TAKING FORWARD ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

The approach taken in this Roadmap is to implement the REDD+ Strategy through existing and planned initiatives. There are some gaps however, so the summary of recommended additional measures below provides an agenda for the REDD+ Implementation Unit and partners to enhance the current package of measures.

Actions	Leading Organizations
<p><i>Priority 1: Pit saving, charcoal and shifting agriculture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Integrate plans for targeted landscapes into county development plans, as a way of connecting REDD+ objectives and measures into the broader planning process. b) For pit saving, identify and appraise options to improve efficiency with improved milling equipment and logging techniques. c) Explore the scope for additional incentives for land-use change, to balance the regulatory approach. d) Promote measures that reduce demand for timber and charcoal in urban areas and identify opportunities to integrate renewable energy projects into LFSP targeted landscapes to complement REDD+ actions. 	<p>MFDP, LFSP Regional Task Teams, County A/T Pillar 2 group.</p> <p>FDA, FIFES</p> <p>RTWG</p> <p>LFSP Regional Task Teams</p>
<p><i>Priority 2: Commercial forestry</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) Develop a REDD+ pilot project based on a commercial logging concession. f) Explore feasibility of incentives to logging operators to provide additional conservation of HCV/HCS, beyond that required in existing forestry regulations. g) Integrate Forest management plans into wider landscape plans in LFSP targeted areas. h) Develop current safeguards (e.g. EIA) and a potential new policy for locating TSC away from dense forest. i) Review provision in logging concessions for managing pit sawing and charcoal production, building on the 'third party access' regulation. j) Develop project selection criteria used by National Benefit Sharing Trust Board to encourage projects that meet sustainable development and REDD+ objectives. k) Review costs and benefits of extending regulations for sustainable forestry to community forests smaller than 50,000 ha but larger than 1,000 ha. 	<p>Logging companies, FDA</p> <p>VPA-SU, FDA, logging companies</p> <p>VPA-SU, LFSP Regional Task Teams</p> <p>EPA, FDA</p> <p>VPA-SU, FDA</p> <p>RTWG, NBSTB</p> <p>FDA, VPA-SU</p>
<p><i>Priority 3: Protected Areas</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> l) Commission review and strategy for completing the proposed Protected Areas Network and achieving the national policy to conserve 30% of total forest area, under LFSP program. m) Include in review/strategy a proposed approach to managing areas of forest set-aside for conservation within forestry concessions, agricultural concessions and community forests. 	<p>RIU, Conservation NGOs</p>



Actions	Leading Organizations
<p><i>Priority 4: Agricultural and mining concessions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> n) Support the mapping and inventory of all large estates and the area of HCV/HCS forest within, so that concessions can be integrated into land use maps and plans for the LFSP targeted landscapes o) Develop a policy and regulation for management of set-aside forest in agricultural concessions and large farms. p) Commission scoping study of potential scale and timing of development of mining sector and consequent impact on forest. q) Further develop policy and financing mechanism for an aggregated offset scheme, linked to the proposed Conservation Trust Fund supported by LFSP and NGOs. 	<p>LFSP Regional Task Teams, MoA, land owners/concessionaires</p> <p>FDA, MoA</p> <p>RIU, World Bank</p> <p>MLME, World Bank, mining companies.</p>
<p><i>Priority 5: Equity and sustainability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> r) Add specific task of defining carbon rights to the legal review/reform measure that is planned within the LFSP. s) Review the strengths/weaknesses of the forestry sector benefit sharing mechanism as a potential financial vehicle for REDD+ payments. Include in review how mining and agriculture concession social funds could be aligned with forestry to avoid overlapping local institutions and so that they can contribute to integrated land use plans for the targeted landscapes. t) Develop data management processes and protocols for LFSP, VPA and other key projects, to ensure that MRV systems for other forestry initiatives are compatible with the REDD+ MRV. 	<p>RIU</p> <p>FDA, MoA, MLME</p> <p>RIU, LISGIS, VPA-SU</p>

These additional measures are combined with the existing in work plans for each of the Strategic Priorities, in appendices to the Roadmap.



3 GEOGRAPHICAL SCALE OF REDD+ IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 ACTIONS AT PROJECT AND LANDSCAPE SCALE

Implementation of practical REDD+ measures in Liberia has started at a project and landscape scale. Liberia is taking a ‘nested’ approach to implementation of REDD+, meaning that interventions are taken at a sub-national level and are fitted within a national framework for enabling and monitoring REDD+ results.

Pilot projects

The piloting of community-based REDD+ approaches begun in 2009 and the Wonegizi project in Lofa County is now becoming established as the first full-scale pilot and demonstration for REDD+. Funding from NORAD has been secured to develop this further over the period to 2020, by which time the project is expected to be producing verified reductions in emissions. Other projects, although not described as REDD+ pilots, have been testing and demonstrating interventions that contribute directly to the REDD+ Strategy. The major examples of these are:

- Biodiversity program for East Nimba Nature Reserve and surrounding communities.
- Grebo protected area biomonitoring and community ecoguard program.
- Gola Forest National Park gazettelement and GolaMa community forestry connecting with the proposed Foya Nature Reserve.

The current projects are focused on single Protected Areas and the ‘buffer zone’ around these, although they are intended as catalysts for larger landscape initiatives that are eventually transboundary. The Tai-Grebo-Sapo complex into Côte d'Ivoire, the Gola Peace Park with Sierra Leone and the Nimba Mountains and Wonegizi-Ziama with Guinea. But these are long-term aspirations. The current projects are more localized and they are preparatory, in that their main outputs will be the necessary tasks of data gathering, land use planning and strengthening local institutions. The Wonegizi project aims to produce verifiable emission reductions by 2020. Gola may be the next project to reach this stage. There is not a REDD+ project on the Liberia side of Gola yet but if one is developed it could achieve verifiable emission reductions in around six years as was achieved on the Sierra Leone side.²⁵

²⁵ RSPB (2015) The Gola REDD Project monitoring and implementation report. September 2015

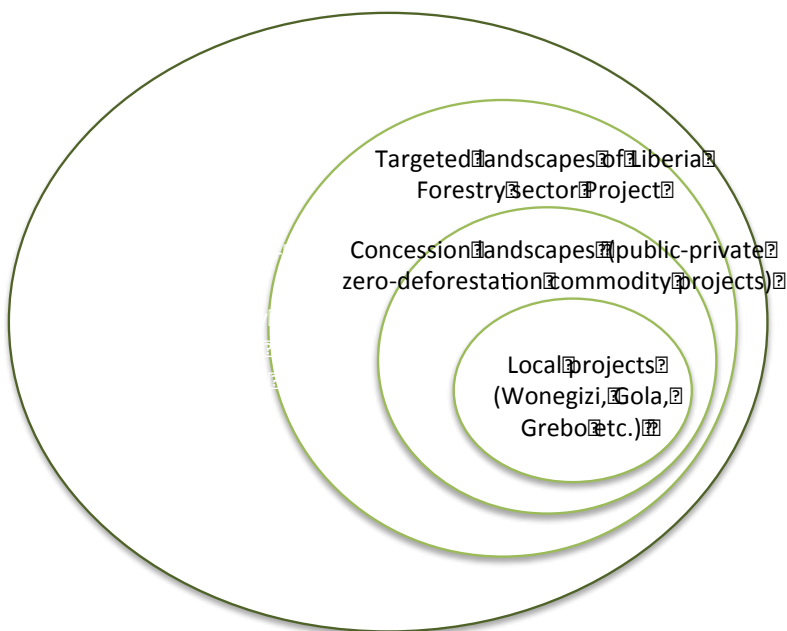


Figure 3 – ‘Nested’ approach: Sub-national implementation and national enabling

Landscape programs

Landscape programs cover a larger area and can achieve more substantial emission reductions. They are large enough to include Protected Areas, concessions for forestry, mining and agriculture, and community forests. At landscape scale, interventions from different projects and sectors can be brought together within an integrated plan. A partnership of organizations is required for oversight and implementation.

The LFSP takes this approach with interventions targeted at two landscapes, in Western Liberia and in the South East.²⁶ The main purpose of the LFSP is to test and demonstrate approaches for achieving land use change. It is part of the ‘Transformation’ phase of Liberia’s REDD+ process. It does not aim directly to produce verifiable reductions in emissions within its four-year duration to 2020.²⁷ The Liberia-Norway Letter of Intent – which provides the overarching aims and strategy for the LFSP – includes the aspiration that Liberia should be in a position to measure emissions reductions from its REDD+ interventions from 2017 and may begin the phase of “contributions for verified emission reductions” in 2018.

In addition to the LFSP the Sustainable Landscapes project, operated by IDH and FDA with Norwegian funding, will implement actions that may produce a significant contribution to REDD+. This is targeted in three landscapes. Two landscapes are centered on the extensive palm oil concessions of Sime Darby Plantation Liberia in Western Liberia and Golden Veroleum Liberia in the South East. They overlap with the LFSP landscapes but are smaller and are focused on the concessions and land for community-owned out grower schemes in or around these concessions. The third landscape is centered on the Northern Nimba mining concession operated by Arcelor Mittal. The project enhances the existing biodiversity offset project for East

²⁶ The World Bank. Project appraisal document On a Proposed grant in the amount of US\$37.5 million From the Liberia forest landscape single donor trust fund to the Republic of Liberia for a Liberia forest sector project. April 19, 2016

²⁷ The objectives and results framework of the LFSP do not include emissions reductions, although this is the intended outcome of the preparatory actions supported by the project.



Nimba Nature Reserve, led by the company. The Sustainable Landscapes Project has a distinct focus on private-public partnership with concession companies.

Sub-national REDD+

With a ‘nested’ approach, the MRV system also starts at a sub-national level, to assess the emission reductions in specific project sites or targeted landscapes. It follows that the results-based payments will flow to these same sub-national areas.

The geographical scope of REDD+ can grow, from projects to landscape scale, as interventions are scaled up. Over time, a large sub-national REDD+ program or a national program can be established. It is up to countries to determine the scale at which they implement REDD+.

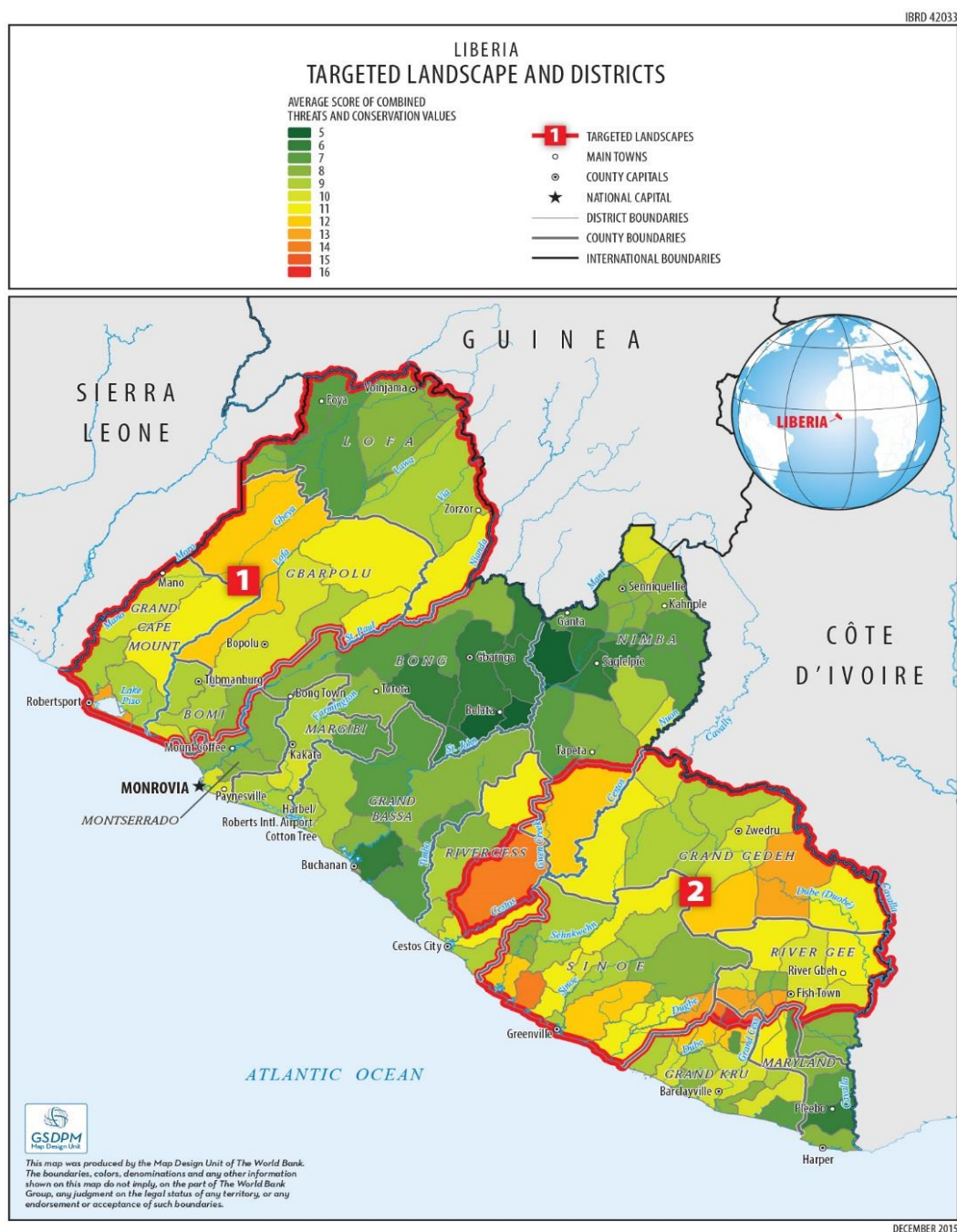


Figure 4 - Targeted landscapes for REDD+ interventions adopted by the LFSP



4 CREATING AN ENABLING FRAMEWORK FOR REDD+

For project and landscape level actions to succeed, action is required at national level to create an enabling environment. The key areas where national action is required are:

- Strengthening the legal and policy framework for REDD+;
- Promoting integrated land use planning; and
- Coordination of sectoral policies and actions

4.1 STRENGTHENING THE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

A detailed review of the legal, policy and institutional framework for REDD+ was carried out to inform the Strategy and Roadmap.²⁸ This clarifies Liberia's legal preparedness to proceed towards a full-fledged REDD+ program, and to implement the Strategy Options in the REDD+ Strategy.

Currently, Liberian law does not address REDD+, nor has any such law been proposed. Aspects of REDD+ can be implemented administratively without the need for new legislation. Other aspects will require either legal or regulatory amendments. There are two basic routes to the implementation of legal reforms for REDD+ available to Liberia:

- a) New and comprehensive REDD+ legislation; or
- b) Addressing gaps and overlaps in the existing frameworks.

A new REDD+ Act would enable Liberia to design a comprehensive program and allow lawmakers to give clear guidance to implementing agencies, affected communities, the private sector, and other stakeholders. It would also provide greater confidence to donors and international investors. However, the legislative process is slow and resource-intensive and requires high levels of political support.

The other option, regulatory and potentially legislative reforms, could provide a sound legal basis on a somewhat shorter timeframe, but will require harmonization among key pieces of legislation and their implementing regulations, particularly the Community Rights Law. In addition, direction in the form of new policies, operational guidelines or codes of conduct, as enabled under existing regulations, would help to fill some critical gaps in existing planning criteria and processes. In particular, there are well-recognized gaps in the existing legal framework related to land and natural resource tenure that will need to be addressed in passing and implementing the proposed Land Rights Act. The Legal and Policy review (Annex F) examines these issues in-depth and emphasizes that clearly defined and secure tenure rights for land, forest and carbon are critical enabling conditions for REDD+. REDD+ is premised on providing benefits to those who maintain or enhance forest carbon stocks, in order to compensate for lost opportunities or to incentivize good forest stewardship. This requires a clear understanding of who owns the land and resources in question (including carbon) and the ability of rights-holders to exclude others from accessing and changing forest cover.

The approach taken in the REDD+ Strategy is to build on existing laws, policies or projects and to improve or reform these using the lessons learned from pilot and demonstration projects.

²⁸ LTS-Niras (2016) Liberia REDD+ Policy, Legal and Institutional Framework. Report to FDA 27 June 2016.



This approach favors the second option, of using existing forestry, tenure and national resource management laws and regulations as the framework for REDD+. The critical gaps and overlaps that need to be addressed related to carbon rights and benefit sharing are described in the previous section under Strategic Priority 5.

Further detailed review and revision of laws and regulations is being carried out through the VPA process and is planned as a component of the Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP).

The problem of a shortage of capacity in forest governance institutions to implement and enforce existing laws and policies is highlighted in the SESA and is well documented in studies of the forestry sector, as well as agriculture, mining and other sectors relevant to REDD+. The REDD+ Strategy and Roadmap do not propose policies or measures for capacity building because these are already contained in the main implementing programs, particularly LFSP and VPA. The REDD+ Strategy does recognize the constraints that capacity limitations place on options for implementing REDD+ and responds with an underlying approach that builds on existing capabilities and starts with a limited geographical scale where interventions can be tested and demonstrated.

4.2 LAND USE PLANNING

Implementation of the REDD+ Strategy requires a planned approach to encouraging or controlling land uses within project sites or targeted landscapes. The absence of land use planning at national or local level is widely noted as a barrier to sustainable land use, resulting in competing activities across land-related sectors, overlapping concessions and a failure to protect forest areas designated for conservation. The land use and forest cover assessment commissioned by the FDA as part of the FCPF 'Readiness' phase makes an important contribution to the national planning process.

Land use planning at the national level will be taken forward as part of the policy and legal reforms being undertaken by the Land Commission (currently being re-constituted as the Land Authority). The mandate given to the Land Authority is to focus firstly on land rights, then land administration and finally on land use planning and management.²⁹ The development of Government-led national land use plans is therefore a long term endeavor.

Integrated land use plans will appear more quickly at a project or landscape level. The preparation and gazettement of Protected Areas will require the detailed surveying and mapping of land uses, settlements and other social features, and the preparation of a management plan that says how land uses will be managed within the Protected Area and in the 'buffer zone' around it. Large concessions for forestry or agriculture also involve survey, inventory, mapping and planning work. The large palm oil concessions for example are, in effect, landscapes in which commercial, community and conservation land uses need to be mapped and considered within an overall management plan. The preparation of community forests will likewise require a land use planning exercise.

Land use plans for Liberia will therefore be built 'bottom-up' up through these projects and landscape initiatives. Initially they will be confined to the sites of specific projects or initiatives

²⁹ LTS-Niras (2016) Liberia REDD+ Policy, legal and institutional review.



but over time they will expand to cover whole concessions or local landscapes. A further step is to join these up to develop integrated land use plans at the scale of the LFSP targeted landscapes.

The LFSP will support the preparation of land use maps at subnational level, for the targeted landscapes, and at national level (Subcomponent 2.1. Improved Land Use Planning; US\$1 million). It will also support socio-economic survey and land use planning at the community level, in prospective community forest areas (Component 2.3 Community Forestry in Targeted Forest Landscapes; US\$10.5 million).

Based on the experience gained from producing land use maps and land use plans, the LFSP includes the aim of producing a Roadmap for scaling up land use planning beyond the community level (such as land use plans at the district level). With these plans, the intention is to develop an integrated landscape management approach that will accommodate interventions to achieve GHG emission reductions and support the monitoring required for national carbon accounting for REDD+.

4.3 COORDINATION OF POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The REDD+ Strategy and Roadmap are an aid to coordination across REDD+ relevant sectors. The Strategy indicates how land use change in these sectors can all contribute to reductions in emissions. The Roadmap identifies existing and planned interventions that contribute to the Strategy and describes how they can be integrated within a REDD+ program.

The landscape planning described in the previous section is the most practical and important means for coordinating policies and actions from different government ministries, private companies, NGOs and donors at the landscape level. At the national level, the REDD+ Implementation Unit (consisting of both FDA and EPA) can support this by managing the following coordination priorities with other government bodies:

<i>Coordination Priorities</i>	<i>Objective</i>
VPA Support Unit and LVD	To ensure that commercial forestry contributes to the REDD+ Strategy as envisaged under priority 2.
Ministry of Agriculture	To enlist mainstream agriculture projects and funding into the REDD+ Strategy and targeted landscapes, where they can deliver conservation agriculture, agro-forestry, increased productivity and other REDD+ goals. The develop policies and practices for achieving REDD+ in the palm oil concessions.
Ministry of Land Mines and Energy	For land reform and the registration of community forests, Protected Areas etc. To develop an aggregated offset policy for large scale mining and a policy for managing small scale/artisanal mining in forest areas. To promote renewable energy solutions and energy conservation technologies (e.g. improved cooking stoves) as a way of reducing demand for charcoal.



<i>Coordination Priorities</i>	<i>Objective</i>
Ministry of Finance and Development Planning	<p>To ensure that FDA, EPA and others have the necessary resources to implement the REDD+ Strategy.</p> <p>To work jointly on the development of benefit sharing mechanisms for forestry revenue and REDD+ payments.</p> <p>To link the REDD+ Strategy into the national and regional planning and coordination process for pillar 2 and cross-cutting environmental aspects of the Agenda for Transformation.</p> <p>To collaborate over land use mapping and planning.</p>
Land Authority	<p>To collaborate over land use mapping and planning in REDD+ project sites and landscapes.</p> <p>To clarify and manage the relationship between land and forest tenure.</p>
Bureau of Concessions	To develop policies and practices in forestry, agriculture and mining concessions that contribute towards the REDD+ Strategy.
LISGIS	To develop consistent data collection and data management protocols that meet the needs of REDD+ MRV.
Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection	To monitor gender issues in REDD+ implementation and to identify additional initiatives to support positive impacts for women.
Ministry of Education	To assist with the ongoing communication of REDD+ through schools and other educational institutions.

For implementation of the REDD+ Strategy there is a need to coordinate interventions across the Strategic Priority ‘pillars’. In particular:

- Priority 1 measures for managing small-scale commercial activities are vital to the success of priority 2 (commercial logging), priority 3 (Protected Areas) and priority 4 (agricultural and mining concessions) because forest conservation in any of these designations will be undermined by un-managed encroachment.
- Priorities 2 and 4 measures lead to forest areas being set-aside in logging and agricultural concessions. A Strategy for bringing this set-aside forest under protection needs to be part of priority 3 (Protected Areas).

4.4 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Countries participating in REDD+ are required to set up a national REDD+ entity and designate a REDD+ Focal Point to communicate with the UNFCCC Secretariat and other relevant bodies. Liberia has done this, through the REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU) which coordinates and oversees REDD+ readiness and implementation. The RIU sits in the FDA and is being strengthened in staff numbers and capacity through the LFSP.

Liberia has well-established arrangements for REDD+ preparation and these have been adopted by the LFSP for implementation. An elaborate and new national architecture just for REDD+ would be complex and expensive to set up and it would distract effort away from local projects. Instead, the need for institutional development should be revisited once there is better evidence



on how the current arrangement works and when there is greater clarity from the international community about what REDD+ financing will be available to Liberia, beyond that coming from the bilateral agreement with Norway and the Readiness investment by FCPF.

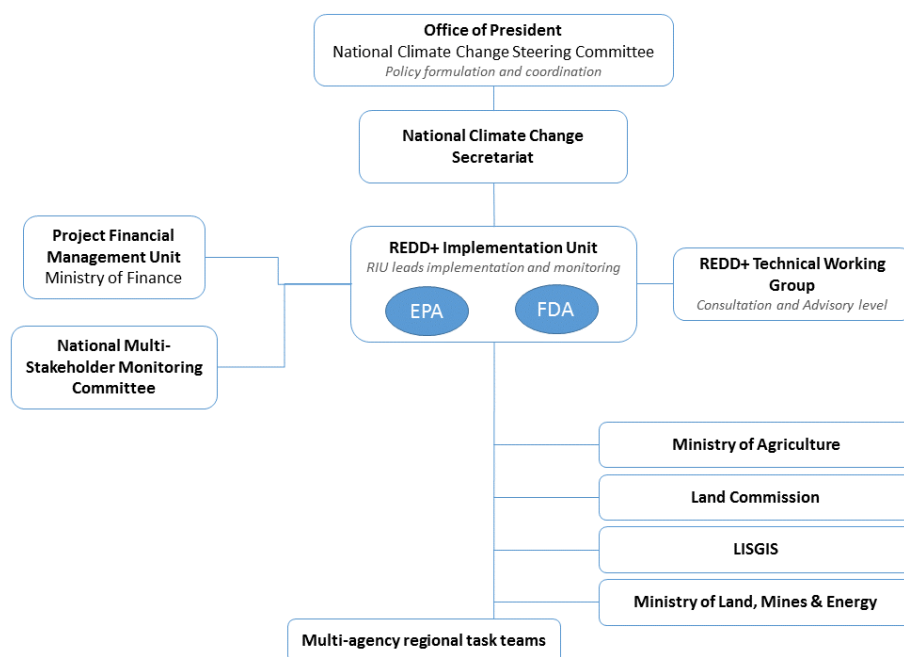


Figure 5 - Institutional arrangements for REDD+

The immediate issue confronting the existing institutions with a role to play in implementing REDD+ concerns their effectiveness rather than their design. Serious limitations in the capacity to implement activities or enforce laws and regulations have been very well documented; in the consultations and feasibility analysis conducted for the REDD+ Strategy preparation, in the SESA and in previous studies of forest governance – see, for example, the assessment of key government issues for REDD+ implementation conducted by PROFOREST in 2013.³⁰ These challenges are recognized in the LFSP and in the VPA project, and in other projects contributing to REDD+ implementation. The results of the measures to strengthen the FDA, community forestry institutions, etc. contained in these projects will determine the effectiveness of the NCCSC, RIU, RTWG and other REDD+ institutions. Initially, the REDD+ strategy relies very heavily on donor supported programs for capacity building and forest management. However these do not substitute for the core revenue support to ministries and agencies from the Government of Liberia. To date, budgetary constraints within the Government have severely limited the resources available to FDA, EPA and other bodies. This has hindered recruitment and organizational development, as well as the conduct of day-to-day activities such as forest monitoring and law enforcement. Looking ahead, it is vital that the resources required for implementing the REDD+ strategy are factored into the budget planning of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

³⁰ Halton et al (2013) Liberia: Assessment of key governance issues for REDD+ implementation through application of PROFOR forest governance tool. PROFOR/FCPF.



An assessment of institutional needs and strengths/weaknesses should therefore form a part of the mid-term review of the LFSP as well as reviews of progress with VPA and other REDD+ related projects. Suitable criteria for this assessment are:³¹

Criteria	Indicators
Political legitimacy	How acceptable the structure is for national authorities, civil society, local communities, donors and other international organizations engaged in REDD+. Legitimacy also concerns transparency and accountability, distribution of power and wealth of REDD+ financial flows.
Effectiveness	Capacity to deliver on reduced emissions, that is, address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, avoiding leakage and ensuring permanence.
Efficiency	Ability to deliver cost-efficient REDD+ results. This involves all costs of REDD+, including implementation, transaction and opportunity costs.
Capacity to deliver co-benefits	Effects on poverty reduction and biodiversity preservation.

4.5 REVIEW AND UPDATING OF STRATEGY

The Strategy will need to be revised at future points in response to lessons learned from projects and research, and to reflect developments in relevant policies and laws as well as feedback through the ESMF and FGRM.

4.5.1 Inputs to monitoring and review

The process and timing for a review of the Strategy should be linked to the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that is being put in place for the LFSP, because that is the major instrument for implementing the Strategy and it is accompanied by the MRV System. The MRV system will provide information on whether emission reductions are being achieved and so is the key input for review of the strategy.

For the LFSP and MRV, the FDA and specifically the RIU, has the role of coordinating monitoring and evaluation. This involves gathering information on results as well as coordinating the inputs from groups such as the RTWG. The work plan for the LFSP includes capacity building for FDA to help it perform this task. The MRV roadmap describes the tasks involved in operating the system and notes the needs for capacity building and a technical group(s) specifically for this task. The functions for monitoring and evaluating the LFSP and MRV, and the appropriate institutional arrangements for doing so, will therefore be finalised in the early stages of these projects; a sub-group for MRV is envisaged.

The LFSP and MRV is at the heart of the process for monitoring and reviewing the REDD+ Strategy, but it is not the only input. There are also the results from other projects that contribute to the REDD+ Strategy, including the VPA, the Wonegizi REDD+ pilot, and a series of community development and forest conservation projects, as described in this Roadmap. These projects have their own M&E and reporting arrangements and hence the task for the

³¹ Assessment criteria based on those used by CIFOR in a global comparison of emerging REDD+ structures: Pagiola, S., Bosquet, B. (2009) Estimating the Costs of REDD at the Country Level. Forest Carbon Partnership Facility.



REDD+ Implementation Unit is to gather this information and feed it into the "bigger picture" of the REDD+ Strategy.

In addition, the ESMF needs to be applied to assess environmental and social impacts of implementing the REDD+ Strategy and feedback from the FGRM needs to be considered. The design of the ESMF comes with a recommendation that it is managed by a "Safeguards Committee" (sub-group) under the RIU, or possibly under the MRV Working Group. A process and institutional arrangement for managing the FGRM is currently being designed.

Inputs to review of the REDD+ Strategy	
Inputs	Key questions for review
MRV	Are emissions being reduced? If so, where is this occurring and what are the causes?
LFSP	Are interventions working as intended, to create the conditions for reducing emissions?
VPA and other projects	Are interventions resulting in changed land use practices which can be linked to a reduction in emissions, or the potential to achieve this?
ESMF	What are the environmental and social impacts of the projects which contribute to the REDD+ Strategy and what changes to the Strategy or its implementation would reduce negative impacts?
FGRM	What grievances are being raised and what adjustments to the strategy or implementation would relieve these?

4.5.2 Monitoring and review arrangements

For monitoring and reviewing the REDD+ Strategy, what is important is that:

- Each of the inputs to the REDD+ strategy have an effective monitoring and evaluation regime;
- Each are fed into an overall assessment of progress with implementing the REDD+ strategy, leading to adjustments/revisions.

Part of the early support from LFSP is to enable the RIU and RTWG to adjust to the new functions that come with REDD+ and to build its capacity. The remit of the RIU and RTWG is expanding to cover the ongoing management of the "R-Package" including the MRV, ESMF and FGRM, plus management of the LFSP and coordination with the numerous other implementation projects.

This requires changes to the terms of reference, composition and working practices of the RTWG. This task should be taken forward as a distinct exercise, as part of early implementation of the REDD+ Strategy, to ensure that the RTWG is effective at supporting RIU in its management role and enabling all interests to participate.

Although the REDD+ Strategy has focussed on strategic priorities, it still includes a wide scope of issues and interventions. This will be very challenging to monitor and manage on a regular basis. It is important that the RIU is able to maintain a "high-level", comprehensive view of



progress and to do this it will be greatly assisted if the MRV, LFSP, ESMF and FGRM are managed as distinct projects, with their own stakeholder engagement arrangements. In that way the RIU will be able to delegate management and receive management reports. .

It is recommended that the RIU convene a review of the REDD+ Strategy shortly after the Mid Term Review of the LFSP (approximately 2018). This should gather evidence from the various sources described above. To do so it will convene projects managers and/or technical working groups associated with each of the initiatives. The aim should be to produce a written stock-take of progress with implementing the strategy and preliminary conclusions on strengths and weaknesses of the Strategy itself.

Actual revision of the Strategy should be done following the evaluation of the LFSP (approximately 2020). Within this five-year period there will be sufficient results from projects, research, MRV etc. to inform changes to the strategy.

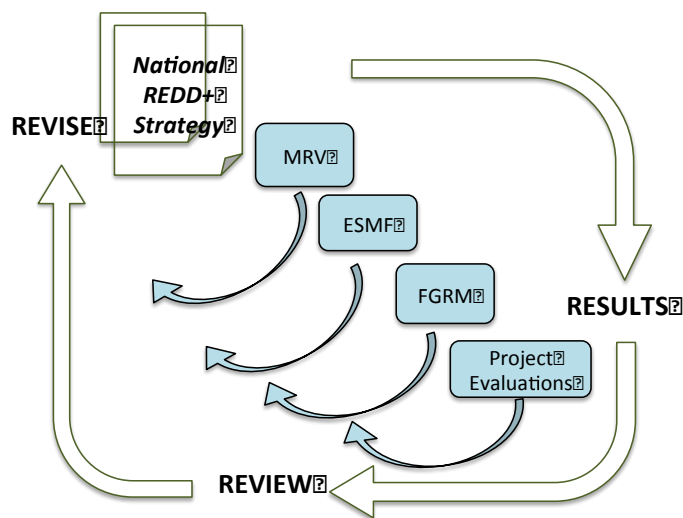


Figure 6 - Feedback loops in the process of reviewing and revising the REDD+ Strategy

Further guidance on the review process includes:

- Assessment of results should be based on evidence from practical projects, and those managing these across Liberia.
- The impact of the 2017 election in Liberia and the new administration should be factored into the review, as well as other changes to the context for REDD+ such as development in international climate change agreements (such as arise from the UNFCCC Conference of Parties).
- The terms of reference for the REDD+ Technical Working Group (RTWG) need to be revised to include a role in reviewing the REDD+ Strategy Document, as well as its implementation.
- Based on the capacity gaps of the RTWG identified in the SESA Priorities Report, a training program for RTWG members and others involved in the monitoring and evaluation of REDD+ should be carried out. This program may also include training on results frameworks in order to adequately monitor progress of the REDD+ Strategy implementation.



- The ESMF can act as a mechanism for documenting and storing issues and proposed edits to the REDD+ Strategy and Roadmap.



APPENDIX 1: IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR REDD+ STRATEGY PRIORITIES



Table 1 - Priorities and Strategy Options from the REDD+ Strategy

Goal	Reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and increase benefit sharing				
Strategic priorities	1. Reduce forest loss from pit sawing, charcoal production and shifting agriculture.	2. Reduce impact of commercial logging	3. Complete and manage a network of Protected Areas.	4. Prevent or offset clearance of high carbon stock and high conservation value forest in agricultural and mining concessions.	5. Fair and sustainable benefits from REDD+
Strategy Options	<p>1.1 Manage pit sawing (chain saw logging) to reduce loss of forest.</p> <p>1.2 Reduce impact of charcoal industry on forest through better regulation, improved efficiency and the development of alternatives energy sources.</p> <p>1.3 Increase area and productivity of non-forest land under permanent food and cash crops, to reduce the expansion of shifting agriculture.</p> <p>1.4 Locate services and new infrastructure development in non-forest and less-dense forest areas¹.</p> <p>1.5 Integrate hunting, artisanal mining and forest restoration into community-led livelihood and sustainable forest management practices.</p>	<p>2.1 Ensure that all industrial logging is practiced to high conservation standards², so that loss of forest and biodiversity is minimized.</p> <p>2.2 Conserve and maintain areas of high conservation value³ within commercial forestry concessions, such as important wildlife corridors.</p> <p>2.3 Review Timber Sales Contracts to ensure compliance with forestry laws and EIA standards and establish a strong presumption against further TSC contracts on dense forest and within 3km of Protected Area.</p> <p>2.4 Prevent unregulated pit sawing and charcoal production in forestry concessions.</p> <p>2.5 Manage commercial forestry in community forests to achieve sustainable logging standards as apply to FMCs.</p>	<p>3.1 Complete the Protected Areas Network and strengthen management to prevent forest degradation</p> <p>3.2 Expand the Protected Areas Network to conserve 30% of forest land.</p> <p>3.3 Reduce pressure on Protected Areas from surrounding communities (using priority 1 measures).</p> <p>3.4 Develop and implement land use plans at landscape scale, to integrate production and conservation.</p>	<p>4.1 Conserve HCS-HCV forest within agricultural concession areas, including developing and implementing a policy for the sustainable management of these conserved areas (using priority 1 measures)</p> <p>4.2 Apply policy of conserving HCS-HCV forest to all agricultural concessions, including large private farms.</p> <p>4.3 Ensure that mining results in zero-net deforestation, through mechanisms such as biodiversity offsets.</p> <p>4.4 Locate future large-scale agriculture and mining concessions in less dense and non-forest areas.</p>	<p>5.1 Define carbon rights and develop policies and regulations for upholding these.</p> <p>5.2 Establish benefit sharing mechanisms for REDD+, in harmony with those operating in the forestry, mining, agriculture and other relevant sectors.</p> <p>5.3 Operate a robust monitoring, reporting and verification system for demonstrating reductions in emissions achieved through REDD+ policies.</p>



Table 2 - Implementation plan for REDD+ Strategy priority 1: Reduce forest loss from pit sawing, charcoal production and shifting agriculture

Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 1.1	Reduce impact of pit sawing (chain saw logging) on forest through better regulation, improved efficiency and developing alternatives.	Existing	Study of domestic timber industry (LFSP s-c 2.3, VPA-SU Conducted by FAO for FDA)										
			Revision of Regulation # 115-11, Chainsaw milling (VPA-SU)										
			Develop Emission Reference Level for domestic timber (LFSP/MRV Road map)										
			Regulate and eventually include pit sawing under the timber legality assurance system (VPA-SU activity 10)										
		Additional	For pit sawing, identify and appraise options to improve efficiency with improved milling equipment and logging techniques.										
SO 1.2	Reduce impact of charcoal industry on forest through better regulation, improved efficiency and the development of alternatives energy sources.	Existing	Study of charcoal industry (LFSP Subcomponent 2.3)										
			Develop Emission Reference Level for charcoal industry (MRV/LFSP)										
			Charcoal production regulation - pending 2016-17 (VPA-SU).										
			Development of national energy policy with mitigation activities in INDC including:										
			Promoting private investment in renewable energy (hydro, biomass, solar)										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
			Rehabilitate existing hydro-power plants and build new hydro-power plants.										
			Produce and distribute 280,543 improved firewood cookstoves and 308,004 improved charcoal cookstoves by 2030.										
			Implement large scale biomass projects to generate about 30 MW by 2030.										
		Additional	Promote measures that reduce demand for timber and charcoal in urban areas and identify opportunities to integrate renewable energy projects into LFSP targeted landscapes to complement REDD+ actions.										
SO 1.3	Increase area and productivity of non-forest land under permanent food and cash crops, to reduce the expansion of shifting agriculture.	Existing	Strengthened Capacity for Sustainable Agriculture (LFSP Subcomponent 2.4. US\$4 million). This will promote sustainable agricultural practices and reduce slash-and-burn agriculture in the targeted landscapes (building on WB- MoA projects STCRSP and WAAPP in Grand Gedeh, River Gee, and Bomi Counties.)										
			Development of national agricultural policy with adaptation activities in INDC including:										
			Intercropping, irrigation and the optimization of lowland/swamp farming.										
			Develop climate resilient crop/agroforestry diversification and livestock production systems.										
		Additional	Explore the scope for additional incentives for land use change, to balance the regulatory approach.										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 1.4	Locate services and new infrastructure development in non-forest and less-dense forest areas.	Existing	Improved Land Use Planning (LFSP Subcomponent 2.1) will support the preparation of the current land use map at the sub-national (for the targeted landscapes) and national levels.										
		Additional	Integrate plans for targeted landscapes into county development plans, as a way of connecting REDD+ objectives and measures into the broader planning process.										
SO 1.5	Integrate hunting, artisanal mining and forest restoration into community-led livelihood and sustainable forest management practices.	Existing	Recognition of "Authorized Forest Communities" (LFSP)										
			LFSP subcomponents 1.1. and 2.3 addressing Sustainable livelihoods.										
			Develop key rural forest-based enterprises and provide sustainable economic opportunities for farmers and forest-dependent communities while combating deforestation and loss of biodiversity in 17 Community Forest (FIFES project)										
Cross-cutting		Existing	Estimate activity data and develop FERL for forest degradation/deforestation/conservation/restoration practices: charcoal, pit sawing, shifting agriculture (LFSP and MRV 2.4, 2.5)										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
			Strengthen local institutions for forest management: (LFSP Subcomponent 2.3. Community Forestry in Targeted Forest Landscapes. Under this subcomponent, the project will support activities on a demand-driven basis to assist forest communities in (a) strengthening community governance and institutions to manage community forestlands and common pool resources (in accordance with the CRL and the Land Rights Policy); (b) promoting and supporting productive natural resources management investments based on an integrated 3Cs approach at the level of community lands, of which forest will be a significant land use component; and (c) improving livelihoods by creating job opportunities and improving income from the use of communities' customary land and forest resources.										
			Support to community forestry, sustainable forest management in community forests and improving livelihoods (NGO Working Together document, Activity 4. Community Action for Conservation).										
			Revision of existing guidelines for forestry plantations (VPA-SU p.42 - Relevant to potential re-forestation projects)										
		Additional	Explore the scope for additional incentives for land-use change, to balance the regulatory approach.										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
Targeting	<p>The Geographical scale for intervention is the targeted landscapes of the LFSP, plus sites of REDD+ relevant projects located outside of these: e.g. The Arcelor Mittal Biodiversity Offset Nimba Landscape and community forestry sites supported by PROSPER/FIFES and NGO-led projects.</p> <p>Target beneficiaries of LFSP are Up to 70 communities supported to conduct a Socioeconomic Profile Reconnaissance Survey. Up to 40 Community Action Plans, Community Land Use Plans and up to 40 community training exchanges. Up to 40 communities supported on timber and non-forest timber products certification (p.61)</p>												



Table 3 - Implementation plan for REDD+ Strategy priority 2: Reduce impact of commercial logging in forestry concessions

Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 2.1	Ensure that all industrial logging is practiced to high conservation standards in keeping with national regulations and international standards.	Existing	Review existing standards for Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) and adapt/apply for use in Liberia (Letter of Intent)										
			Create or update strategic forest management plans for all current FMCs (no plans currently exist) (VPA-SU p.14)										
			Develop forestry regulations (VPA-SU)										
			Capacity building for the private sector to engage in VPA (VPA-SU Activity 5.1)										
			Develop Forest Governance program with FDA and MoJ to perform regulatory work and admin of justice for forestry laws (VPA-SU)										
			Capacity building in Legality Assurance System (VPA-SU)										
			Review of the Code of Harvesting Practices (VPA-SU)										
			GIS, Mapping and forest management planning support to FDA, to improve commercial and community forestry practices (VPA-SU)										
			Introduction of new chain of custody, legality verification system and Legality verification Department in FDA (VPA)										
		Additional	Develop a REDD+ pilot project based on a commercial logging concession.										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 2.2	Conserve and maintain areas of highest conservation value within commercial forestry concessions, such as important wildlife corridors.	Existing	Experiment with direct payment system to communities and individual landowners for contributions to protecting forests and for community forestry (LoI)										
			Strengthen environmental impact licensing and monitoring of forestry through capacity building to EPA (VPA activity 3.5).										
		Additional	Explore feasibility of incentives to logging operators to provide additional conservation of HCV/HCS, beyond that required in existing forestry regulations.										
			Integrate Forest management plans into wider landscape plans in LFSP targeted areas.										
SO 2.3	Review Timber Sales Contracts to ensure compliance with forestry laws and EIA standards and establish a strong presumption against further TSC contracts on dense forest and within 5 km of Protected Areas.	Existing	Review status and legality of TSCs (LoI) and moratorium on the award of new industrial logging concessions (LFSP) (see cross-cutting interventions).										
		Additional	Develop current safeguards (e.g. EIA) and a potential new policy for locating TSC away from dense forest										
SO 2.4	Prevent unregulated pit sawing and charcoal production within forestry concessions.	Existing	Third party access to concession areas regulation - pending 2-16/17 (VPA-SU)										
		Additional	Review provision in logging concessions for managing pit sawing and charcoal production, building on the 'third party access' regulation										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 2.5	Manage commercial forestry in community forests to achieve sustainable logging standards as apply to FMCs.	Existing	Integration of CFs into the Legality Assurance System, to ensure same standards as FMCs (VPA-SU)										
			Mapping of (increasing) CFMA applications (VPA-SU) (FIFES)										
			Coordination of community forestry Development committees by establishing the National Union of Community Forestry Development Committees (NUCFDC) and by capacity building support to CFDCs (VPA-SU).										
		Additional	Review costs and benefits of extending regulations for sustainable forestry to community forests larger than 1,000 ha and of EIA screening of all commercial forestry operations larger than 50ha.										
Cross-cutting	Existing		Moratorium on the award of new industrial logging concessions, including CFMAs that are backed by companies until all concessions have been reviewed (LoI, section iii Legal reform and law enforcement)										
			Review of legality of existing logging and other land use contracts, leading to the cancellation of illegal and non-performing concessions (LoI, section iii Legal reform and law enforcement). Legal reform for effective implementation of REDD+ related laws and policies (LFSP sc 1.2)										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
Targeting			Restructuring of FDA Community Forestry, Commercial Forestry and Research & Development (GIS Division) Departments functions, starting in Region 3 (Buchanan HQ) in 2016 then expanding to other regions by 2018 (VPA-SU Activity 4/4.1) [Region 3 extends up to Nimba. The LFSP western targeted landscape is in region 1, eastern in region 4]										
			Updating of forest concession maps and development of a comprehensive Forest Management System (VPA-SU)										
			Strengthening and monitoring of social agreements between logging concession holders and affected communities (VPA-SU)										
			Support to develop a Functioning and Effective National Benefit Sharing Trust Board (NBSTB).										
			Capacity building for NGO coalition to support independent forest monitoring and assistance to CFDCs and CFMBs (VPA-SU activity 5.2)										
	Additional		Develop project selection criteria used by National Benefit Sharing Trust Board to encourage projects that meet sustainable development and REDD+ objectives										
Targeting													



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
	VPA initiatives are geographically targeted at commercial forestry concessions, including community forests. For the purposes of REDD+ the targeting of Priority 2 initiatives would be limited to those forestry concessions that are within the targeted landscapes of the LFSP, so that they fall within the scope of the MRV system.												



Table 4 - Implementation plan for REDD+ Strategy priority 3: REDD+ Strategic Priority 3: Complete and manage a network of Protected Areas

Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Action	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 3.1	Complete the Protected Areas Network and strengthen management to prevent forest degradation.	Existing	LFSP Subcomponent 2.2. Strengthened Management of Protected Areas of Targeted Forest Landscapes (US\$8.2 million). This subcomponent will contribute to the expansion, improved management, and more sustainable funding of Liberia's protected area network, providing the resources necessary to safeguard selected existing and future protected areas.										
			Support priority investments to strengthen the on-the-ground management of the Sapo, Lake Piso, Gola Forest, and Wonegizi protected areas. PPAs to be assessed under the LFSP are the Foya and Kpo Mountains PPAs in the northwest forest landscape and the Grand Kru-River Gee, Gbi, and Senkwehn PPAs in the southeast (LFSP)										
			Conservation NGOs SCNL/RSPB, CI, FFI, WCF and partners have initiatives to support the gazettelement, management planning and community engagement in existing and proposed PAs, including Gola (and GolaMA project between Gola and Foya PPAs), East Nimba and Grebo.										
SO 3.2	Expand the Protected Areas Network to conserve 30% of forest land.	Existing	Compose an overarching strategy for the allocation of selected forest areas to protected area status, detailing adequate resources necessary to safeguard existing and future protected areas (LoI/LFSP).										
		Additional	Include in review/strategy a proposed approach to managing areas of forest set-aside for conservation within forestry concessions, agricultural concessions and community forests.										



Roadmap for implementation of the national REDD+ Strategy

Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Action	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 3.3	Reduce pressure on PAs from surrounding communities (using priority 1 measures).	Existing	Measures to manage pit sawing, charcoal and shifting agriculture described under priority 1.										
			Community action for conservation. This consists of a number of programs operated by different NGOs with different funding sources, including:										
			Development of conservation agreements										
			Development of benefit sharing mechanisms										
			Development of conservation trust funds and financing mechanisms for sustainable forest practices by communities.										
			Implementation of sustainable livelihood projects.										
			NGO Working together actions 4 Community action for conservation and 6. Sustainable financing for conservation activities within protected areas and community forests.										
SO 3.4	Develop and implement land use plans at landscape scale, to integrate production and conservation.	Existing	LFSP Subcomponent 2.1. Improved Land Use Planning: The subcomponent will support the preparation of current land use maps at the subnational (for the targeted landscapes) and national levels. Together with the results achieved and lessons learned from the inclusive strategic planning processes and land use planning at the community level (Component 2.3), a road map report to scale up land use planning above the community level (such as land use plans at the district level) will be developed										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Action	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
			Landscape approach to biodiversity conservation (NGO Working Together Document activity 7)										
			IDH Production-Protection project with GVL, Sime Darby and Arcelor Mittal										
Cross-cutting		Existing	LFSP further support for PA management includes i) Conservation Trust Fund; ii) Biodiversity offsets from mining; iii) Tourism potential study; iv) Capacity to FDA regional offices.										
			Cross-cutting activities underway or planned by INGOs include (NGO Working Together Document): Activity 1: Demarcation and legal gazettment of proposed and existing protected areas (PAs)										
			Activity 2. Monitoring of protected areas, community forests for conservation, and key landscapes (biomonitoring)										
			Activity 3. Protected area management frameworks										
			Activity 5. Compliance and law enforcement through community or government-led initiatives.										
			Activity 6. Sustainable financing for conservation actions within protected areas and community forests										
			Activity 8. Capacity building in biodiversity conservation for the next generation (Environmental education)										



Targeting	<p>LFSP interventions are targeted at protected areas and proposed protected areas within the projects' targeted landscapes. The main activities of conservation NGOs for protected areas also mostly fall within the LFSP targeted areas and include Wonegizi, Grebo and Gola. East Nimba Nature Reserve is outwith the targeted landscapes but is supported by the Arcelor Mittal Biodiversity Program, which includes or is assisted by activities by CI, FFI, Liberian NGOs and the IDH sustainable landscapes program.</p>
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Table 5 - Implementation plan for REDD+ Strategy priority 4: Prevent or offset clearance of high carbon stock and high conservation value forest in agricultural and mining concessions.

Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Action	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 4.1	Conserve HCV-HCS forest within agricultural concession areas, including developing and implementing a policy for the sustainable management of these conserved areas (using priority 1 measures)	Existing	Letter of Intent contains a commitment towards a zero-deforestation policy for all multinational agricultural companies doing business in Liberia.										
			TFA 2020 initiative to establish HCV, HCS and FPIC standards for Liberia.										
			IDH Sustainable landscapes program: Public-Private initiative to finance community oil palm or other agricultural improvements within concessions in exchange for Production-Protection Agreements to conserve set-aside forest. Includes mapping of HCV/HCS forest in concessions.										
		Additional	Develop a policy and regulation for management of set-aside forest in agricultural concessions and large farms.										
SO 4.2	Apply policy of conserving HCS-HCV forest to all agricultural concessions, including large private farms.	Existing	TFA 2020 initiative (see above) may extend beyond palm oil to include other agriculture concessions.										
		Additional	Support the mapping and inventory of all large estates and the area of HCV/HCS forest within, so that concessions can be integrated into land use maps and plans for the LFSP targeted landscapes										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Action	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 4.3	Ensure that mining result in zero-net deforestation, through mechanisms such as biodiversity offsets.	Existing	Further develop policy and financing mechanism for an aggregated offset scheme, linked to the proposed Conservation Trust Fund supported by LFSP and NGOs										
		Additional	Commission scoping study of potential scale and timing of development of mining sector and consequent impact on forest.										
SO 4.4	Locate future large-scale agriculture and mining concessions in less dense and non-forest areas.	Existing	Improved Land Use Planning (LFSP Subcomponent 2.1) will support the preparation of the current land use map at the sub-national (for the targeted landscapes) and national levels (see Strategy Option 1.4)										
		Additional	Integrate plans for targeted landscapes into county development plans, as a way of connecting REDD+ objectives and measures into the broader planning process.										
Cross-cutting		Existing	Existing community-based forest management and livelihood interventions, from a variety of programs, which aim to reduce unsustainable uses of forest resources, including pit sawing, charcoal production and shifting agriculture.										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Action	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
		Additional	Review and develop social agreements and benefit sharing with communities from mining and agricultural concessions revenues, to improve effectiveness and to explore the potential to link agreements to forest conservation. Also explore potential to integrate REDD+ payments and potentially other sources of income for forest conservation (see Strategic priority 5).										
Targeting	The IDH landscapes are centered on the palm oil concessions of Golden Veroleum Liberia and Sime Darby Plantations Liberia, and the mining concession of Arcelor Mittal. The palm oil landscapes lie within the LFSP targeted landscapes.												



Table 6 - Implementation plan for REDD+ Priority 5: Fair and sustainable benefits from REDD+

Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 5.1	Define carbon rights and develop policies and regulations for upholding these.	Existing	LFSP Subcomponent 1.2. Legal Reform. This aims to support the GoL with the ongoing process of legal reform and enforcement of forest-related laws. It includes land rights and could therefore directly or indirectly support work to clarify carbon rights.										
		Additional	Add specific task of defining carbon rights to the ToR for the legal review/reform measure that is planned within the LFSP										
SO 5.2	Establish benefit sharing mechanisms for REDD+, in harmony with those operating in the forestry, mining, agriculture and other relevant sectors.	Existing	LFSP subcomponent 2.3 a) Support to develop a Functioning and Effective National Benefit Sharing Trust Board (NBSTB) and establishment and/or strengthening of existing benefit-sharing arrangements at local level.										
		Additional	Review the strengths/weaknesses of the forestry sector benefit sharing mechanism as a potential vehicle for REDD+ social and economic benefits. Include in review how mining and agriculture concession social funds could be aligned with forestry to avoid overlapping local institutions and so that they can contribute to integrated land use plans for the targeted landscapes										



Strategy Option	Description of Strategy Option	Status	Description of Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10
SO 5.3	Operate a robust monitoring, reporting and verification system for demonstrating reductions in emissions achieved through REDD+ policies.	Existing	LFSP Subcomponent 3.1. MRV and Reference-Level Development. This subcomponent will support TA, goods, workshops, and operational costs for a functional and successfully tested national MRV system building on the road map developed with support from the University of Wageningen (included in annex 8), with the results achieved by the national REDD+ Readiness Program, supported by the FCPF readiness grant, and in coordination with ongoing VPA support to the FDA in the context of legality verification.										
			LFSP Subcomponent 3.2. Development of an Information System for Safeguards.										
		Additional	Develop data management processes and protocols for LFSP, VPA and other key projects, to ensure that MRV systems for other forestry initiatives are compatible with the REDD+ MRV										
Cross-cutting		Existing	REDD+ preparation and implementation (NGO Working Together Document. Activity 9). This aims to support ongoing REDD+ work by revitalizing the RTWG and establishing an expert advisory group; incorporating the lessons from on-the-ground interventions into the REDD+ Strategy; and establishing more REDD+ testing/demonstration sites.										
Targeting	The definition of carbon rights, the structuring of benefit sharing mechanisms and MRV need to be done at national level, as well as at a sub-national landscape or project level.												

