MAINSTREAMING SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS INTO THE LIBERIAN NATIONAL FORESTRY REFORM PROCESS

A Strategic Environmental Assessment for implementation of the 3Cs of the Forest Reform Law 2006
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CFDC  Community Forest Development Committee
CFWG  Community Forestry Working Group
COPAN  Consolidation of Protected Area Network (Project)
CRL  Community Rights Law with Respect to Forest Lands
EIA  Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA  Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia
FDA  Forestry Development Authority
FMC  Forest Management Concession
GoL  Government of Liberia
IUCN  International Union for the Conservation of Nature
LFI  Liberia Forest Initiative
MLME  Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy
NFRL  National Forestry Reform Law
NGO  Non-governmental organization
NTFP  Non-timber forest product
PRR  Poverty Reduction Strategy
REDD  Reduce Emission for Deforestation and Degradation
SDI  Sustainable Development Institute
SAPN  SAPO National Park
TSC  Timber Sales Contract
UNEP  United Nations Environmental Programme
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
3Cs  The conservation, commercial, and community components Liberia’s 2007 forest strategy

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Agroforestry: A dynamic, ecologically based natural resource management practice that, through the integration of trees and other tall woody plants with agricultural plants on farms and in agricultural landscape, diversifies production for increased social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Biodiversity: Defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (1992, Art. 2) as “the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part.”

Biofuel: Fuel produced from plants’ biomass, seen as replacement for fossil fuel for transportation, which is known to be a major contributor to climate change; also known as agrofuel.

Carbon Credit: Part of the cap and trade carbon pricing system whereby an overall carbon emission cap is set and tradable allowances that grant businesses the right to emit a set amount of carbon are issued. Those who can reduce emission cheaply can sell their tradable allowance (carbon credit).

Carbon Trade: Carbon trading is a market approach to mitigate global warming that is leading to climate change by trading carbon credits.

3Cs: The commercial, community, and conservation uses of forests within the sustainable management of forests in Liberia. The “3Cs” concept, developed by the Liberia Forest Reassessment project, was intended to focus on the integration of these three components.

Communal Forest: Refers to “an area set aside by statute or regulation for sustainable use of forest products by local communities or tribes on a non-commercial basis” (National Forestry Reform Law of 2006).

Community: A group of local residents who share a common interest in the use and management of forest resources, with traditional or formal rights to the land and the forest on it (National Forestry Reform Law of 2006).

Community Forestry: The governance and management of forest resources in designated areas or landscapes by communities for commercial and noncommercial purposes to further their own livelihoods and development. Community forestry incorporates the practice, arts, science, policies, institutions, and processes necessary to promote and support all aspects of sustainable community-based forest management.

Conservation: In its broadest sense, management of natural resources substantially as well as their protection and restoration (Fisher et al. 2005).

Environment: Includes the surrounding living and nonliving things and their interactions.

Livelihoods: The ways in which people make a living. Livelihoods contribute to human well-being, which includes spiritual and aesthetic values.
In postconflict Liberia, natural resources are viewed as an engine for kick-starting the economic development of the country. The forest sector—traditionally dominated by commercial forestry—played an important economic role in Liberia. More recently during the years of civil war, corruption in the forest sector—coupled with indiscriminate logging and widespread illegal trade of forest products, carried out under the protection of private armed militias—destroyed much of the country’s forest resources. Between 1989 and 2003, most of the forest revenue was used to fund armed conflict, prompting the United Nations Security Council to impose three years of sanctions on Liberian timber exports starting in July 2003. After the sanctions were imposed, the Liberian government used this period to reform forestry practices and pave the way for restoring the rule of law. The Forest Concession Review was carried out to assess the condition of the forest concessions, and it found that all concessionaires were not complying with logging regulations from the period 2000–03. The total arrears in forest charges amounted to US$64 million. The reviews eventually led to the issuing of Executive Order #1 by the president in February 2006, declaring all existing contracts null and void and explicitly mandating a reform of the forestry sector.

Since then, Liberia has embarked on forest reform, which involved making a new forest policy, revising the forest legislation, and putting in place a chain-of-custody system governing all commercial logging and wood exporting. Reforms in the sector recognized that the economic and environmental value of forests extends beyond commercial forestry. A new National Forest Reform Law was passed in 2006. On 20 October 2006, the UN Security Council commended the Liberian legislature for passing this legislation and concluded that there is no basis for reinstating the measures on timber. In 2007 the Forest Development Authority (FDA) was established with assistance from partners in the Liberia Forestry Initiative (LFI), developed the 2007 Forest Strategy. The strategy promotes a holistic approach to forestry. It integrates commercial, community, and conservation aspects (the “3Cs”) of forestry. The policy and associated regulations, while defined on commercial aspects (and to a certain extent on conservation elements), was lagging on community forestry. Moreover, the implementation of the policy into the integrated approach of the 3Cs was limited. In 2007, through the Liberia Surplus Grant on Economic Management and Development of the Forestry Sector (P09184), the World Bank began engagement in Liberia. Using this engagement, the World Bank financed the implementation of a institution-centered strategic environmental assessment of the forest sector—first, to inform the Community Rights Law with respect to Forest Lands (CLR), and second, to assess capacity and institutional adjustments that may be needed in the implementation of the Liberian National Forestry Reform Law of 2006 (hereafter referred to as Forest Reform Law) improving governance and performance within the forest sector. This strategic environmental assessment (SEA) was also intended to inform an assessment of potential positive and negative environmental and social impacts of the World Bank project on the forest sector.

OBJECTIVE OF STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

In October 2007, an institution-centered SEA of the forest policy was initiated. The objective was to (i) identify key social and environmental considerations in the forest sector, (ii) examine key challenges facing the successful implementation of the policy, and (iii) assess institutional capacity for the implementation of the new policy, with a focus on the institutional adjustments needed to strengthen governance and performance within the sector.

1 The lifting of the sanctions was conditional on the passing of a new Liberian forestry law.
implementation of Liberia’s 3Cs forest policy, (iii) examine how the forest policy and law are currently addressing key social and environmental considerations, (iv) identify institutional and capacity gaps for effectively addressing these key considerations, (v) develop an action plan for how the government and stakeholders in the sector can meet these challenges, and (vi) develop monitoring and evaluation criteria for the implementation of the action plan. The SEA aimed to inform the development of the community rights to forest lands law, assist in the mainstreaming of the key considerations occurring in LFI activities intended to support implementation of the Forest Reform Law, and inform an assessment of possible negative environmental and social impacts of the World Bank project on the forest sector.

CONDUCT OF SEA

The SEA was conducted over a period of 13 months. It involved four main phases—scoping, identifying priority considerations, examining the situation in terms of the legal, economic, and institutional context within which these considerations were occurring, and proposing institutional and capacity recommendations (the recommendations were also to include monitoring approaches). An international and national team composed of the IUCN, ProACT Network, and Sustainable Development Institute led the SEA. The SEA team included staff of the FDA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPDA) in order to enhance buy-in and foster capacity development, and worked closely with the Community Forestry Working Group (CFWAG). When necessary, the core members of the SEA team were supplemented by representatives from the Office of the Chairman; House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry; Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs; Ministry of Land, Mines, and Energy; Ministry of Internal Affairs; and the National Investment Commission.

The SEA had two main shortcomings: the analytical work conducted as a result of this SEA was limited (e.g., inadequate environmental analysis, lack of a capacity gap analysis), and accordingly it had limited utility in identifying potential environmental and social impacts of the World Bank project on the forest sector, plus several elements of the scoping phase as the SEA was being implemented. The second shortcomings resulted from the consultations associated with this SEA being conducted in conjunction with the consultations associated with the CRL. The latter caused confusion to certain key staff members in the FDA regarding the objective of the SEA, reducing their confidence in the SEA and willingness to adopt recommendations. These shortcomings delayed the finalization of the SEA. The former shortcoming was minimized by referring to and drawing on the 2008 Environmental Threats and Opportunities Assessment conducted for USAID. Similarly, the difficulties caused by the delay were handled by sharing an interim brief on the findings of the SEA, FDA and LFI members, and updating information collected by the IUCN, ProACT Network, and SDI team where possible (e.g., regarding the CRL and more current studies).

LEGAL, ECONOMIC, AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS

The government of Liberia has committed to optimal use of forest resources as articulated in the national forest strategy and the forest reform law. The 2006 National Forest Reform Law and National Forest Strategy call for a more balanced and integrated development of Liberia’s forests for commercial, community, and conservation uses. This is a deviation from the traditional focus in the forest sector, which was largely limited to exploiting the forests’ commercial potential (Soloh 2008). In 2008, at the time of launching of the SEA, community forestry was the least understood and least developed of the 3Cs, and its legal basis was ill defined and poorly protected, because the CRL had not been drafted. Different stakeholders, however, have different interpretations of the 3Cs as they are defined in the reform law.

The forest sector of Liberia is also informed by other policies, laws, and treaties, including the National Environmental Policy, which sets the policy framework for environmental management in Liberia; the 2003 Environmental Protection Agency (EPDA) Act, which authorized the establishment of an overall institutional framework for sustainable management of the environment in Liberia; the Food and Agriculture Policy and Strategy (which was in draft form in 2008); and international commitments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Ramsar convention on Wetlands. In addition, because the new forest law requires unprecedented transparency concerning forest revenues, Liberia has included forestry in its Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

In addition, despite its fairly comprehensive legal context, the forest sector is impacted by the lack of clear laws or regulations on bush meat and by unclear land rights.

Contribution of forests to income generation

Estimates are that about 70 percent of Liberia’s rural dwellers earn a living from forests and forest-related products, and rely on firewood and charcoal as the main source of energy generation for cooking and heating (Soloh 2008). Forests are viewed as important because they are a source of livelihood; they lead to increased food security; and they are a source of firewood and charcoal, bush meat, and water from rivers (Soloh 2008).

While the uses of forests are known, there is limited information on the contribution of forests to rural incomes or the national economy. In the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) it is predicted that forestry will contribute 14–15 percent of real GDP during the PRS period and will be one of the main components of rural economic growth in that period. This prediction is based on the assumption that there will be a progressive reintroduction of commercial logging in all regions.

The economic model adopted by the FDA focuses primarily on large commercial operations. Local people believe that the forests of Liberia and the forest products belong to them. They therefore state that they should benefit more from forest resources, and be consulted and involved in decision making regarding logging concessions. Forest-dependent households are concerned about the failure of logging companies to carry out value addition at the local level. The local perception is that jobs could be created and income-earning potential increased if logging companies processed timber and timber products at the local level.

Concerns regarding income generation underpin calls for the development and support of small and medium-size enterprises in the forest sector. Considering the potential role of forests in income generation, development partners to the government of Liberia have called for greater recognition and valuation of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). The government, however, had limited appreciation of the economic value of these products at the local level. Many communities are also unaware of the economic potential of specific NTFPs. Forest communities consider commercial logging to be the sole forest activity with economic value. Accordingly, deriving economic benefit from the sector requires involvement in commercial logging.

Capacity of the FDA

The institutional context is one that points to weak capacity. The FDA is viewed as needing additional capacity to effectively implement the new forest policy and legislation. Throughout the reform process, the Forestry Development Authority has been assisted by partners in the Liberia Forest Initiative (LFI). The LFI is a partnership of government, NGOs, and donor agencies collaborating to support the rehabilitation and reform of Liberia’s forestry sector and to enhance cooperation and coordination of activities for the promotion of sustainable forest management, improved conservation, and strengthened community forestry practices.

The FDA also seems to lack the infrastructural and logistical support to properly enforce and implement laws and regulations of community forest management, raising questions regarding the role the agency would play in community forest management. Another indicator of limited FDA capacity is in the area of revenue collection. FDA revenue collection has significant room for improvement, particularly in areas such as the collection of fines for noncompliance with forest regulations.

The need for coordination within and among government agencies

Coordination faces numerous challenges in the current institutional context. Intersectoral programs are a low priority, and a lack of coordination between the FDA, the Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy (MLME) is also central to ensuring sustainable use and maximization of cumulative environmental impacts. Similarly, within the FDA there is a need for improved coordination and accountability to enable the agency to deliver on an integrated 3Cs approach in the forest sector.

Participation in forest management and unclear property rights

Forest communities are rejecting the old-style, top-down management approach and want to be involved in making decisions regarding forest management. Community involvement is crucial for effective forest management.
decisions affecting the management of forest reserves. They are concerned that decisions regarding forest management significantly affect them. Communities are interested not only in playing a role in decision making regarding logging activities in their community, but also in receiving tangible benefits from commercial forestry operations that take place in their areas.

The most pressing issue affecting all land use in Liberia is the lack of legal clarity on property ownership and use rights. Security of land tenure in today’s Liberia is weak to nonexistent. Rights of access to and use of natural resources, including land, minerals, forests, and water, are shrouded in a state of tenure insecurity, vague and ambiguous legislation, conflicting and competing tenure arrangements, and persistent clashes involving customary and statutory rights over the management, authority, and control of these resources.

**PRIORITY ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The SEA identified priority social and environmental issues primarily through a consultative process and validated the results with secondary literature. This section includes a brief presentation of the key issues and measures proposed for addressing these issues.

The consultative and analytical process identified three key environmental issues.

**Overlapping land uses**

There is overlapping of mining areas (areas with mineral deposits) with large parts of the protected area forest reserve network (DAL, 2008). The potential exploitation of these mineral deposits could significantly affect biodiversity and forest cover. The forest degradation could be locally extensive and permanent. The common impacts from mining stem from indiscriminate removal of vegetation, which in turn alters the regeneration potential of forests and the availability of food and shelter for wildlife. Other impacts of concern include habitat fragmentation and increased bush meat consumption, siltation of dams and rivers, degradation of lands from settlement patterns of miners, and ground and surface water pollution (e.g., acidic mine drainage and high metal concentrations in rivers, resulting in an impoverished aquatic environment (Miranda et al. 2003).

If these activities are occurring where there is also illegal or indiscriminate removal of vegetation, which in turn alters the regeneration potential of forests and the availability of food and shelter for wildlife. Other impacts of concern include habitat fragmentation and increased bush meat consumption, siltation of dams and rivers, degradation of lands from settlement patterns of miners, and ground and surface water pollution (e.g., acidic mine drainage and high metal concentrations in rivers, resulting in an impoverished aquatic environment (Miranda et al. 2003).

**Limited reforestation/restoration of logged areas**

**The Forest Policy makes provisions for reforestation and plantation development.** Reforestation can provide a new source of wood for the processing industry and other forest products (e.g., fuel, building poles, and non-wood forest products). In areas degraded by unsustainable logging, reforestation or forest restoration can reduce the pressure on natural forests and provide new opportunities for income generation by expanding the area of forest plantations. There has been limited reforestation and the success of public sector tree planting has been disappointing due to poor site-species selection and inadequate management, resulting in poor yields and low economic returns.

**Strategic action plan**

- Build partnership and capacity to: (i) identify potential areas for reforestation and forest restoration (for the latter it will be important to distinguish between areas best suited for mosaic-type versus broad-scale restoration); and (ii) examine the economics and technical dimensions of forest restoration in these areas.
- Put in place institutional mechanisms to provide economic incentives and technical assistance for restoration of degraded forest areas through appropriate tree species selection for different sites and tree planting.
- Provide capacity to train communities in proper management of planted trees.

**Habitat destruction and species displacement, disturbance, or reduction**

**Liberia is home to two of the three remaining large blocks of Upper Guinean Rainforest in West Africa, an equivalent of 42–43 percent of this forest type.** These biologically rich forests are home to approximately 240 timber species, 2,000 species of flowering plants, 125 mammal species, 590 bird species, 74 reptiles and amphibians, and over 1,000 insect species.

While there are numerous threats to habitat and biodiversity, the threats related to forest activities include shifting cultivation, poaching and hunting of bush meat in association with unregulated timber extraction, firewood gathering, charcoal production, and human settlements. Currently, there also is a lack of data with which to fully assess the extent of the impact and there is no land use planning. The latter partly results from the unclear land tenure system and limited land use feasibility studies. Logging and road infrastructure also have contributed to forest fragmentation.

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emerges from the inadequate attention given to providing alternative livelihoods for the communities around protected areas.

**Strategic action plan**

- For the establishment of protected areas covering 30 percent of forest land, build capacity to implement provisions in the forestry laws concerning the creation of protected areas, including the necessary disclosure for public comment and consultation with local communities, countries, and other local authorities regarding regulations and prohibitions in protected areas.
- Provide mechanisms and incentives for community participation in discussions on new protected areas.
- Develop the capacity to identify and implement suitable alternative livelihoods for communities adversely affected by the establishment or maintenance of protected forest areas.
- Develop joint management plans with communities for protected areas and integrate, to the extent possible, community engagement in protected-area management.

**NEXT STEPS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN**

A National SEA Workshop validated the priority issues identified in the process and provided the main input to the action plan that is presented in this report. Implementation of the action plan, for those tasks identified as coming directly within the operational mandate of the FDA, would now pass to the respective departments within the FDA.

The work associated with such workshop should be led by the Strategic Planning Unit in coordination with the 3Cs departments. The action plan also suggests points for implementation by non-FDA actors.
Liberia has undergone profound changes in the past two years. Long known for corruption and exploitation of the population by a minority, in the 1980s the country descended into civil and political strife noted for its brutality against civilians. The Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (ACPA) of August 2003, UN Security Council Resolutions 1509 and 1521, the collaborative work between the transitional government and donors that followed, and the legislative and presidential elections of October–November 2005—generally considered peaceful, free, and fair—have created a spirit of hope after these decades of conflict. An elected government headed by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf assumed office on January 16, 2006. An ambitious 165-day reform program has been announced, which includes moving forward on long-delayed economic governance reforms. This provides a unique opportunity to work jointly with a reformist government in critical reform areas, including in the forest sector.

Liberia lies entirely within the Upper Guinean Forest Ecosystem and contains two of the last three remaining large blocks of Upper Guinean Rainforest in West Africa, an equivalent of 42–43 percent of this forest type. These biologically rich forests are home to approximately 240 timber species, 2,000 flowering plants, 125 mammal species, 590 bird species, 74 reptiles and amphibians, and over 1,000 insect species. Forestry in Liberia has the potential to contribute 8–10 percent of GDP and contribute significantly to export revenue and fiscal receipts.9 In recent years, these forests have not been managed either to support biodiversity or to support the livelihoods of the poor.

Forests are clearly one of the most important natural resources in Liberia, yet they have never been managed to deliver anywhere near their full potential to contribute to the long-term, sustainable economic growth of the nation; the livelihoods of local and rural communities; or the long-term conservation of the country’s natural heritage.

On September 16, 2006, the government of Liberia approved the National Forestry Sector Reform Law of 2006. This law stipulates that forests should be managed for three purposes: for commercial, conservation, and community (the 3Cs). The use of forest resources to achieve the 3Cs implies a series of direct and indirect positive and negative economic, social, and environmental impacts. As the process advances toward implementation of the forest policy and law, there is a need to examine potential impacts of the policy specifically with regard to commercial use of forests. Moreover, there is a need to conduct such impact assessment in a manner that takes into account cross-sector impacts and tradeoffs.

### TABLE 1: Liberia’s Forest Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>AREA (ha)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Urban Area</td>
<td>46 047</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Predominant rural agricultural domain</td>
<td>436 747</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Agricultural area with small forest presence</td>
<td>3 042 091</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Mixed agricultural and forest areas</td>
<td>1 317 873</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Agricultural degraded forest</td>
<td>946 615</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Open dense forest</td>
<td>1 013 993</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Closed dense forest</td>
<td>2 424 079</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Free water</td>
<td>7 649</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Savannah or bare soil</td>
<td>13 312</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Littoral ecosystem</td>
<td>161 390</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Agro-industrial plantation</td>
<td>178 294</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>9 591 089</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 2007, the World Bank provided resources for conducting an institution-centered SEA of the forest sector, primarily to inform the development of the community rights to forest lands law. Another purpose was to assess capacity and
CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

LIBERIA’S FOREST RESOURCES

Liberia is situated within the tropical rainforest belt on the west coast of Africa. The country has a total land area of 8.6 million hectares, of which forest cover is about 4.4 million hectares or 46 percent of land area (ITTO 2008). Table 1 provides a summary of the overall estimated land use cover, and Figure 1 shows as image of Liberia’s forest and land cover based on 2003 satellite imagery.

An approximate area of 1 million ha has been subject to logging over the past 10 years. Another 1 million ha of forest has been subject to agricultural pressure (class 3.1: agricultural degraded forest), and another 1.3 million ha of forest land has been seriously affected by agricultural pressure and now consists of only forest patches (class 2.3, mixed agricultural and forest areas). Although the annual rate of deforestation is estimated to be approximately 12,000 ha (0.3 percent), the recorded planting of new forests since 1971 to date is estimated to be only approximately 11,000 ha in total (FDA 2007).10

Historically, the forestry sector has been a strong contributor to Liberia’s economy. For example, in 1980, the production of forest products accounted for approximately 5 percent of GDP, rising to 20 percent in the late 1990s. Forest products also accounted for 5–10 percent of export earnings in the 1980s, rising to over 50 percent in 2000. In 2002, it was estimated that 36 forest companies were operating in Liberia and producing timber exports valued at over US$100 million (or 60 percent of Liberia’s total export earnings) and employing up to 8,000 people (FDA 2007).

A review carried out by the Forest Concession Review Committee (FCRC) showed that between 1989 and 2003, 26 million acres of forest were allocated to concessionaires—even though less than 10 million acres of forest existed. Prior to the concession review, community forestry and conservation of forests in Liberia were almost nonexistent. Years of conflict resulted in the forests being filled with illegal miners, loggers, and hunters. Poaching and the bush meat trade flourished under Taylor, threatening the loss of endemic species (FCRC 2005).

The obvious links between Liberian timber export and the purchase of weapons for use in Liberia and other regional conflicts led to the UN Security Council imposing sanctions on timber exports from Liberia in 2003. Once the war ended in 2003, the National Transitional Government of Liberia and other Liberian stakeholders worked with the UN Security Council to facilitate the reforms necessary to allow the lifting of the sanctions. In June 2006 the Security Council recognized the efforts made by Liberia and lifted the sanctions on timber exports.

Currently, forestry production is projected to grow substantially between 2008 and 2011 from 44,000 cubic meters (m3) to more than 1,400,000 m3. It is estimated that approximately 2.9 million ha of forest will be used for commercial and community forestry and 1.2 million ha will be set aside for conservation and tourism. Rural employment in this sector is targeted at 5,000 for these three years (IMF 2008).

The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), which views Liberia’s rich natural resource base—in particular, the forest resources—as an engine of growth, predicts that log exports will rise to pre-2003 levels within a few years and will contribute 14–15 percent of real GDP by 2011. Timber sales are also expected to contribute significantly to rural economic growth.

In addition to commercial benefits, the forests provide a wide range of non-timber forest products, such as bush meat, materials for traditional and religious ceremonies, fruits, nuts, traditional medicines, and materials for construction and ecosystem services (such as pollination, flood protection, and water purification).

Postconflict reforms have not only reconstituted the commercial forestry sector but additionally sought to ensure that conservation and community forest management play equal roles in Liberia’s future forest management. The 3Cs (conservation, commercial, community) concept is now enshrined in the forest policy of Liberia and reflected in the Forestry Law of Liberia of 2006. The 3Cs formed the foundation of the Forest Management Strategy being implemented by the FDA.

REFORMS IN THE FOREST SECTOR

Reforms undertaken since 2006 have included: organizational changes, financial reforms, and new governance measures. The new forestry regime in Liberia comprises the following key elements:

• The National Forest Reform Law (NFRL), passed in September 2006
• The 10 core regulations, covering Public Participation, Forest Land Use Planning, Prequalification, Public Tender of Contracts, Profiling Requirements, Benefit Sharing, Forest Charges, Chain of Custody, Penalties, and Rights of Private Land Owners (approved by the Board of Directors of the FDA on September 11, 2007)
• Liberian Forestry Policy and Implementation Strategy (2006)
• National Forest Management Strategy (June 2007)
• Community Rights to Forest Lands Law (2009)
• Wildlife Law (Pending approval)

Under the new forest management regime the stated policy is one of an “integrated 3Cs” approach, and according to the National Forest Management Strategy of June 2007, it is aimed at ensuring that “commercial forestry, community forestry and forest conservation activities are integrated and balanced to optimize the economic, social and environmental benefits from the forest resource”.

Commercial forestry operations

The strongest developments in the new forestry management regime have been in the commercial forestry sector, where two new contractual modalities have been established for commercial forestry operations: Timber Sales Contracts (TSCs) and Forest Management Concessions (FMCs).11
The following principles underpin commercial forestry operations under the new forest management regime:

- Management decisions must be based on verifiable scientific principles.
- Affected communities must be consulted.
- Create a competitive bidding system for allocation of commercial concessions.
- Larger logging companies are required to have plans in place to achieve international certification for their timber and to ensure that their activities are environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable.

Specific features introduced under the new management regime include:

- Prequalification of companies wishing to log commercially.
- Competitive bidding (competitive bidding is prohibited on areas ranging from 1-49,999 ha. Allocation of any other land area above this threshold is subject to competitive bidding).
- The lodging of performance bonds.
- Revised labor, environmental, and social requirements for doing business.
- The adoption of forest management plans.
- Improved auditing and a chain-of-custody system.
- Enforced freedom of information requirements.

Conservation forest management

In 2007, Liberia had two declared protected areas: Sapo National Park (180,000 ha) and Nimba Nature Reserve (13,500 ha), which together constitute 4 percent of the total forest area (or 2 percent of the landmass). Following the FDA’s Forest Land Suitability Planning Study (2007), undertaken to identify preservation suitability across the country, 13 other areas were identified to be included in a proposed protected-areas network. In addition to the two existing protected areas, the following areas were identified as potentially part of an expanded Protected-Areas Network: Wologizi-Wonegizi and Foya in the north, Lofa in northeastern, Kpo Mountains in the north central, East Nimba in the northeast, Lake Piso on the western coast, Bong Mountain in the center, the Margibi mangrove area in the central coast, Gbi in the east, and Cestos, Sapo Grebo, and Grand Ku River Gee in the southeast. Table 2 provides a summary of Liberia’s protected-areas network (DAI 2008). Currently, with support from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the World Bank, the FDA is creating three additional protected areas, namely, Lake Piso Basin, Gola, and Wonegizi national forests. The project for the development of the three new protected areas was officially launched in October 2008 under the designation Consolidation of Protected Area Network (“COPAN 1”) (FDA 2008). Preparations have been made in accordance with the law for the gazettement of these new protected areas.

Community forest management

Although the current forest policy and strategy includes a third C, focusing on community forest management, not much has been done on this aspect of the policy. A fundamental starting point in implementing community forest management in Liberia has, however, been the Community Rights Law with respect to Forest Lands (CRL). This law was mandated in the Forestry Reform Law of 2006, which required the drafting of “a comprehensive law governing community rights with respect to Forest Lands” (Section 10.1c). The recently approved and passed CRL provides clarity on the following issues:

- The rights of communities with respect to ownership, occupation, and use of customary forest lands and how those rights relate to the government—and specifically to the FDA.
- How communities can manage forest land under clear rules and obligations.
- How forest-related activities are to be undertaken so as not to jeopardize or interfere with community rights to forest land.
- What conflict resolution mechanisms are available to resolve disputes on community rights to forest lands.

**TABLE 2: Liberia’s Protected-Areas Network**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DESIGNATION</th>
<th>ECO SYSTEM</th>
<th>AREA (ha)</th>
<th>MANAGEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sapo</td>
<td>National Park</td>
<td>Wet evergreen</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>FDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonegizi</td>
<td>Proposed national park partially in North Lorma National Forest and partially not protected</td>
<td>Mixed evergreen/semi-deciduous, plus gallery-forests</td>
<td>13,500</td>
<td>FDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soka</td>
<td>Proposed national park received largely in Gola National Forest</td>
<td>Mixed evergreen/semi-deciduous</td>
<td>60,750</td>
<td>FDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Piso</td>
<td>Proposed national park/Ramsar site and not part of an existing national forest</td>
<td>Coastal marine and wet evergreen</td>
<td>33,914</td>
<td>FDA/EPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Nimba</td>
<td>Nature reserve</td>
<td>Mixed evergreen/semi-deciduous, plus gallery-forests</td>
<td>13,569</td>
<td>FDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kpo Mountains</td>
<td>Located partially within Kpo Mountains National Forest</td>
<td>Mixed evergreen/semi-deciduous, plus gallery-forests</td>
<td>69,700</td>
<td>FDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wologizi</td>
<td>Largely within North Lorma National Forest</td>
<td>Mixed evergreen/semi-deciduous, plus gallery-forests</td>
<td>107,530</td>
<td>FDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibio</td>
<td>Largely part of Gola National Forest</td>
<td>Wet evergreen</td>
<td>37,136</td>
<td>FDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sib</td>
<td>Largely part of Kakata Brassa National Forest</td>
<td>Mixed evergreen/semi-deciduous</td>
<td>68,429</td>
<td>FDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimba West</td>
<td>Largely part of West Nimba National Forest</td>
<td>Mixed evergreen/semi-deciduous</td>
<td>10,482</td>
<td>FDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gboklo Wetlands</td>
<td>Ramsar site</td>
<td>Freshwater</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>EPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Wetlands</td>
<td>Ramsar site</td>
<td>Coastal/marine</td>
<td>12,168</td>
<td>EPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manzala Wetlands</td>
<td>Ramsar site</td>
<td>Coastal/marine</td>
<td>6,760</td>
<td>EPA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DAI (2008)
Examine the institutional capacity in the regions and collect anecdotal evidence to substantiate the issues raised at the national level for both the broader SEA and the CRL. Identify issues that have not been raised at the national level and local levels. While in the field, try to confirm the qualitative information by collecting additional data and “triangulating” the information. Examine the institutional capacity in the regions and at the local level to handle priority considerations with regard to the forest policy emerging from the consultations.

As part of the scoping exercise, the team conducted a stakeholder analysis and rapid political economy analysis. The purpose of the stakeholder analysis was to identify the key stakeholders that need to be engaged and consulted for the SEA, such as government, civil society, communities, academia, donors, and the private sector. The stakeholder analysis was done based on information from key informants and validated during the scoping workshop. The political economy analysis was to help understand the power dynamics among the stakeholders, so that the appropriate participation approaches would be used when engaging the various stakeholders. This analysis was also to inform the practical recommendations that were to be made, as the political economy analysis provided a basis for understanding who has the decision-making power.

The identification of key issues should have involved both a thorough analysis and consultation process. This SEA placed more emphasis on the consultation process, and the analysis done was confined to the situation assessments. The consultation done for this SEA was, as mentioned above, tied to the CRL consultations. For the purposes of the joint consultation process, the core SEA team was expanded to include not only representatives from the FDA and EPA, but also from the House of Representatives Committees on Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, MLME, and the National Investment Commission. The scoping stage of the SEA involved a rapid assessment of the forest sector in Liberia and the stock taking of completed and ongoing activities and studies. It helped establish the proposed objective of the SEA and the context in which the SEA would be undertaken by setting out the relevant baseline information.

Work on the SEA began in September 2007, and an inception mission in early October introduced the concept of the SEA to key stakeholders in the Liberian government and civil society in a series of individual meetings followed by a joint concluding meeting with invited key stakeholders from the Liberian forest sector. During this mission, stakeholders were provided with a general overview of strategic environmental assessment as a decision-making tool, followed by the role of the SEA in the Liberian forest sector context more specifically, as well as a list of preliminary issues that had emerged during pre-mission screening and communications with Liberian stakeholders.

A follow-up mission spanning part of October and November 2007 continued stakeholder consultations and data gathering and culminated to a key stakeholder workshop at the end of the mission. Following inputs of stakeholders at this meeting, the terms of reference for the SEA were refined and finalized. The refined SEA scope emphasized the need to identify key considerations associated with the forest sector and use this identification to assess the institutional and capacity adjustment that may be needed to effectively address them. The team was also asked to construct the SEA so that it could inform the development of the Community Rights Law with respect to forest lands. The second revision in the SEA was to merge the regional consultation process that had been envisaged as part of the SEA with the consultation process that was to be undertaken to inform the drafting process for the CRL.9

Both the SEA and community rights legislative drafting processes included a consultative and community participation element to canvass the views of and gather information from community-level stakeholders outside of Monrovia and thereby obtain a more representative sample of pertinent issues. Following discussions with the World Bank and the Community Forestry Working Group responsible for the administering the studies necessary to inform the drafting of the CRL, the FDA, and EPA, it was decided to run a single consultation process that would be used to inform both areas of work.

Both the SEA and the CRL drafting process had additional elements apart from the combined consultation process, had different timelines and mandates, and ultimately are two separate processes. However, the benefits of combining the two regional consultation processes for example, better coverage of more sites from which to gather information, more efficient use of logistics, and the opportunity to simultaneously examine the CRLs of Liberian forest management supported the merging of the two consultation processes.

9 The objective of the institution-centered SEA was to: (i) identify institutional and capacity gaps for effectively addressing these key considerations, (ii) develop an action plan for how the government and stakeholders in the sector can meet these challenges, and (iii) develop monitoring and evaluation criteria for the implementation of the action plan.

The SEA aimed to inform the development of the community rights to forest lands law, assist in the mainstreaming of the key considerations in LFI activities intended to support implementation of the Forest Reform Law, and inform an assessment of possible negative environmental and social impacts of the World Bank project on the forest sector.

METHODOLOGY OF SEA

The SEA involved a number of steps that were carried out in parallel. The main sequence of the activities included three main phases that involved (i) scoping, (ii) situation assessment and identification of capacity gaps and institutional adjustments, and (iii) developing recommendations and drafting an action plan.

In an effort to maximize the input from the government of Liberia to the SEA process and to build capacity on the technical aspects of the SEA, a national SEA team was established. The team was composed of staff of the FDA and the EPA, with coordination and facilitation provided by the SOI. When necessary, the core members of the SEA were supplemented by representatives from the Office of the Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, MLME, MIA, and the National Investment Commission.

The SEA team met regularly during the SEA, participated in the field work for the regional consultation process and case studies, and played a key role in the prioritization of issues raised in the SEA.

Scoping

The scoping stage of the SEA involved a rapid assessment of the forest sector in Liberia and the stock taking of completed and ongoing activities and studies. It helped establish the proposed objective of the SEA and the context in which the SEA would be undertaken by setting out the relevant baseline information.

Work on the SEA began in September 2007, and an inception mission in early October introduced the concept of the SEA to key stakeholders in the Liberian government and civil society in a series of individual meetings followed by a joint concluding meeting with invited key stakeholders from the Liberian forest sector. During this mission, stakeholders were provided with a general overview of strategic environmental assessment as a decision-making tool, followed by the role of the SEA in the Liberian forest sector context more specifically, as well as a list of preliminary issues that had emerged during pre-mission screening and communications with Liberian stakeholders.
The workshop in Buchanan also included participants from Rivercess County, soliciting input from eight counties overall. On average, 30 persons were invited to each regional workshop; at least 10 persons came from outside the provincial capitals or population centers where the workshops were held. The selection process was based on segments of the local population including government official, gender, and membership in a social or interest group (youth, women, civil society, etc.). Population size, accessibility, and the degree of dependence on the forest were the main selection criteria for towns from which grassroots participants were identified. These grassroots-level participants were selected by their peers during the informal grassroots-level meetings that preceded the workshops. Each workshop concluded with the selection of two participants to attend the presentation of the outcomes of the rural outreach at a national workshop that was held as part of the transfer process.

At each regional workshop, the team gave a detailed presentation of the SEA to establish the context for the workshop. Following the presentation, participants were divided into groups based on gender and age to discuss various topics using structured questions. The questions presented were designed to be used as a guide for the group discussions and to help facilitators probe participants for more reflective inputs. The groups then returned to plenary and presented their results. Questions after each presentation were aimed at seeking clarification on the points in the presentation, emphasizing particular issues, or challenging or presenting a different perspective on a particular issue.

In addition to the regional workshops and introductory sessions with local authorities, a total of seven informal grassroots-level meetings were organized to facilitate the selection of group representatives to the regional workshops. These included 4 meetings (each) with women and youth groups, 16 town hall-style meetings and 5 meetings with teachers and civil society groups. A total of 606 people participated in the informal meetings, while 216 people participated in the workshops. In total, 242 (or approximately 40 percent) of the participants were women.

At each regional center, meetings and workshops were held attended by local government officials, paramount, clan and town chiefs, and district commissioners; various interest groups including women and youth groups, local NGOs, and teachers; as well as persons selected from two villages outside the population center or provincial capital where the workshops were convened. Overall, the selection processes for participants was based on position (local government officials and chiefs), gender, age, and membership in a social or interest group (youth groups, women’s groups, and CBOs). However, population size, accessibility and the degree of dependence on the forest were the main selection criteria for towns from which grassroots participants were invited. Participants from the grassroots meetings were identified through a self-selection process facilitated by the SEA team. The workshops themselves were conducted using a combination of approaches including focus group discussions, general assemblies, key informants, and semi-structured interviews. At each of the regional workshops, the participants self-selected two representatives from their county to attend a national-level workshop that would be held during the assessment phase of the SEA.

The regional consultation process covered by the CRL and resulted in a single report entitled Report on the Regional Consultations on the SEA and the Communities Rights Law (refer to Annex 1). Once the joint regional consultation process was completed, the two processes were separated and continued on their own timeframes. The draft version of this report informed the CRL drafting process. Upon completion of the consultations the SEA process and CRL drafting process continued on their respective timeframes. It should be noted that the information collected in the Regional Consultation Report would ultimately be interpreted in two different contexts—first, that of the CRL, and second, that of the SEA process itself.

Following the regional consultations, the reports were compiled by the team. Each person on the team independently reviewed the draft report and submitted written comments on the draft. Those comments included additions to the text (where some issues were left out, clarifying the context, in which a particular comment was made, removing or modifying comments that do not reflect what was said by participants, etc.). Following the individual reviews, the team met in a working session to adopt the final draft report.

**Prioritization of issues**

A technical working session of the National Team and Situation Assessment authors was organized on June 2008 in Monrovia. The heads of the Community Forest, Conservation, and other departments within the FDA were also invited, but none of those invited from the FDA were able to attend.10 Two new FDA staff members attended in place of those who were unable to attend. The purpose of this working session was to review progress on the SEA, the list of issues that had been identified during the SEA inception phase, the field consultations, and key informant interviews. The FDA and EPA technicians along with the SEA facilitators from UCIN and SDI then began the process of ranking the issues identified thus far.

The prioritized considerations were then validated in a national workshop.

**Situation Assessments**

Situation assessments were carried out to understand the relevant environmental, social, economic, legal, and institutional context within which the key considerations associated with the forest sector were currently being handled. In aggregate, the situation assessments were to help identify the various factors that affect the forest sector as a whole, i.e., how the development of the forest sector is impacted by other sectors of Liberia’s postconflict development, specifically—but not limited to—activities in the mining, agriculture, and planning sectors as well as policy responses such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan.

The assessments were undertaken with a similar methodology that included individual interviews with key stakeholders and organizations and literature reviews. The terms of reference for the situation assessments were published in the draft scoping report for comment from stakeholders. The authors of the individual assessment reports also participated in the consultative meetings organized as part of the SEA; particularly the National SEA Workshop held in November 2007 in Monrovia. The four situation assessments are briefly summarized in the findings section of this report.

**Recommendations and development of action plans**

**Use of case studies**

Case studies were also conducted to further illuminate the context within which the key considerations were to be addressed, as well as to inform the recommendations. The case studies looked at the practical implications of possible alternative strategies identified during the SEA addressing the priority environmental and social considerations in the forest sector.

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10. It should be noted that the workshop coincided with the visit of a delegation from the Ivorian Ministry of Forestry to discuss transboundary forestry-related issues; the SEA in-country facilitator had no prior knowledge of the visit.
Six possible areas were identified by the SEA team to illustrate the practical application of forest policy in Liberia. In the course of several meetings and a number of decision criteria were established that would allow the potential case study sites to be ranked, and case studies were undertaken at three locations. The entire field team visited the first location to test the methodology adopted. This was then refined before each case study. A table summarizing the discussions and ranking the six potential case study sites is presented in Annex 3 of this report.

The following sectors were used to select the three study sites: Forestry (commercial—TSC, FMC; pit-clearing; Conservation—proposed, actual; Community); Mining (illegal, industrial, exploration); and Agriculture (tree crops, shifting cultivation). Sites with potential interactions between the sectors were identified. The three sites with the highest number of interactions with the activities in the three sectors were chosen and confirmed with the FDA and the EPA for the case studies. These sites are Butter Hill, Grand Cape Mount County; Kayaaquleh, Lofa County; and Dulay, Nimba County. These sites allowed the SEA team to examine the overall context in TSC and FMC areas as well as protected areas respectively.

The two-step approach adopted for the data collection was:

(i) Perform interviews of the relevant government agencies in Monrovia to obtain policy perspectives and the official position on what should be happening on the ground at the three selected case study sites. The team also reviewed parts of the SEA scoping report that relate to the issues to be examined on the ground.

(ii) Carry out key informant and group interviews to identify what was happening on the ground in the three selected case study sites, as compared to the information obtained in Monrovia in (i) above. To facilitate the interviews, guide questionnaires were prepared for the priority thematic areas that were identified during the SEA. After the introduction of the study concept and objectives to the group of representatives of the sites visited, they were divided into three groups as follows in consultation with them:

- **Group 1:** The town chief, chiefs of satellite towns, Butter Hill Chief’s Council, elders, tribal governors, and the Community Forest Development Committee (CFDC) members, collectively referred to as Elders in the report.

- **Group 2:** The youth, including hunters, miners, teachers/school administration—collectively referred to in the report as the ‘Youth’.

- **Group 3:** Women’s co-op, midwives, petty traders, marketing association, farmers’ association—the Women in the report.

Separate interviews were held by team members with key informants at the case study sites to cross-check the findings from the group discussions. The results of the respective group discussions were reviewed and compared by all members of a team and harmonized into one summary report. The summary report was subsequently validated with the representatives of the case study sites.

All three teams combined to undertake the assignment at the first site (Butter Hill) before separating to do the other two remaining sites (Kayaaquleh and Dulay). This was meant to ensure consistency in the methods used for all three study sites.

**National Stakeholders Workshop**

A National Stakeholders Workshop on the SEA of the forest sector was held in November 2008. The workshop brought together a cross-section of stakeholders, including the FDA, SPA, other government agencies, NGOs, private sector, donor agencies and members of the Liberian Forest Initiative (LFI), as well as participants from civil society in eight counties. The participants from the counties came from Grand Bassa, River Cess, Sinoe, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Nimba, Lofa, and Gbarpolu counties. Participants from the counties included chiefs and elders, teachers, women, youths, and community-based organizations.

The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Identify strategic challenges facing the Liberian forest sector, thus validating the work done in the scoping phase and situation assessments of the SEA.

- Determine elements of an action plan (including indicators for monitoring) for addressing the challenges.

- Agree on next steps.

A total of 59 participants attended the workshop. This included 16 participants from eight counties; 4 from three case study sites; and 40 from government, NGOs, INGOs, industry, and other stakeholders. The FDA was well represented by a mix of technicians and middle- and senior-level managers.

**FINDINGS FROM REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS**

The results of the rural outreach are presented in four broad thematic areas: environmental, social, economic, and legal/institutional. Issues presented under environmental, social, and economic themes are based mainly on local communities’ past experiences with commercial logging and conservation activities. Other issues that were also considered included large-scale agricultural activities (plantations) and mining in forest regions. The legal and institutional theme focuses on suggestions obtained from the communities for the CRL. It should be noted that the conservation and protected-areas issues did not attract the same level of interest as commercial forestry. This reflects the perception in all the regions that forest management is more associated with commercial logging than any other forest land use.

An important note here is that the findings from the regional consultations reflect the situation at the time of the consultations (November 2007–January 2008).

**Social issues**

The local people had high expectations from concessionaires in their areas. Many of them expected benefits such as roads, clinics, school construction, employment of locals, and the provision of training to members of local communities. Unfortunately, the majority of companies did not provide any benefits to local peoples and the communities in the regions they operated. A study by IUCN (2005) found that in the past numerous concession holders deprived the surrounding communities of much-needed financial and social assistance by failing to comply with their community obligations. Moreover, although certain expectations were created, communities had no access to real information about concession holder obligations, or their own rights. In all the regions in which the study was carried out, the participants complained that the FDA did not engage or advise them about the obligations the logging companies had to them under their agreements with the government. The FDA and the Ministry of Finance (MoF) failed to enforce legal requirements and to monitor and collect the required taxes from concession holders.

The lack of community benefits from the forests and false promises made by logging companies are the two key issues that emerged in many regions. Previously, logging companies routinely made promises to locals that were not kept. Even when informal agreements had been made between the logging companies and local communities, many times the logging companies failed to keep these promises. The local people no longer trust the FDA and logging companies. There is, therefore, a need to build better relationships among these parties.

This problem is compounded by the fact that the expectations at the community and regional levels are already high, partly because of the way that future community benefits are unrealistically projected in discussions surrounding forests.

Community development projects initiated by logging companies also define the relationships between loggers and communities. Throughout the regional consultations, participants at the informal and formal meetings repeatedly raised the issue of “log bridges” (i.e., bridges built by logging companies). These bridges are usually of poor quality and deteriorate quickly, and thus do not provide lasting benefit to the communities. They were cited as an example of bad community development initiatives. While some discussed this issue in the context of wasting commercially valuable logs, others were concerned about their durability, as they rot quite easily.
Participants in the regional consultations reported that the marginalization and exclusion of local people from decision making was a major issue. In the past there were no consultations with local people about logging in their communities. Participants from all regions tried to establish a scope for their future involvement in the forest sector. Since the local people feel that they own the forests and all the associated forest products, they argued that they should be involved in all the major decisions and negotiations regarding the forest resources.

The forest communities also complained about the negative impacts that they face due to uncontrolled logging activities. They asserted that this negatively affected the farmlands and crops (and therefore their livelihoods), but they were never compensated for the losses.\textsuperscript{10}

Grand Bassa and Rivercess. The main issues raised were the secret buying of logging workers, lack of compensation to victims’ families, and the taking of land by force or granting of concessions on private land. The local people complained that logging camps were usually established in remote areas, and when accidents or death occurred they were not reported by the logging companies. It is not uncommon for victims to be buried without notice or compensation to the victim’s family members. The absence of a registrar of employees made it difficult for family members to pursue these issues, and local authorities could not verify reports because of lack of information.

Since Gbarpolu, there was political patronage was one of the main complaints raised by the local people. They claimed that many times logging companies have refused to fulfill their obligations as discussed and agreed upon in informal negotiations. When the local people complain, the logging companies claim that they have already consulted with government officials on the issue.

Nimba, Grand Gedeh, and River Gee. The main concerns here included sexual exploitation and abuse by logging companies.\textsuperscript{11} This issue raised very heated discussions among the local people. Some of them argued that this problem was due to a breakdown in family values and asserted that logging companies and their employees should not be blamed. In Grand Gedeh, the issue was presented as follows: “Company staff spoiled our young girls with money and spoiled their school business; sometimes our children wear uniforms to go to school but they don’t go to school; they go and spend the whole day in the camp with the men.”\textsuperscript{12}

The key social issues raised are summarized as follows:

1. The need for communities to benefit from logging
2. The need to involve local people in forest management and forest-related decision making
3. The need for logging companies and FDA to keep the promises they make
4. The lack of compensation for damages to cash crops and private property by the logging companies

Region-specific social issues that were raised are discussed below.\textsuperscript{13}

Economic issues

In addition to the social issues discussed above, the economic considerations raised will potentially pose the most serious challenges to forest management at the local level. In spite of the promises of the forest sector reform (especially with regard to revenue sharing), communities constantly reminded the team that benefits from the forestry sector were not shared in the past. This is particularly critical given the limited understanding of the variety of economic opportunities that exist in the forest sector and the heavy focus on the revenue that will be shared with communities from logging operations. During the consultations, the local communities did not bring up NTFPs, other than the fact that they wanted bush meat hunting and trade to be regulated. This could have been due to unawareness of the potential economic value of NTFPs.

Locals persistently raised concerns about the failure of logging companies to improve local livelihoods. The local people felt they could benefit from the logging companies’ presence through employment or processing logged timber into sawn timber. There was also a general feeling that if logging companies diversified into processing at the local level, it would create new jobs and income opportunities for local people. Community concerns about obtaining maximum value out of commercial forest operations is also evidenced by their concern of the practice of not using all trees that had been felled or using valuable cut trees inappropriately. Sometimes logging companies abandon cut logs and use commercially valuable timber to construct bridges, which is considered wasteful.

Also, the diminishing commercial viability of the forest is a source of concern. In their words, “good logs are gone ... big forest trees have been reduced due to repeated logging of the area.” Despite this concern, the local communities were quick to point out that there was still potential for logging and that logging would increase job opportunities for local people.

Another important issue that was raised was salary arrears for workers in the sector. In one instance, a (female) participant walked out of a meeting after the team suggested that former workers organize and present themselves to the FDA and the Ministries of Justice and Labor to seek formal clarification or redress on the issue.\textsuperscript{14} Some participants who raised this issue felt that the government should take responsibility for the salary arrears owed by logging concessions, since their concessions have been canceled and they will not be required to operate. The main economic issues that emerged included:

1. The need to improve employment in the forest sector
2. The need for logging companies and activities to improve local livelihoods
3. The wasteful use of forest timber products by logging companies
4. The diminishing commercial viability of the forest
5. The existence of salary arrears

Environmental issues

Locals are generally concerned about forest loss and forest degradation. They acknowledge that shifting cultivation has negative impacts on the forest and also blame logging operations for forest loss and forest degradation.

The pollution of rivers and streams, dryer conditions, and visibly decreasing water bodies were perceived to be directly associated with forest loss. Water pollution also occurs because logs are covered with earth, and when it rains the mud runs into the creeks and streams.

Other issues that were highlighted included the wasteful use of forest timber and the lack of reforestation/forest restoration activities. They considered activities leading to forest loss to be “putting the community at risk.” The cumulative environmental effect of logging and mining in the same area was also raised. Locals recommended that logging and mining should not occur in the same area and agricultural activities (farming in high forest (old growth) should be stopped.

The proposal to expand the protected-areas system received mixed reactions. Locals regard it as “beneficial for unborn generations because when they are born they will still see some of the forest and benefit from it,” but at the same time raised concerns that this restricts some of the villagers’ own activities, especially farming.

The environmental concerns were summarized as follows:

1. The cumulative impacts of logging and mining in the same area (in Bopolu there was a particular reference to some logging companies engaging in mining activities in their concessions area)
2. The pollution of streams that results from blocking sections during access road construction in the forest
3. The migration of wildlife as a result of heavy machinery used by logging companies
4. The reduction of wildlife population as a result of increase in hunting activities by the local people
5. Wasteful use of timber
6. Limited reforestation/forest restoration programs and, where they do exist, the use of exotic species

Legal and institutional issues

There is disparity of perception or views among local people that they “own the forest, in their communities, and everything that is in it.”\textsuperscript{15} For example, participants in Gbarpolu stated that “forests are apportioned” based on township, clan, or chieftain levels. This line of thought was also highlighted in Buchanan, where participants there concurred that “there are no open spaces” or empty land between towns. Therefore, local people felt that each town should be responsible for planning and managing their own forest along with the FDA, and should involve the Ministries of Agriculture and Internal Affairs.

As a result of the perceptions discussed above, participants made some proposals for consideration during the drafting of the CRL. These included the need for communities to...
There are several activities under each of the Cs, some of which overlap. This can cause conflict if it is unclear which department is primarily responsible and how the financial and human resources will be allocated to the various activities.

In 2008, within the FDA there was limited collaboration among the departments regarding the Cs. The departments are largely compartmentalized, with commercial forestry focusing on logging concessions, community forestry focusing on community forests, and the conservation department focusing on national parks. In the field, however, the lines of responsibility between departments become rather blurred. Wildlife occurs in all forests, not just national parks, and the boundary between Timber Management Contract Areas and the community forest is not that clear (DAI 2008). The lack of coordination and collaboration could become a major source of conflict within FDA and between FDA and stakeholder groups, respectively. This would limit FDA’s effectiveness in reducing poverty without compromising the safety of the environment or community livelihoods. An illustration from the regulatory standpoint is the regulations associated with conservation that list wildlife species (e.g. chimpanzee, forest buffalo as protected species, while local communities consider them pests because they destroy crops, resulting in human-wildlife conflict. Another illustrative example is the fact that the current conservation model practiced in Liberia gives local communities limited access to protected areas and restricts them to the extraction of NTFP (especially meat) in some of these protected areas. This comes at a cost to communities. For example, it is estimated that prohibited or fully protected wildlife species account for about 35 percent of bush meat sales, and partially protected species account for a further 40-50 percent (DAI 2008). At the same time there are no provisions in place to compensate communities for the restrictions imposed on them. This contrasts with the regulations in place for commercial forestry.

The NRFL states that local communities should be granted user and management rights and that social, economic, and technical procedures for capacity building should be put in place to ensure that communities can equitably participate in and equitably benefit from sustainable management of the forests. Unfortunately, community involvement in conservation and commercial forestry is still very limited. The local communities feel that they are alienated from the management of the forest resources. Advancing on translating the CRL ratified in October 2009 into practice will provide an opportunity to rectify this.

Another area of potential conflict within the forest sector is between the objective of the 3Cs and the emerging “carbon agenda.” There is an increasing awareness of the importance of addressing climate change concerns in the management of Liberia’s forests, and a number of initiatives have started. In September 2007, the Liberian government formed a National Carbon Working Group, which is the government’s main advisory group on all issues connected with carbon; and in May 2009, Liberia was selected as a REDD country participant and received a grant for US$200,000 to prepare a National Forest Sector Readiness Assessment and Business Preparation Plan (RPP). There are, however, several challenges that need to be addressed before REDD strategies are put in place, including the following:

- Minimizing sectoral conflicts, particularly from land use planning
- Building necessary capacity for forest inventory and systematic monitoring of the carbon stocks
- Determining the potential economic revenue from carbon credits and emission reductions and viable synergies between these and other forest land uses

There are also potential conflicts between the Forest Sector Reform Law and other laws. A law establishing the land commission was passed by the national legislature few days prior to the enactment of the CRL with respect to forest land. The two laws present different approaches by the government of Liberia to the same issue, and CRL in a sense preempts work of the commission. The Land Commission may recommend the same or an amended approach to customary land tenure, which will presumably have to recognize any community lands that are documented. Such a situation would result in conflict within the 3Cs and at the intersectoral level.

The Environmental Protection and Management Law is the legal framework for the sustainable development, management, and protection of the environment by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in consultation with the relevant line ministries, agencies, and the law underscores intersectoral coordination and authorizes EPA—in consultation with the relevant line ministries, agen-

cies, and/or authorities—to promulgate several procedures, measures, guidelines, plans, registers, criteria, licenses/permits, standards, and regulations to protect the environment (DAI 2008). These provisions can appear to conflict with the Forestry Law, which gives FDA primary authority for forest management and protection. There are also contradictions between the NFRL and the Food and Agriculture Policy and Strategy. The latter states that sector objectives for forestry should include, inter alia,

There are several activities under each of the Cs, building necessary capacity for forest inventory and determining the potential economic revenue from logging and other forest uses. The parameters of each of the Cs are not well defined. In 2008 only 10 core regulations had been drafted for the national forest reform law. These included Regulations on (i) public participation, (ii) forest land use planning, (iii) bidder qualification, (iv) tender award and administration of forest management concessions, timber sales contracts and major forest use permits, (v) major pre-selling operations under forest resource licenses, (vi) benefit sharing, (vii) certain forest fees (stumpage fees, land rental fees, and forest product fees), (viii) establishing a chain of custody system, ( ix) penalties, and (x) rights of private land holders. The lack of indication of numerous other elements and the lack of specific and complete definitions on key issues are a source of confusion and conflicting interpretations.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE SITUATION ASSESSMENTS

The situation assessments generated a range of findings. This section highlights some of the key elements of these findings.

Potential challenges with implementation of the 3Cs

A review of the National Forest Management Strategy revealed that while there are minimal conflicts among the 3Cs at the policy level, there is the potential for conflicts to arise during implementation. The reasons for this include:

- The parameters of each of the Cs are not well defined. In 2008 only 10 core regulations had been drafted for the national forest reform law. These included Regulations on (i) public participation, (ii) forest land use planning, (iii) bidder qualification, (iv) tender award and administration of forest management concessions, timber sales contracts and major forest use permits, (v) major pre-selling operations under forest resource licenses, (vi) benefit sharing, (vii) certain forest fees (stumpage fees, land rental fees, and forest product fees), (viii) establishing a chain of custody system, (ix) penalties, and (x) rights of private land holders. The lack of indication of numerous other elements and the lack of specific and complete definitions on key issues are a source of confusion and conflicting interpretations.

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had the capacity to effectively fulfill their mandate, no effective training program exists on any HR theme. Furthermore, due to the conflicts period in Liberia, FDA is staffed by senior staff, many of whom are due to retire, or by a junior cadre of government staff who need training in specific areas—for example, community consultations and community organizing, development of microenterprises, forest conservation, etc.

The institutional capacity to implement the new forest policy and legislation was identified as a key issue by stakeholders both within and outside the FDA. Concerns were associated largely with the FDA’s “field capacity.” Tables 3 and 4 provide an overview of staffing among departments and in the field (DAI 2008).

The FDA also has inadequate infrastructure. The conflict period decimated much of the country’s infrastructure and government facilities. This has severely disrupted many government functions (DAI 2008). Electricity is not reliable, forcing FDA to rely on generators and spend financial resources on fuel. FDA also lacks adequate financial resources for enhancing its field presence.

Improved infrastructure and revenue generation will be critical, as will capacity to implement the new mandates, especially with regard to logistical support for law enforcement of commercial forest management. Law enforcement is currently weak. There are multiple reasons for this. Some experts feel that the high bar set by the policy requires a longer implementation time, given Liberia’s initial conditions—e.g., limited community awareness and infrastructure that is in poor condition.

There are other key areas where FDA capacity will need to be strengthened. For example, the CRL and effective implementation of the NFRL will require a certain number of staff with specific skill sets that currently are not available or are limited in availability. For example, the National Forestry Reform Law has regulations regarding the process of awarding contracts for commercial timber concessions. The UN Monitor report for Liberia for the last quarter of 2008 found that the change made by the FDA to the payment terms for three forest management contracts after the conclusion of negotiations could lead to the loss of $50 million in revenue for the government of Liberia over the course of the 25-year period of the contracts (United Nations Security Council 2008b).

FDA will also need to strengthen its capacity to manage forest revenues. In Liberia the MoF and FDA are the only government agencies involved in the collection of forest charges. Production monitoring, calculation of forest charges, and the generation of forest production statistics are the responsibility solely of the FDA. Both the FDA and MoF receive payments of forest charges (depending on the type of charge) (Doe 2004).

FIPA revenue collection has been poor in the past. A review of total assessment and collection of forest revenue for the two years 1999 and 2000 revealed that actual revenue collected accounted for 30 percent of total assessed charges, while arrears in charge payments account for the remainder (70 percent (Doe 2004)). This situation needs to be improved, especially in areas such as the collection of fines for noncompliance with forest regulations. This could require greater presence of FDA staff at logging operations, as well as effective mechanisms for conducting audits and verification.

There is a more general issue relating to the revenue base available to the FDA, and the extent to which the FDA is capturing the income available from forest goods and services. Currently, revenue collection focuses almost entirely on fines, penalties, royalties, and other user fees for timber concessionaires. It overlooks other values of forest areas.

During a 2005 workshop on community forestry (CIFOR 2006) discussions regarding capacity building revealed the need for awareness raising among all sectors of government (society, government and nongovernment) concerning the government’s policy on community forestry, reorientation of government staff to fit them for new roles as advisors and extensionists rather than as policing and concession licensing officials, and training of government staff and NGOs on procedures tools and techniques for implementing community forestry.

Building capacity in the aforementioned areas will require some of the key training and higher-education institutions to revisit their curricula. Currently, for example, the curriculum for forestry that is taught at the University of Liberia dates back to 1978; it does not deal with the emerging issues in the forest sector. This continued focus on the skills required for commercial forestry operations will jeopardize the “the other two Cs,” community and conservation.

Development partners have begun investing in the area of capacity building through bilaterally funded projects and projects coordinated and implemented by international and national NGOs. There have been recent efforts in the University of Liberia to develop training for practitioners on elements of community-based forest management. Building capacity would benefit from improved donor coordination to ensure optimal benefits from the multiple donor initiatives.

### Local communities

Local communities have limited capacity to efficiently participate in the implementation of the 3Cs component of the Forest Management Strategy due to widespread confusion and limited awareness about what community-based forest management might entail and how it might be encouraged. The local communities are aware of the NFRL but, more often than not, were unable to differentiate it from the CRL. Within communities, commonly marginalized groups such as elders, youth, and women are aware of the individual Cs. Few, however, had heard about the concept of integrating the 3Cs as articulated in the policy. There also is confusion regarding the “social obligations” of concessionaires (such as support to community clinics, primary schools, road building, or job provision) with the objective of community forestry. There is no clear understanding of “benefits” from protected areas to communities, as evidenced by the situation of Sapo National Park (SNP). At SNP some community members are employed by the park management, and some local and international NGOs are providing livelihood services to several local communities. The NFRL does not have provisions for compensating communities around protected areas in the same way that communities receive compensation from timber concessions. Instead, communities adjacent to protected areas are provided with alternative livelihood programs. These programs, unfortunately, often fall short of deterring illegal activities as they cannot compete with illicit/illegal livelihood opportunities (DAI 2008).

There is also no common understanding of “benefits” between local communities and logging concessionaires. A recent study carried out by the IUCN (2006) showed that none of the stakeholders had any knowledge or substantial information about issues, terms, legal obligations, and compliance of the logging companies. This resulted in the logging companies taking advantage of the local people. Even with the recent introduction of the social agreement between the communities and logging concessionaires, there is still strong evidence that logging companies are benefiting from the local communities while they are not receiving any benefits from logging activities.
Many decision makers don’t have sufficient information that
it comes to how community forestry will be implemented.
Otherwise, there is a danger of these resources being
degraded or stakeholders losing interest in investing in their
sustainable use. There is also the risk of the Liberian gov-
ernment and people failing to maximize or capture a major
source of potential economic benefits.
Particular gaps in this respect, which have been noted in the
SEA process and consultations, include:
• Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are of great
importance in both urban and rural Liberia, yet there is
limited appreciation of their economic value. Both
environmental and social sustainability benefits from the
forest resources, a key challenge facing the forest sector will be to
find ways of factorizing all of the 3Cs into economic and
financial planning.

Despite a stated policy of coherence between the 3Cs, curr-
rently there remains a paucity of economic data on the “community” and “conservation” aspects, and the data on
commercial aspects is questioned. Lack of data makes it very
difficult to plan future activities reliably. For example, the lack
of data on the economic importance of NTFPs, felt that economic benefit from the sector would have to be largely derived from commercial
logging.

Paucity of data resulting in undervaluation of forest
resources
In its efforts to integrate commercial forestry, community,
forestry, and forest conservation, and to optimize the eco-

local community and the logging concessionaires, commu-
nities need to have a better understanding of the possible
types of benefit they can derive from logging operations.

Vily (2017b) found that not many communities were aware that
the law obliges government to share one-third of the rent due on the lease of their lands to concessionaires, and that
there was no legal obligation for the revenue to reach them directly—it could be given back to the communities in
form of support services managed by county author-
ities. Moreover, no legal commitment was made to share
the percentage of lucrative stumpage and export fees with the
forestand owners and possessors. It is also taken for
granted that the one-third of rent will be delivered automati-
cally, whereas there are clear requirements for accessing the
funds (such as community body needing to be incorporated and
status to access the authorized body to gain access to this funding). There is a need to clarify how communities
participate in forestry concessions, specifically the steps and requirements that need to be fulfilled.

The local communities did not seem to appreciate the eco-

fiscal aspect is questioned. Lack of data makes it very
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logging.
and are said to be overestimated. According to Shearmen (2008), although the FDA has been predicting significant revenue from the export of logs for a number of years, the revenue has not been realized. This failure could be due to the fact that the estimates are based on inflated area and volume data. There is a need for estimates to be accurate given the fact that the Poverty Reduction Strategy (2008) has used these projections to support 5–6 percent of activities between 2008 and 2009, and that this will rise to 8 percent between 2010 and 2011.

**TABLE 6: Projected and Actual Revenue from Export of Lumber and Timber from FMCs**

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<td>Powers Reduction Strategy</td>
<td>$2,685,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDA 2007 Annual Report</td>
<td>$17,458,015</td>
<td>$16,594,915</td>
<td>$26,134,915</td>
<td>$23,088,434</td>
<td>$11,352,886</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>0</td>
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Source: Shearmen (2008).

Inadequate intersectoral coordination

The board of FDA is made up of a mix of ministries, and there are several government agencies operating in the local communities—for example, the MLME, MIA, Liberia Marketing Agency (LMA), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), MoF, Ministry of Commerce (MoC), Ministry of Education (MoE), and the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). Despite this structure, there does not seem to be any coordination amongst these organizations. As each sectoral ministry struggles to meet its own mandate, intersectoral coordination has been a low priority in an attempt to increase coordination in different ministries, the FDA has set up several cross-sectoral working groups. These include the Protected Areas Working Group, the Community Forestry Working Group, and the Carbon Working Group. These working groups have created new partnerships to assist the FDA in achieving its mandate, but there is room for improvement.

Currently, there is virtually no land use planning. Accordingly, rural areas have numerous conflicting land use issues relating to agroindustrial plantations; mining concessions; location of mineral deposits; and lack of information on ancestral land, tribal lands, and other land claims (DAI 2008). These are all matters of concern. For example, the overlap between the location of mining deposits and protected areas and forest reserves suggests that potential exploitation of mineral deposits in these areas could significantly affect biodiversity and forest cover. Forest destruction in these areas would be locally extensive and permanent (DAI 2008). The impacts would stem from sitation of dams and rivers, indiscriminate deforestation, additional degradation of lands from settlement patterns of miners, ground and surface water pollution, dust pollution, habitat fragmentation, and increased bush meat consumption.

Coordination with agriculture is also becoming increasingly important, given the growing government interest in promoting agroindustrial investments. Large-scale agroindustry is not new to Liberia. Liberia had large areas consisting of rubber plantations and 27,000 ha of industrial palm plantations owned by parastatals and the private sector (DAI 2008). Tree crops are an important component of the Liberian economy, accounting for 22 percent of GDP in 2005, with the rubber industry alone employing 18,500 workers and accounting for 9 percent of total exports (DAI 2008). In 2008 the MoA was negotiating new leases for the palm plantations. The government is also interested in the potential introduction of oil palm biofuels plantations. For example, Equatorial Biofuels has expressed interest in obtaining 500,000 ha of land in River Gee County for biofuels plantations. This area falls within the proposed protected area in Grebo National Forest (DAI 2008).

A number of proposals have been discussed with the MoA, but it is unclear how Liberia’s forest policy and management would deal with these proposals. There also is limited clarity on how the MoA would coordinate with the FDA if plantation establishment were to involve the clearing of existing forest lands.

Another element of coordination that requires FDA involvement is the improved coordination among donors and development partners. Coordination between various donors and development agencies can be improved, a fact that has been recognized by the key donor coordination body within the forest sector: the Liberian Forest Initiative (LFI). LFI had discussions on reformulating its role after the lifting of the UN sanctions and on how to define new roles for coordination and cooperation. The need for improved coordination can be seen from the multiple demands made on FDA staff. The pace of reform has been high, and multiple new initiatives have been introduced since the elections.

Development partner engagement in the sector has introduced several new concepts to FDA. While each of them is important, they have created extraordinary demands on the technical staff within the FDA. New issues introduced include chain of custody, a new management and financial tracking system within the FDA, the new CRL, and discussions and initiatives relating to carbon financing mechanisms including REDD. Technical staff within the FDA has noted that there needs to be more links between these initiatives and the overall strategic plan of the FDA, to allow them to more easily incorporate these initiatives in their daily work plans.

Community rights

Traditionally, forests in Liberia have been an integral part of community property with local communities owning them in both a territorial and mystical sense. The Forest Act of 2000, however, declared forests and land the property of the Republic. This forestry law removed the natural rights of jurisdiction and benefit from the forests by the local people and this become further entrenched in the NFRL. Although the NFRL proclaims its intention to protect and support community forest rights by granting them rights to forests, giving them ownership to unspecified forest resources, and consulting them in decision making, there is no legal obligation in the law that they must be involved.

Prior to the formulation of the CRL, the provisions in the NFRL do not genuinely give rights to forest resources to the local communities or empower them as far as forest management and planning is concerned. The NFRL is clear on the fact that people have no say as to whether or not their forest lands are logged. Their consent to the lease of their lands (for up to 38 years) for logging or salvage is not required, although they may protest and seek compensation if their crops and houses are damaged (Wily 2007b). Although the local people could benefit from these contracts, they have no control over who gets them or what they do. The communities may be consulted, but may not be heard, and may receive only one-third of the rent the government charges through leasing out their lands.

Prior to the drafting of the CRL, the resettlement of land losses at the hands of government was growing, especially as many realized that the promised reform meant only returning to communities one-third of the ground rent that the government earns by leasing out their lands to logging concessions. More and more communities are demanding to be included in decisions affecting the status of the area or its use by forest harvesters or miners. The absence of customary tenure security including respect for the natural rights of ownership is a major impediment to good governance of the sector (Wily 2007a).

Benefit sharing

The NFRL states that communities will receive land rent to be paid by Perrott Holders (s. 14.2 a). In Chapter 14 of the law, it is stated that government shall allocate and distribute fees collected annually as follows:

(i) Ten percent of stumpage fees to support operational costs for the Protected Forest Areas Network established by Chapter 9 of this Law
(ii) Thirty percent of land rental fees to communities entitled to benefit sharing under Forest Resources Licenses; 30 percent of land rental fees to Counties; and 40 percent of land rental fees to the Ministry of Finance to hold as part of the general revenues of the Republic in accordance with Section 7 of the Reform Tax Code
(iii) Ten percent of Forest Product fees to support operational costs for the Protected Forest Areas Network established by Chapter 9 of this Law

The proposed allocations of the land rental to the communities and the delivery mechanism, however, are highly discriminatory. In the context of fiscal revenues, land rental fees are likely to be small in comparison to the more profitable stumpage fees. It is therefore unlikely to contribute to meaningful social change (see Box 1).

**FINDINGS FROM THE CASE STUDIES**

The case studies provided information on the context in which key issues were currently being addressed and looked at the practical implication of possible alternatives identified during the SEA. It was done to help define the actions needed for implementing the recommended approach while minimizing negative potential priority environmental and social concerns and impacts associated with the 3Cs. The following section presents the findings from the three case studies.15

**CASE STUDY SITE 1: Butter Hill, Cape Mount County**

Grand Cape Mount is a county in the northwestern portion of Liberia. It is one of the 15 counties that comprise the first level of administrative division in the nation. The county has five districts, with Robertsport serving as the capital of the county. The last census indicated that the population of the county is 129,096, making it the eighth most populous county in Liberia.

15 For more details regarding the case studies, see Annex 3.
**BOX 1: ESTIMATES OF LAND RENTAL AND STUMPAGE**

1. Land rental is set at an annual area fee of US$1.25 per hectare of land subject to a Timber Sales Contract and US$2.50 per hectare of land subject to a Forest Management Concession. Land rental would appear to apply to the whole area of a concession.

2. The total area available for Forest Management Contracts, as of 2011, is estimated in the present FDA strategy to be 2,300,000 ha, together with 36,000 ha for Timber Sales Contracts.

3. Stumpage is calculated on the basis of the volume and value of the individual tree being felled, and is set at 10 percent of the market FOB price for category A (high value) species, 5 percent for category B species, and 2.5 percent for category C species.

4. The projected economic performance of the sector indicates log production at US$80,000/m³ per year, leading to annual tax revenue (land rental and stumpage), nationally, of US$2,902,000 and $9,582,100, respectively. With a 40-year felling cycle, this suggests log production at approximately 15 m³ per hectare of coupe.

5. Assuming a concession area of 100,000 ha in the locality of a rural population, and an average harvest level of category A species of 15 m³ per hectare, at an average $100 per m³, then the annual tax accruing would be:
   - a. Land rental = $125,000 to $250,000
   - b. Stumpage = $475,000

6. Thus, if the riparian population receives only the land rental (as per the 2006 law), the sum received would be $37,500 to $75,000 per 100,000 ha (i.e., 30 percent of $125,000 to 30 percent of $250,000). If, however, the community share was 30 percent of both land rental and stumpage, the total annual community component from this single concession would be ($37,500 + $142,500) – $75,000 + $142,500 = $180,000 to $217,500.

7. A lower harvest level is perhaps more realistic, given the variable productivity of the forest (say, one-third of the projected harvest, at 5 m³ per hectare). This would give annual taxes accruing to this 100,000 ha concession as:
   - a. Land rental = $125,000 to $250,000
   - b. Stumpage = $125,000

Thus, in this hypothetical scenario, the community share of the land rental would be $37,500 to $75,000. If stumpage was also attributed at 30 percent, this would contribute a further $37,500.

Source: Adapted by author from Brown (2008).

Butter Hill is situated next to Timber Sale Contract Areas A-9 (in Gola Konnah District, Kpoko and Manneh Chiefdoms) and A-10 (in Poroja District, Kpoko Clan, Grand Cape Mount County). In the area, subsistence agriculture and shifting cultivation are common. The area also has high bush meat hunting activities close to the proposed Gola Nature Reserve and very high mining activity. There are local traditional by-laws that prohibit the hunting of some animal species. The protected animals include lions, chimpanzees, elephants, leopards, and crocodiles, as well as pregnant animals.

The economic activities that are undertaken in the community include gold mining (very intensive alluvial mining, involving cyanide), and very high mining activity.

Another complaint was the fact that the infrastructures built by the logging firms—such as bridges and culverts—were not durable and, hence, the benefits were not sustainable.

The general view was that conservation and commercial forestry can be undertaken with the involvement of the community. They feel that they should be involved in all decisions made about the forests in their community, including the determination of conservation areas and the setting up of a committee for mediation with timber firms that may be operating in the area.

All community members interviewed acknowledged that there have been changes in the weather pattern. Community members asserted that the rainy and dry seasons are no longer predictable. The community members believe that these changes in weather pattern are caused by deforestation, the world coming to an end, and ‘white people’s space exploration.’ In general, the local people did not seem to understand carbon financing. They said that they would not accept payments not to use the forests, because they need to use the forests to support their livelihood.

Community Forest Development Committees (CFDCs)

A CFDC has been formed in the area in connection with the TSC in the locality. However, some dissatisfaction was expressed with the manner in which representatives for Butter Hill were selected. An FDA team was said to have been in the area to organize the election of the CFDC members. The latter team provided a list of five towns (three from Poroja District, including Butter Hill, and two from Golokonn District) that were expected to provide three representatives each for the election of the five executives of the CFDC on the following day at a nearby town (Benduari). Due to the short notice given by the FDA team, some satellite towns of Butter Hill were not consulted. In haste, the three representatives were appointed at a meeting at Butter Hill. It was learned that the elders and chiefs present upheld the process despite dissent from some of community members present. Some members of the community are still dissatisfied with the disenfranchisement of Butter Hill’s satellite villages.

The FDA team indicated to the community that the town chiefs and elders were disqualified to stand for elections As a result, the role of the chiefs and elders in the CFDC is unclear to the community. The community opposed the election of the CFDC chairman, whom they claimed is a government employee. It was eventually learned that the CFDC chairman is not a government employee.

A lesson that can be learnt from the above is that providing adequate time to the communities is important for the communities to understand, trust and engage in the process and subscribe to the outcome (i.e., election of their representatives).

**Intersectoral coordination**

With regards to mining, there are two teams that are regulating affairs on the ground. There is a management team that works on behalf of the community to ensure that the artisanal miners pay the agreed share of Butter Hill of the proceeds of the mining activities. The other is the authority team, which issues permits to prospective artisanal miners to facilitate the issuance of mining licenses by the MELME. There is no similar arrangement set up for logging.

The community indicated that the execution of mining and logging activities in the same place at the same time will create serious environmental impacts and conflicts. Hence, they will not tolerate such overlapping activities in their forests. They prefer that such activities be undertaken in different areas and times. The potential risks of carrying out these activities simultaneously are many and include the inability to farm in the mined areas, water pollution, and the creation of mining pits, which are dangerous for humans and vehicular traffic.

**Land ownership**

In the case study area, land can either be owned in the community by statute (i.e., deeds or traditional means. In the latter case, the community land has been divided among families and handed down from generation to generation within a given family. Natural features and landmarks are used to mark the boundaries of the land. The control of access to forest land is through the town chief, elders, and occupants of the land in question.

**Appropriate forest land use**

There are different types of land designations in this village. For example, there is communal forest in the area. The actual size of communal forest, however, is not known. About half of the community forest is earmarked for farming, while the other half is set aside for hunting and the exploitation of NTFPs. In addition to communal forests, there is private land owned by individuals who have deeds or tribal certificates. In the past, land disputes were resolved using traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, but it is uncertain whether this practice is still employed. In November 2006, all land use categories are being surveyed and designated for the entire district. This process does not involve the community members.
pursue resolution systems. Recently, there have been no land disputes.

There were diverging views within the community regarding the appropriateness of replacing forests with other crops. The youth and the women would not accept the clearing of large portions of the community forests for the purposes of establishing plantations of, say, rubber or firewood species. They wanted to protect the indigenous species for the current and future generations. In contrast, the elders were open to such a venture, not wanting to forestall development in the area stemming from the potential revenue and benefits. Their position and decision were dependent on negotiations with the interested party.

There are sacred bushes for both women and men in the community. No activities are allowed in these bushes. Although the youth and the women did not feel there was a need for the expansion of such bushes, the elders would prefer to expand the sacred bushes as the population of the community increases.

**Economic activities and forest value**

The major NTFPs used in the community include bush meat, fish, rattan, bitter root cane, bitter cola, thatch, poles, plant medicine, bamboo, honey, fruits, nuts, and water. All NTFPs are considered to be very important for the livelihoods of the members of the community. The monetary value of these uses, however, was not known. While this information is currently not available, it can readily be estimated. For example, in the community, rattan is mostly used instead of nails to hold roof rafters together. An equivalent market value of using rattan for a typical three-bedroom house in the community was about LR5,500 or 30 packets of nails (in 2008).

The commercial forest activities that the community would like to be involved in include commercialization of NTFPs (e.g., rattan, medicinal plants, bitter root canes), commercial agriculture, chain sawing, and working with logging companies.

**Knowledge of forestry laws**

In general, the communities are not very well informed about the new laws. Although some members of the community are aware of the NFRL, they could not differentiate it from the CRL. The women are aware of the individual Cs, but not the NFRL, they could not differentiate it from the Kpayaquelleh Town is part of. The access to the forest land is controlled by the Gbarlin Resources Development Agency. While information sharing has taken place and documents have been shared with community members, they have not had the opportunity to become fully informed.

**Logging and mining**

Five logging companies operated in the area in the past: Gateway, KLC, American Woods, Forest Hill Corporation, and Vanja. Currently the only the chiefs were on the payroll of the logging companies, and the communities generally did not benefit from the logging activities. There were also few other benefits—for example, the bridges on the logging roads which were constructed from logs and did not last very long.

With regard to other extractive uses of resources, there has been no mining in the area in the past. Currently there is some prospecting for gold. The community proposed that before any prospecting or mining license is issued, a community committee must be consulted. Miners should also establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with each community before mining, and prospecting should not last for more than three months.

The local people were very concerned about the effects of logging and mining activities in the same place. They asserted that they did not want this to happen in their community, since destruction of land and conflicts can result.

There are differing perspectives regarding the impact of logging and farming on forest resources. For example, the women in the community held the view that farming and logging were causing a decline in forests and trees in their community. They explained that while previously they would collect Nioang (hetereria utilis) seeds around the town compound, it was now difficult to find them and they had to walk longer distances to get them. The youth and elders, on the other hand, reported that there were plenty of Nioang in the forests.

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There were also differing views about the length of time needed to follow the land. While the women felt that using 8-year fallow periods for shifting cultivation would be appropriate, the youth argued that tree crops such as rubber and cacao should be planted and that the land should be fallowed for 10–15 years. Although the elders felt that fallowing was important, they did not specify how long the fallow period should be.

**Institutional arrangements for land and forest management**

There are multiple institutional arrangements for addressing land and resource issues, each working at different levels and having different degrees of effectiveness. For example, there is a community forest for the town. Although the youth are aware of its extent and boundaries, the women and elders were not so sure about its extent. The private sector companies that are the area are acquired either traditionally through inheritance or by obtaining tribal certificates. A person wanting to acquire land in the area has to go through a team responsible for apportioning land. This team is comprised of landlords, chiefs, and elders.

Land disputes in the area are mostly settled traditionally. The youth gave several examples of disputes in the area and the stages at which they are as far as settlement is concerned. For example, while a dispute between two individuals from Kpayaquelleh and Kpayaquelleh was settled traditionally, a pit-sawing dispute between Kpayaquelleh and Gangolta has not been totally resolved because Kpayaquelleh has not yet received its part of the past benefits from pit-sawing.

There is also an existing dispute between the Gbarlin clan and Gbargpolu County over part of the land around the Via River. This dispute has been taken to the Caucus of Lofa County, and a complaint has been lodged with the House of Representatives.

**Involvement of the community in conservation and commercial forestry**

All groups interviewed were of the opinion that conservation and commercial forestry should be undertaken with the involvement of the community. The community’s understanding of the term “community forestry management” is the management of forests by local or traditional bylaws and their effective enforcement. In connection with the expected roles of the community in forest management, the youth suggested the designation of conservation areas and the setting up of a committee for mediation with timber firms that may be operating in the area. The elders proposed the provision of guards for the protection of the forest as well as trained manpower for employment in the forestry activities. The women would participate by ensuring compliance with any agreement between the community and prospective timber firms.

**Different uses of forest lands and forest products**

It was acknowledged that there has been pit-sawing in the Kpayaquelleh area in the past. This has been stopped as a result of bad road conditions and no benefits to community. A previous District Commissioner did not give Kpayaquelleh their part of the share of the tols that he collected. Currently pit-sawing is undertaken under community-controlled conditions for housing and community development projects. Fuel is supplied to those with pit-sawing skills in the community.
to produce for the community or individuals. Pit-sawing is being done on private land with agreements between the pit-sawyers and the land owners.

There are NTFPs in the area which were ranked by the community in the following manner: (1) medicinal plants: Kojolobo (malarial), Water bark (malarial), ganagana (skin rash-es), Bushia—Nauclea spp (bowel disorders, constipation), and tree parts (bark, leaves, roots); (2) food: walnuts, locusts, yams, bitter cola, palm, wild/bush pepper, bush-meat, water, country spices, fish, ratten, palm wine, honey, bitter roots, water ropes, Aframomum (pepper), and bamboo worms; (3) minerals: gold and diamonds; and (4) construction material: poles, ropes, thatch, and bamboo. There was limited knowledge regarding the potential economic value of these products.

It was reported that there are many abandoned logs still lying in the forest. However, the community lacks the necessary capacity and resources to utilize them. The distance to the abandoned logs and the bad conditions of the roads and bridges leading to them are also hindrances.

The feedback from the community with regard to the replanting of forests with biofuels was mixed. The women were in favor, as it will open up job opportunities. The youth indicated that this will not be acceptable until they are aware of exactly how much land rent they are supposed to get. In addition, the communities expect the logging activities to result in employment, building of roads, bridges, schools, and health facilities. The youth are skeptical about getting these benefits.

Community Forest Development Committees (CFDCs)

The FDA had passed on to the community a document justifying the need to form CFDCs, but the community had not yet formed this committee. The youth in the community were aware of the importance and roles of this committee, although they had not yet read the document. The elders had, however, accepted it as a guide to logging activities in the FMC in the area. The women in the community were not informed about the committee or the document justifying its formation.

CASE STUDY SITE 3: Dulay, Nimba County

Nimba County is found in the northcentral portion of Liberia. It is one of the counties comprising the first level of administrative division in Liberia. The county is divided into five districts, with Sanniquellie serving as its capital. The county is the largest county in Liberia, with an area of 11,951 square kilometers. The 2008 census estimated its population to be 468,088, making it the second most populous county in the nation.

Dulay is located in the eastern part of East Nimba Nature Reserve (ENNRR). The people living in this community are small holder farmers of food and cash crops. They mainly practice shifting cultivation of food crops such as rice, casava, plantain, and pepper. There are also plantations of cocoa, coffee, oil palm, kola, and rubber. The majority of the land is owned through traditional inheritance of land allocated by the chief and elders to the families in the community. Although there are squatters in the community, checks have been put in place so that they do not take land that is owned by the community. For example, although they can plant food crops on communal land, they cannot plant perennial cash crops such as cocoa, coffee, oil palm, and rubber.

The community owns the forest lands, with the elders and chief acting as their custodians on behalf of the community. The access to the forest lands is controlled by the chiefs, the elders, quarter chiefs, or family land owners. There is a community forest in the area, but no figure could be put on its extent. There are no private lands in the area. There is an ongoing land dispute with an adjacent village (Nyantuo) with regard to encroachment. The dispute has not yet been resolved, and it becomes tense when “blowing” time approaches for making new farms.

There is an area earmarked for protection (namely, the ENNRR) whose boundary is yet to be demarcated. The community stopped the linecutting when they realized it was encroaching on their farming area. Farming activities did not occur beyond the proposed boundary of ENNRR this year, as the boundary dispute with the FDA has not been resolved.

There is no agreement with respect to the area earmarked for logging. The area in question falls within the Zor clan’s land, which Dulay and the adjacent towns share.

The community wants to benefit from logging activities taking place in their area. They expect the logging companies operating in their area to provide them with safe drinking water, good roads, health facilities, and schools.

As a result of the bad conditions of the roads in the area, there is no commercial pit-sawing. Pit-sawing is undertaken in the area for local use only, and access to trees for such purposes is regulated by the elders, the chief, and the affected landowners.

The community members would also like to be involved in commercial forest activities such as the development and marketing of NTFPs including rattans, raffia palm, cane for furniture making, pit-sawing to provide lumber for local use, and production of climbing rope for harvesting palm nuts.

Environmental impact of mining and logging activities

The community was against logging and mining activities taking place in the same place at the same time. They reasoned that it will create environmental problems, conflicts, and pose danger to life and property.

The communities reported a need to replant areas that have been cleared by logging companies. Suggestions for reforestation included allowing the bush to lie fallow to regenerate naturally, as well as replanting trees to replace those that had been cut. The community provided the local Maco name konoh for the only plant species that was confirmed for inclusion in the ENNRR, but both the Zor and the Gba communities use land in and around the Nimba Reserve. In February 2008, when an FDA team arrived to demarcate the border of the protected area, the communities stopped the linecutting when they realized it was encroaching on their farming area.

Benefit sharing

Although logging has been taking place in this community, it has not benefited the local people. Many logging companies have failed to meet the promises they made to the local people. Currently, there is no mining taking place in the community, although prospecting for minerals has been carried out in the area in the last few years. The local people feel they should be consulted about activities taking place in the forests in their communities. They would especially like to have representatives of the communities monitoring any mining activities that take place in the area. The expectations of the community from future mining activities in the area include the provision of social amenities and equitable sharing of revenue from the mining activities.
to be declining in numbers. This species was used to poison arrows in the past. The loss is attributed to deforestation through farming and logging activities.

There are sacred beaches for both men and women in the forest that the community uses. But surprisingly, there has been encroachment on these beaches in the recent past. They would like these beaches to be expanded and protected from activities such as mining, logging, hunting, and farming by establishing boundaries around them.

Knowledge of forestry laws and intersectoral cooperation

The FDA has gone to the community with the aim of increasing awareness of protected area management for the forests in the area. The FDA has informed the community about the forest law for the community. FDA also has talked to the local people about the need to respect forest boundaries and resist farming or hunting in the protected areas. Despite this, there is tension between the local people and the FDA because of some promises that the FDA failed to keep, such as building the headquarters of the ENNR in the area. The youth and the elders were aware of the NFRL and the ICs, but the women were not.

The government agencies that are operating in the Duliyu area include the FDA, MoE, MoJ, MIA, and MoF. No meeting or coordination involving any group of these has been observed in the area. Nevertheless, no conflict has been noted between any of them.

Community engagement in forest activities

In general, the local people want to be involved in conservation and commercial forestry. They suggested that they could play a meaningful role in the monitoring and management of conservation and commercial forestry activities.

The community does not want any biofuel plantations to be established in the area because of inadequate land for farming in the area. They feel that once land is set aside for biofuel plantations, they will not have adequate land to plant needed food crops.

The community confirmed changes in the climate in the area during the recent past. The timing of the rainy and dry seasons has not been as predictable it used to be. They attribute such abnormality to deforestation as a result of logging and farming. The youths and elders said community would not agree to any payment to the community for not using part of its forest. The women, on the other hand, would prefer to make their decision after the community’s negotiations with the interested party.

Commonalities among case studies

There were some notable commonalities among the case studies that need to inform the institutional and capacity adjustments to mainstream the priority social and environmental considerations. First, the communities studied have already identified community forest areas. They have also arranged structures to deal with resource management issues (e.g., collection of alluvial mining “fees,” prohibition of pit-sawing due to inequitable sharing of toll fees collected). Communities are skeptical about being paid not to use “their” forests (relevant, for example, to potential carbon projects). All communities rejected the idea of mining and forestry in the same area.

A common understanding still needs to be developed for interaction between government and community structures (such as allocation of adequate time for the selection of community representatives to be presented for election to the offices of the CFCOs, ensuring the “spread” of the information in the justification documents of the timber concessions to all sectors of the affected communities). Finally, community will need to develop new skills in relation to the CRL and a better understanding of the IC policy.

PRIORITY SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The SEA process identified numerous social and environmental considerations that were then prioritized. The outcome was six key social and environmental considerations. It should be noted that many of the issues presented here cut across each of the ICs and would thus affect the implementation not only of a segment of the forest policy, but also the integration of the ICs themselves. This section provides a brief overview of these issues.

Priority environmental issues

The three key environmental issues that this SEA identified are as follows:
1. Overlapping land uses: There is an overlap between mining areas (areas with mineral deposits) and large parts of the protected area/forest reserve network (DAI 2008). The overlap creates a funding problem for the implementation of integrated projects. The overlap also increases the risk of conflicts between forest and other land users. The overlap also increases the risk of conflicts between forest and other land users.
2. Habitat destruction and species displacement, disturbance, or forest degradation: Because of the large-scale industrial logging operations, there is a danger of habitat destruction and species displacement. The loss of habitat can affect the survival of many species, including those that are endangered or threatened. The loss of habitat can also affect the biodiversity of the forest.
3. Habitat destruction and species displacement, disturbance, or forest degradation: Because of the large-scale industrial logging operations, there is a danger of habitat destruction and species displacement. The loss of habitat can affect the survival of many species, including those that are endangered or threatened. The loss of habitat can also affect the biodiversity of the forest.

Priority social issues

The three key social issues identified through this SEA are briefly described below:
1. Corruption and lack of accountability associated with logging operations: Corruption is widespread in the logging industry, and it is a serious problem. The lack of accountability associated with logging operations is a major concern. The corruption is often linked to the illegal logging of timber.
2. Threats to biodiversity: The threats that are related to forest activities include shifting cultivation, poaching and hunting of bush meat, unregulated timber extraction (including from artisanal logging), firewood gathering, charcoal production, and human settlements. The latter is due partly to the unclear land tenure system and limited land use feasibility studies. Logging and road infrastructure also have contributed to forest fragmentation.

Shifting cultivation methods in upland areas used for rice growing fields can also be a threat. Recently there have been large areas subject to capital investments, and associated with some of these is a mechanized approach to “slash and burn” (DAI 2008). Shifting to mechanized cultivation is of concern because it often results in the removal of parent trees, reducing the potential for regeneration. However, the low population density of Liberia and the fact that only 6 percent of the land is used for agriculture suggests that currently the problems related to shifting cultivation may not be severe.

In contrast, unregulated logging, primarily artisanal logging, is a serious cause of forest degradation. In Liberia, artisanal logging entails groups of timber harvesters with chainsaws operating in forests with easy road access. The sawn planks are moved to the roadside for collection by trucks owned or rented by timber merchants. In September 2007 a joint FDA-UNMIL forest patrol program set up around national forests in three counties found a total of 39 chainsaws and 114 operators producing on average about 400 planks per week. In addition to habitat loss and forest degradation, artisanal logging results in loss of volume and revenue.

Currently, data are lacking to fully estimate the extent of impacts, and there is no land use planning.
a growing political activism, forest communities are claim-
ing rights and objecting to what they see as top-down ap-
proaches from the government and FDA. This social concern
encompasses issues regarding meaningful participation in
forest management, transfer of benefits to the community,
and development of technical capacity at the local level to
implement community forestry.

3. Social impact of expansion of the protected areas net-
work. The government has committed to establishing a bi-
ologically representative network of protected areas covering
at least 30 percent of the existing forest area. Depending
on the process undertaken for the expansion of a protected-
areas network, there is the potential for negative social im-
pacts such as loss of access to forest land and livelihoods.
This issue emerges from the inadequate attention given to
providing alternative livelihoods for the communities around
protected areas.

VALIDATION OF PRIORITY ISSUES THROUGH A
NATIONAL SEA WORKSHOP

A national SEA workshop was organized to identify strategic
challenges facing the Liberian forest sector (thus validating
the work done in the scoping phase and situation assess-
ments of the SEA), determine elements of an action plan for
addressing the challenges (including indicators for monitor-
ing), and agreeing on the next steps.

The key results and outcomes included:

Priority issues. Workshop participants were presented with
the priority issues that had been identified during the earlier
prioritization workshop and were invited to add, delete, or
modify these issues. Participants felt that the identified is-
sues were in line with how they saw the priorities, and did
not see the need for changes. This allowed the earlier prior-
ity issues to be validated by a larger and more diverse set of
stakeholders, who then developed action plans for each of
the issues (presented below). A list of emerging issues was
generated, but the participants felt they did not have enough
information or knowledge of these issues to address them
in a separate breakout group or to develop an action plan on
them

• Community benefits and community involvement.
  The need for a clear definition of community benefits
  and mechanisms for their distribution was articu-
  lated, not only for the forest sector, but also for the
  other natural-resource sectors. This would require
  not only a determination of the appropriate policies

and administrative mechanisms, but also a thor-
ough dissemination of these new ideas to affected
communities.

There was recognition of the good intentions behind
the concepts of CFDCs and social agreements. It was
noted, however, that implementation would be chal-
lenged by a variety of factors. This point was reinforced
by the perspective of stakeholders in the workshop
who stated that there was a need to “walk the walk”
and not just “talk the talk”—that is, to implement the
existing legislation and policies.

• Continued dialogue on forest issues. Participants
  welcomed the platform provided by the national work-
  shop as an opportunity for multiple stakeholder and
  intersectoral discussions. In particular, the community
  representatives welcomed the opportunity of stating
  their cases directly to the FDA (and other government
  agencies) and hearing their responses first hand.

On the basis that the SEA Team was a project-based con-
cept, all stakeholders present at the workshop en-
dorsed the idea that a platform be established along the
same lines. The main focus of such a platform would
be to create a space where the issues themselves
could be discussed, as opposed to focusing on the
positions adopted by different stakeholders on those
issues. This would help ensure a free flow of informa-
tion and exchange of views on forest sector processes.

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The SEA examined key social and environmental consid-
erations associated with the forest sector. The SEA also
reviewed the policy, legal, and institutional contexts in
which these issues are being addressed and made recom-
endations on how these issues may be more effectively
mainstreamed through possible capacity and institutional
adjustments. From the findings from different activities of
the SEA, a policy action matrix was developed that will help
move from recommendations into practice and enhance the
uptake of the SEA findings among decision makers.

The matrix summarizes the key considerations identified in
the SEA and clearly indicates the capacity and institutional
adjustments and actions required to address the identified
priorities in the context of ongoing forest sector reforms—
and who should carry out these actions. Due to the com-
plexity of the interrelatedness of the 3Cs of Liberian forest
strategy, as well as of the relationship of the forest sector as
a whole to other areas of development in Liberia, only key
strategic actions and priorities are included in this document.
It is important to note that the strategic actions were identi-
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### STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR IDENTIFIED PRIORITY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

#### KEY ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION 1: Overlapping Land Uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT HAS TO BE DONE?</th>
<th>HOW SHOULD IT BE DONE?</th>
<th>WHO DOES IT?</th>
<th>INDICATIONS?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop and implement a land use plan for the site in such a way that no two activities take place on same site at the same time; improve capacity of EPA to handle cumulative impacts when they occur</td>
<td>Immediately following the identification of the impact until the planning stage</td>
<td>EPA, FDA, LME, MoA, NPM, MoJ, community or local people</td>
<td>Submission of project specific Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)s noting other developments within the same project footprint</td>
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#### LIMITED REFORESTATION/RESTORATION OF LOGGED AREAS

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<td>Build partnership and capacity to (i) identify potential areas for forest restoration, and (ii) integrate economic and technical dimensions of forest restoration in specific areas</td>
<td>Early March–October 2008: Consultative meetings</td>
<td>Continuously</td>
<td>FDA, LFI, SDI, forests, and Rima International, MoA communities</td>
<td>Forest cover restored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put in place institutional mechanisms to provide economic incentives and technical assistance for reforestation</td>
<td>ADHD should partner with international entities with comparative advantage in: Spatial mapping of forest areas based on tree cover, population data, and other relevant data layers</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>FDA, LFI, SDI, Fauna, and Rima International, MoA communities</td>
<td>Forest cover restored</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### KEY ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION 2: Habitat Destruction and Species Displacement, Disturbance, or Reduction

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<td>Identify partners with comparative advantage in areas indicated</td>
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### STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR IDENTIFIED PRIORITY SOCIAL ISSUES ISSUES

#### KEY SOCIAL CONSIDERATION 1: Corruption and Lack of Accountability with Logging Concessions

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<tr>
<td>Improve stakeholder awareness and participation in negotiating social and economic benefits from logging operations</td>
<td>Prior to intervention (two years)</td>
<td>FDA, LME, MoJ, NGOs, community private sector, development partners</td>
<td>Increased resources allocated to community forestry department</td>
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<td>Ensure compliance by all stakeholders with legal instruments</td>
<td>Prior to and during implementation (every two years)</td>
<td>FDA, LME, MoJ, NGOs, community private sector, development partners</td>
<td>Achievable action plan proposed for improving community participation and community outreach</td>
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<td>Assessment and analysis of lessons learned from interactions with affected communities after the first round of FMCs and TSCs that have been allocated</td>
<td>Prior to the start of any intervention</td>
<td>FDA, LME, MoJ, NGOs, community private sector, development partners</td>
<td>Outreach materials developed for the existing commercial operations i.e., TSCs and FMCs—should include information on benefits sharing, as well as the conservation areas</td>
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#### KEY SOCIAL CONSIDERATION 2: Transparency and Involvement of Local Community

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<td>Strengthen the capacity of communities to manage the forest resource for themselves (community forests), and to participate in the commercial and conservation activities</td>
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#### KEY SOCIAL CONSIDERATION 3: Improving Community Participation

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### POLICY ACTION MATRIX

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<td>Develop and implement a land use plan for the site in such a way that no two activities take place on same site at the same time; improve capacity of EPA to handle cumulative impacts when they occur</td>
<td>Immediately following the identification of the impact until the planning stage</td>
<td>EPA, FDA, LME, MoA, NPM, MoJ, community or local people</td>
<td>Submission of project specific Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)s noting other developments within the same project footprint</td>
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KEY ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION 3: Community Rights to Forest Land and Entitlement

**WHAT HAS TO BE DONE?**

- Ensure effective implementation of the CRL passed by Parliament on October 16, 2009.
- FDA reviews the CRL to ensure consistency with its policy and strategy, laws and regulations.
- Simple and appropriate guidelines should be formulated and disseminated to community forestry, as embedded in the 3Cs approach.
- Regulation is monitored by points and learning, not necessarily right away.
- Specific community outreach activities explaining the actual benefits expected to derive from the communites under the FDA.
- FDA develops a clearly articulated strategy on community forest management that outlines how this would relate to the other two C.
- The FDA should consider implementing “partnership agreements” for the conservation and community forestry sectors in the same manner as has been contemplated for the commercial C of the 3Cs.

**HOW SHOULD IT BE DONE?**

- Hermeslize definitions of community within the FDA policy and legislation to be in accordance with the CRL.
- Through consultation participation and disclosure for proper demarcation.
- Follow-up on regional consultations and regular fora for communication and exchanges between FDA, communities, and other stakeholders.

**WHEN SHOULD IT BE DONE?**

- Before any interventions.
- At regular intervals of 6–12 months.

**WHO DOES IT?**

- Community and all stakeholders.
- FDA, LME, MoJ, communities, private sector.

**INDICATIONS?**

- Clear and locally acceptable delimitation of boundaries for commercial operations and for conservation activities have been established.
- FDA works with stakeholders to develop and implement regulations that may be helpful for community forestry in accordance with its review of the CRL.
- Minimum level of land disputes.
- Guidelines and, if needed, regulations proposed and disseminated.

- Consultative meetings with communities and stakeholders.
- Undertake a legislative and policy review.

- FDA, LME, MIA, MIA, MoJ, Communities.
- CRC implemented.
- Legal and policy review undertaken by FDA and recommendations from the review implemented.
- Community sensitized to implications of the CRL.

**COORDINATION ACTIONS—AMONG GOVERNMENT ENTITIES**

- Number of trained FDA staff focused on community outreach.
- Improve performances in applying best practices.
- Improved monitoring and evaluation by community forest management committee in applying best practices.
- Assessment of needs at community level.
- Students taught with revised curricula.
- Number of FDA assessments to hold sites and student internship placements in the field.

**ADDITIONAL INSTITUTIONAL AND CAPACITY ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE KEY CONSIDERATIONS MENTIONED ABOVE**

**CAPACITY ISSUES**

**WHAT HAS TO BE DONE?**

- Training of forest management committee, FDA, and civil society in forest management, building on community management knowledge.
- Technical support for FDA to improve its skills and awareness raising in relation to community participation, interaction, and liaison.
- Undertake an assessment of the skill set that the CRL and the new forestry regime require of communities.
- Develop a community outreach program based on the findings of the assessment.
- Through short- and medium-term courses, workshops, and seminars.
- Provision of materials.
- Technical assistance from donors and development partners.
- Training for FDA staff and community students to include field visits, study trips, and secondment with development partners in the field.

**HOW SHOULD IT BE DONE?**

- Through short- and medium-term courses, workshops, and seminars.
- Provision of materials.
- Technical assistance from donors and development partners.
- Training for FDA staff and community students to include field visits, study trips, and secondment with development partners in the field.

**WHEN SHOULD IT BE DONE?**

- Prior and during implementation.
- Ongoing.

**WHO DOES IT?**

- Development partners, FDA, University of Liberia, the community, private sector NGOs, MME, development partners, etc.
- Numbers of trained FDA staff focused on community outreach.
- Improve performances in applying best practices.
- Improved monitoring and evaluation by community forest management committee in applying best practices.
- Assessment of needs at community level.
- Students taught with revised curricula.
- Number of FDA assessments to hold sites and student internship placements in the field.

**INDICATIONS?**

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**POLICY ACTION MATRIX**
## Policy Action Matrix

### Coordination Among 3Cs

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<th>How Should It Be Done?</th>
<th>When Should It Be Done?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a comprehensive land use plan for Liberia</td>
<td>Workshops, town hall meetings, radio talk show, through stakeholder analysis, through stakeholder setting, through meetings</td>
<td>Through assessments and plan should cover short (one to two years) and medium term (three to five years)</td>
<td>FDA and partners for community</td>
<td>Reports of workshops, reports of stakeholders meetings, copies of land use plan, copies of environmental guidelines for timber and NTFP harvesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building programs for FDA, CSO, and communities</td>
<td>Monitoring quarterly or bi-annually for meetings, workshops, and shows, through stakeholder setting, through meetings, through workshops</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>FDA, partners and community</td>
<td>Reports of workshops, reports of stakeholders meetings, copies of land use plan, copies of environmental guidelines for timber and NTFP harvesting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undertake intersectoral coordination and information sharing</td>
<td>Assessment of land use capability, coordination of FDA, MSEME, EPA, MoA, community, and other relevant stakeholders to produce a land use plan assisted by the appropriate specialists</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>CSOs, and communities</td>
<td>Reports of workshops, reports of stakeholders meetings, copies of land use plan, copies of environmental guidelines for timber and NTFP harvesting</td>
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<td>Undertake the SEA for timber and non-timber forest harvesting activities</td>
<td>Assessment of land use capability, coordination of FDA, MSEME, EPA, MoA, community, and other relevant stakeholders to produce a land use plan assisted by the appropriate specialists</td>
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<td>Production of environmental guidelines for the harvesting of timber and non-timber forest products</td>
<td>Assessment of land use capability, coordination of FDA, MSEME, EPA, MoA, community, and other relevant stakeholders to produce a land use plan assisted by the appropriate specialists</td>
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### Next Steps

The National SEA Workshop validated the priority issues and the action matrix, and it also identified the activities necessary as next steps for completing the SEA process. Those are highlighted below:

- **Capacity building programs for FDA, CSO, and communities:** There was a general recognition among participants of the need to increase capacity for all national stakeholders involved in the forest sector. The level of external experts’ involvement in all matters suggests limited internal capacity. This underscores the need for capacity building to ensure that stakeholder outreach for the forest sector is an achievable target. This will ensure national ownership of sustainable forest management processes in Liberia and guarantee practicality of achieving this vision.

- **Initiating forest dialogue platform:** A general consensus also existed on the need to establish a platform for stakeholder interaction and information sharing. Participants were unanimous about continuing the forest sector multistakeholder and intersectoral dialogue. A proposal was forwarded to establish a platform that will provide the medium to sustain forest sector engagements and assist in filling the information gap between community-based and Monrovia stakeholders. This will reduce the tension between government agencies and some communities and encourage mutual cooperation for sustainable natural resource management approaches that promote “public participation.”

- **Extend and continue stakeholder dialogue outside Monrovia:** The presentation on the SEA process to date highlighted how the process included regional consultations wherein community people from eight forest fringe communities of the country participated. The results of the regional consultations involving a cross-section of community residents is a key component of the scoping report, and issues identified during these processes are contained in the priority issues identified in the SEA process to date. These issues were confirmed by all participants at the SEA national workshop. Community representatives at the SEA workshop agreed that regular regional consultations would do more to raise awareness about forest sector initiatives as well as address early misconceptions in disseminating information about the sector at the local level.

- **Community benefits and community involvement:** The need to clarify “community benefits” was raised. Some participants also expressed concern that, to date, no mechanism has been developed between the FDA and the Ministry of Finance as to how “Affected Communities” will access their benefits under the law. Some participants, mainly representing NGOs, said they were baffled sometimes by the demands of communities in the name of benefits. They said their staff will be faced with the challenge of helping communities that benefit from livelihood initiatives outside the forest to recognize these as community benefits. There was a general consensus among NGO participants during this workshop of the need to quantify what constitutes community benefits and raise awareness among community dwellers about it.

- **Simplification and dissemination of laws and policies to communities:** During the workshop, it appeared that none of the community representatives present were aware of the Social Agreement Handbook that had been developed within the FDA. In most cases where social agreements have been signed with affected communities, the text of the agreement has been drafted well in advance of the formation of the CFDC, and communities are given less than 24 hours to read, comprehend, and sign. The case studies gathered at least one social agreement has been signed the same day of the formation of the CFDC. This situation may leave communities to the consequences—good or bad—of these social agreements, which, for an FMC, may have a lifespan of 25 years. Against this backdrop, there was a suggestion made that the FDA should be more
proactive in carrying out its work. During their group work on the forest outlook 2028, the FTA seemed to agree with this suggestion when they determined that public participation is Requirement #1 for achieving sustainable forest management. Key to this objective is disseminating forest sector information to communities in a simple, clear, and concise manner.

- Expanded SEA team to address the remaining emerging issues: This suggestion came about as a result of the desire of Monrovia participants to sustain the process beyond the SEA project end date. The details of how this will work out in practice could not be determined during the workshop, so the mechanisms for expansion were left to the current SEA team to figure out during their next meeting. From the plenary discussions, it was evident that the particular government agencies knowledgeable about the given issues will be invited to join the SEA team in carrying out these kinds of tasks.

REFERENCES

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE FOREST SECTOR IN LIBERIA
REFERENCES


This annex presents the results of the consultation process undertaken in eight counties in Liberia. This information forms the basis of the synthesis of issues that are common to all eight regions found in the main report.

**METHODOLOGY**

The inputs to the regional consultations were obtained from seven regional workshops conducted in Gbarpolu, Nimba, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Sinoe, and Grand Bassa counties. The workshop in Buchanan also included participants from Rivercess County; thus, input from eight counties was solicited overall. In addition to the regional workshops and introductory sessions with local authorities, a total of 29 informal grassroots level meetings were organized to facilitate the selection of group representatives to the regional workshops. These included four meetings (each) with women and youth groups, 16 town hall–style meetings, and 5 meetings with teachers and civil society groups. Six hundred and six persons participated in the informal meetings, while 216 persons participated in the workshops. In total, 242, or approximately 40 percent, of the participants were women. This was a direct result of the team’s effort to strike a gender balance during the field consultations.

In addition to regional workshops, informal meetings at the town level, focus group discussions, and meetings with key informants were held. Key informant meetings involved briefings with local authorities and others with a deeper understanding of the local context. Informal town hall–style meetings were used to present overviews of the SEA and facilitate the selection of grassroots representatives to the regional workshops. Focus group meetings with women, youths, elders, civil society groups, and teachers were organized to reach out to a broader segment of the population in each county. This was designed to ensure that the perspectives of the various groups were captured at the regional workshop. Issues raised in these informal meetings were documented to form part of the feedback from each region.

These tools took into consideration the most pressing and critical issues in each sector. For example, in terms of community forestry, the focus was more on issues to be considered during the drafting of the CRL, while discussions on commercial forestry focused on the potential impacts of resuming logging and what these meant for local communities. Discussions on each of these issues informed the others.

At each regional workshop, the team gave a detailed presentation of the SEA to establish the context for the workshop. Following the presentation, participants were divided into groups based on gender and age to discuss various topics using semi-structured questions. The questions presented were designed to be used as guides for the group discussions and to help facilitators probe participants for more reflective inputs. The groups then returned to plenary and presented their works. Questions and answers after each presentation were aimed at seeking clarification on the points in the presentation, emphasizing particular issues, or challenging or presenting a different perspective on a particular issue.

On average, 30 persons were invited to each regional workshop; at least 10 persons came from outside the provincial capitals or population centers where the workshops were held. The selection process was based on segments of the local population (including government officials), on gender, and on membership in a social or interest group (youth, women, civil society, etc.). Population size, accessibility, and the degree of dependence on the forest were the main selection criteria for towns from which grassroots participants were identified. These grassroots-level participants were selected by their peers during the informal grassroots-level meetings that preceded the workshops. Each workshop concluded with the selection of two participants to attend the presentation of the outcomes of the rural outreach at a national workshop that will be held as part of the SEA process.
COMMUNITY RIGHTS LAW (THEMATIC AREAS)

a. Vision setting and defining objectives: What are people’s expectations? What are the measurable and achievable targets for community forestry?

b. Community identity: What are the elements to be considered in the definition of community? Should it be based on town, clan, chiefdom, or district level? What should be the size of a community forest? Who should decide on the size?

c. Community powers and duties vs. role of FDA: What should the powers and duties of communities be? What role do they envision for FDA?

d. Institutional arrangements: What kind of structures or layers of authority should be used by communities to exercise their powers and duties? Who (or what levels/which institutions should exercise these powers and duties?) What will be their motivation (salary/honorarium/voluntary)?

e. Governance arrangements: How should communities exercise their powers and duties? What processes and principles should be applied (e.g., decision-making—rules and permits)?

f. Rights of individuals within the community: Rights of women, youths, families, strangers, etc.?

g. Forest planning and land use: What processes and principles should be applied for forest classification? Who should do what?

h. Transferable vs. nontransferable community powers/duties and rights: Should a community be allowed to contract third parties to provide technical support in the fulfillment of its duties? Which duties can be outsourced and which shouldn’t/can’t?

i. Conflicts: What should the roles of the justice system and alternative dispute resolution mechanism be?

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)

A. Commercial forestry or logging

a. Socioeconomic and livelihood: What is the general feeling of people about logging? Why do people feel that way? What needs to be done and by whom? General description of relationship with actors in the sector (FDA, loggers, etc.). Are forests important at all to the people? If so, how and why are forests important? What are the various activities in which individuals engage so as to earn a living? How do forests feature in livelihood strategies? Is there any relationship between food security and logging? Describe it. What are the impacts of logging on the food (at all levels) situation in the area? What are people’s expectations from logging or what are their experiences?

b. Environmental: Are there any changes in the natural environment, such as size of forest (reducing/increasing), quality (wildlife, loss of plants, including food and medicinal), temperature, or rainfall (patterns, intensity)? Are there any changes in the natural environment? Are there any changes in the natural environment?

c. Socioeconomic and livelihood issues: What is the general feeling of people about protected areas? Why do people feel that way? What needs to be done to address these concerns, by whom, and how? General description of relationships with other actors (FDAs, loggers, etc.). Are forests important at all to the people? If so, how and why are forests important? What are the various activities in which individuals engage so as to earn a living? How do forests feature in livelihood strategies? Is there any relationship between food security and logging? Describe it. What are the impacts of logging on the food (at all levels) situation in the area? What are people’s expectations from logging or what are their experiences?

B. Conservation or protected areas

a. Socioeconomic and livelihood issues: What is the general feeling of people in the area about protected areas? Why do people feel that way? What needs to be done to address these concerns, by whom, and how? General description of relationships with other actors (FDAs, loggers, etc.). Are forests important at all to the people? If so, how and why are forests important? What are the various activities in which individuals engage so as to earn a living? How do forests feature in livelihood strategies? Is there any relationship between food security and logging? Describe it. What are the impacts of logging on the food (at all levels) situation in the area? What are people’s expectations from logging or what are their experiences?

C. Mining

a. Socioeconomic and livelihood: How much of people’s livelihoods does mining account for? What is the general feeling of people in the area about mining? Why do people feel that way? What needs to be done to address these concerns, by whom, and how? General description of relationships with other actors in mining (small-scale and large-scale). Is mining having any impact on people’s relationships and their ability to feed themselves (availability and quality of farmlands)? What are the transboundary issues to be considered?

b. Environmental: Has anyone noticed any changes within the area as a result of mining activities? Quantity and quality of water in rivers and creeks?
The two consultation processes were to be executed around the same time and in the same regions; the SDI and FDA were going to play a central role in the two consultative processes. Concerns were voiced about too much information being “dumped” on communities; and - To ensure objectivity, this report and analysis is based on the factors described above, and the authors made considerable issues were raised.

Feedback to communities
Results of the consultations will have to be fed back to the communities in a carefully drafted user-friendly document. This will be a two-way process: analysis of field data will be packaged, taken back to communities, and discussed with participants in the villages covered by the consultation; and participants will have the opportunity to criticize such a document and ascertain that their views are largely represented.

Constraints and Limitations of the Study
A variety of reasons underlie the combining of the two consultation processes into one field consultation. The reasons were repeated at various meetings with stakeholders during the inception and early stages of the SEA process. The key factors considered included:
- The two consultation processes were to be executed around the same time and in the same regions;
- This was an opportunity to further demonstrate the new “integrated” or 3Cs approach to forest management;
- Combining the two processes would considerably reduce costs;
- Concerns were voiced about too much information being “dumped” on communities; and
- The SDI and FDA were going to play a central role in the two consultative processes.

Little consideration was given to the logistical challenges that merging the two processes would pose—that is, bringing the two processes together meant expanding the field team to accommodate other technicians from different agencies and ministries. For example, the CRL consultation was to be handled by the Sustainable Development Institute (SDI) and FDA, while the SEA consultation was to involve the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Ministry of Lands (MOL), MLME, and other agencies.

As a result of the merger, the number of persons participating in the field consultation was doubled. This raised the question of whether to maintain one team or divide the team into two. For practical reasons it was decided that the team be divided into two—more confusion would be created with eight persons trying to facilitate one meeting. But dividing the team also meant the products would not be the same. Even though we were to work from the same page, the varying level of understanding and appreciation of the tools adopted for the work could lead to slightly different presentations and documentations of the meetings; and indeed it did.

In summary, the single challenge of managing a process became the challenge of managing both a process and a team. The feedback from the communities was mixed. Readers should reflect on the results presented, bearing in mind the fact that each localized context, though similar in some respect to other places, has its own peculiarities; therefore, issues that appear to be the same were not necessarily raised in the same context. Second, the results should be reflected upon in their entirety; subjective interpretation may lead to very erroneous conclusions. The common example that is readily noticed throughout the presentation is the persistent question about the resumption of logging. Taken alone, this could be interpreted as pressure from the communities to resume logging. However, upon reflecting on it in the context of the other issues that were raised in all the regions, including marginalization and lack of benefits from logging, the picture that emerges is one of a need to restart logging in an environment that is different from what existed before. Therefore, to get a proper understanding of the issues, readers are urged to reflect on the full range of issues presented, taking full account of the context in which specific issues were raised.

To ensure objectivity, this report and analysis is based on the factors described above, and the authors made considerable effort to exclude their own interpretations.

D. Agriculture (rubber, palm and other plantations)
a. Socioeconomic and livelihood: What, if any, is the impact of rubber and other plantations on people’s land and livelihoods? What, if any, are the benefits people enjoy from established industrial tree plantations (rubber, palm, etc.)?
b. Environmental: Can anyone tell us whether tree plantations have any effect on the land (farmland, others) and forests? How do these plantations exert and exact their impacts?

The REGIONAL CONSULTATION IN GBARPOLU COUNTY
Introduction and Overview of the Process
This section summarizes the outcomes of the regional consultation for Gbarpolu County. It covers activities undertaken by the consultation team and presents an overview of the process followed and the issues raised in the region.

Gbarpolu County is situated in northwestern Liberia. It hosts parts of the Gola, Kpelle, and Lomma National Forests. The county hosts significant mining concessions and ongoing mining activities. This is mostly in the westernmost part of the county in the district of Kumbur; however, mining is widespread throughout the county. Significant land use conflict exists in the county, as nearly the entire county is considered a mining zone by the MLME. The county is also targeted by the FDA as one of the counties where the first round of logging contracts will be issued.

The regional consultation in Gbarpolu County ran December, 6-12 2007.

The Informal Consultative and Preparatory Meetings
The team convened informal consultative meetings with local authorities, youth, women’s groups, teachers, and elders in Bopolu City. Three grassroots-level meetings were organized in Sapplima, Tototouelle, and Fasu-la. A total of 115 persons participated in the consultation meetings; 21 were females. The consultations in Gbarpolu culminated in a regional workshop that was convened in Bopolu on December 10, 2007. A total of 36 persons, including a cross-section of citizens, residents, and local authorities, participated in the workshop. Ten women participated in the workshop.

The consultative meetings allowed community members to raise issues including concerns, questions, and suggestions gathered from the consultative meetings prior to the regional workshop.

THE BOPOLU REGIONAL WORKSHOP
The regional workshop was convened in Bopolu on December 10, 2007. Participants were selected by their peers during the informal consultative meetings with the women, youths, selected towns and villages, etc. Following the opening formalities, including prayer and self-introduction, the team leader gave a brief presentation on the SEA to establish a context for the workshop. The presentation was followed by a period of questions and answers.

Community Rights Law (CRL)
Following the period of questions and answers, participants were divided into four focus groups including women, chiefs and elders, civil society and youth, and local government officials and teachers. All the groups were given a set of questions designed to stimulate discussions under different thematic areas. These themes included elements of the CRL that had been discussed and agreed upon by members of the Community Forestry Working Group. The elements agreed upon included the vision and objectives of the CRL, factors to be considered when discussing community identity, community powers and duties, the role of FDA in the context of community-based forest management, etc. Each group discussed these issues at length and returned to plenary to report. The presentations from the various groups were then consolidated and are presented below.

A. Vision and objectives: What do you expect to see in this law? What are the key things you want in this law to address? What are your targets for community forestry?

The law should:
1. Guarantee that local people will benefit from logging and other forest uses
2. Guide the community today and tomorrow about how to manage the forest
3. Protect local people within the community
4. Provide for the protection and preservation (conservation) of the forest for the benefit and common good of all the people

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE FOREST SECTOR IN LIBERIA ANNEX 1
Community. The composition, members, and duties of the committee shall be as follows:

1. Community should be identified by the forest communities of the district.
2. The committee members can be elected for a period of time or a specific term.
3. The committee should also be responsible for natural resources development and management.
4. The committee should make periodic reports to the community people.
5. The committee members can be elected for a period of time or a specific term.
6. Institutions that the communities will work with are:
   - Forestry Development Authority (FDA);
   - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
   - Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA);
   - Ministry of Lands Mines and Energy (LME);
   - Ministry of Agriculture (MoA); and
   - NGOs.
7. Governance arrangements: How should communities exercise their powers and duties? What processes and principles should be applied (e.g., decision making rules and permits)?
   1. All powers of the community regarding forest resources management shall be vested in the community and the committee established by the community.
   2. Committees must be set and members elected to carry out community forestry activities.
   3. The community should set criteria to govern election of committee members and put them in place; these should include good character and property of value to be used as collateral.
8. Rights of individuals within the community: What are the rights of women, youths, families, strangers?
   1. be consulted before logging companies can operate in our forest
   2. be present or represented at all meetings relating to forests within the community
   3. get jobs with logging companies
   4. take part (especially women and women’s groups) in discussions relating to the forest, including the planning and implementation of forestry projects
   5. be a part of signing important documents on behalf of the community (representation to ensure transparency)
   6. compensation for damages to their properties as a result of companies’ activities or work
   7. carry on our own projects in the forest
   8. stop strange people from coming from other parts of the country to hunt in our forest, especially the Gios
   9. waive anyone’s benefits if he/she does not want to contribute to community work
   10. not sign agreements with other logging companies, as some of our citizens have done—this is bringing about confusion in our area

G. Forest planning and land use: What processes and principles should be applied for forest classification? Who should do what?

1. Forests are apportioned based on township level
2. Each township should be responsible to plan and manage their own forest resources along with FDA
3. The community will designate specific places for construction of infrastructures and will monitor the construction process of projects
4. Logging companies should build sawmills and minimize the exportation of round logs from the country
5. There should be no mining and logging in the same area at the same time in our forest
6. Members of the community must participate in forest and land use planning at all levels
7. Government should be actively involved, through the MoA, to reduce the misuse of the forest by shifting cultivation
8. There should be no farming in high forest, but only in fallow bushes and swamps

H. Transferable versus nontransferable community powers and duties: What powers, duties, or responsibilities can the community outsource to third parties?
1. Communities shall not unilaterally contract third parties to provide technical support to carry out some of its duties. They should do this in consultation with the FDA.
2. Community power to authorize operation in the forest should not be transferred to third parties.
3. No individual or community has the right to sell or lease land to anyone in the Bopolu District.

I. Conflicts: How should disagreements or conflicts between different groups (e.g., companies and community, FDA and company, FDA and community, committees and their community members, etc.) be dealt with?
Participants denounced bad leadership within the community and identified this as one of the key factors that lead to conflicts. The participants summarized their discussions as follows:
1. Committee members found cheating must be replaced and made to pay for the money or resources they misused
2. If they can’t repay, the person’s property should be seized
3. Before someone becomes a leader, he/she must be married and must have property
4. Transacted receipts must bear the signature of the concerned appointees
5. Conflicts between loggers and others and property owners or community, for example, failure to adhere to agreements and contracts, should be dealt with according to the law
6. Conflicts should be taken to appropriate authorities including the FDA for settlement

Issues relevant to the SEA
The session on the CRL was followed by group discussions on the elements of the SEA relating to commercial forestry, conservation, protected areas, mining, agriculture, and so on in the context of their relationship to the forest sector. The discussions focused primarily on economic, social, and environmental implications of each of these activities, drawing on their past experiences. The reports from the various groups were consolidated and are presented below:

Participants were asked to discuss the SEA in the context of factors (social, economic, environment, etc.) that will likely change as a result of logging and the expansion of protected areas. They were further instructed to identify issues or concerns associated with these and present recommendations on how these issues or concerns could be addressed.

A. Commercial forestry
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Logging creates and increases job opportunities for people.
2. Logging does not have negative impact on our food security. It helps to fertilize the bush.

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Waste of logs: logs are extracted and abandoned by logging companies.
2. Value addition: logs are not manufactured into finished products, but are taken out as round logs.
3. Forest loss: the forest is diminishing because there is no reforestation after logging. We fear that if logs are continuously cut without replanting, the community is put at risk.
4. Benefits: benefits from the forestry sector are not shared.
5. Marginalization of local people: there are no consultations with local people.
6. Diminishing commercial viability: good logs are gone. Big forest trees have been reduced due to repeated logging of the area. We do not get the kind of wood to make canoes, it is very hard to find them.
7. Induces migration of wildlife: animals migrate as a result of heavy equipment movement.
9. Pollution: water or creeks and rivers polluted as a result of logging.

B. Conservation or protected areas
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Mining improves our lives.
2. The idea is good to have a protected area.
3. Community people should take care of the park when created.
4. Anything growing in the park will be seen by children yet unborn. People will pay to enter the park.
5. It is beneficial for unborn generations, because when they are born they will still see some of the forest and benefit from it.
6. It helps the community to generate funds when people come to the area to work or see the area.
7. It can be a tourist center for people to come and pay money to visit the area.
8. Logging companies in the past stopped people from going in their concession area to hunt, fish, farm, etc., whenever they want to log there.

Recommendations:
1. The logging companies should do what the community wants them to do. This time there should be no false promises.
2. A contract should be made between each logging company and the citizens in the areas where they operate. This contract should be notarized.
3. Logging should come in the most positive and modernized way. No round logs should leave the area. All the logs should be processed in the area.
4. This time around, the FDA should enforce the law. The forest law is good, but good laws are made and sometimes not enforced by the agency responsible to do so.
5. When logging companies enter into agreements with the people, they should fulfill their obligations to the people. We sometimes made agreements with logging companies to provide some benefits to the community. However, whenever they reneged on such agreements, they used their connections with people high up in government to neutralize attempts to compel them to deliver on their side of the bargain.
6. Logging companies should not use their connections within government to suppress people in the rural areas. (“Our hopes and fears is that any agreement made when big hands are behind it the community cannot do anything to them”).
7. The logging companies in the past stopped people from going in their concession area to hunt, fish, farm, etc., whenever they want to log there.

B. Conservation or protected areas
Socioeconomic and livelihood issues and impacts:
1. There are no protected areas in Bopolu.
2. The idea is good to have a protected area.
3. Community people should take care of the park when created.
4. Anything growing in the park will be seen by children yet unborn. People will pay to enter the park.

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. It is beneficial for unborn generations, because when they are born they will still see some of the forest and benefit from it.
2. It helps the community to generate funds when people come to the area to work or see the area.
3. It can be a tourist center for people to come and pay money to visit the area.
4. It helps to provide continuous resources—for example, forest products—for the community.

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Reduced land areas for population. As population increases, the land will become smaller.
2. Protected animals or animals that are conserved can damage agriculture, especially rice farming. We always complain about this to the FDA.

C. Mining
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Mining can make people rich.
2. Mining improves our lives.
3. Mining creates and increases job opportunities for our children.

Negative economic, social and environmental impacts:
1. Landslides are associated with mining.
2. Mining destroys the farmland.
3. Mining is taking away farmland from us.
4. More people are involved in mining and not farming; this reduces food production.
5. Mining pollutes and destroys surface water.
6. Mining increases the prices of goods in the market.
7. Mining increases in the population because many miners come from outside of the community, and as a result criminal activities increase.
8. There are many illnesses, and incidences of illnesses are very high.
9. Mining destroys the forest and increases erosion, example, the Mano River landslide.
10. The relationship between miners and the community is not good due to unfairness and dishonesty. That is, miners have the tendency to cheat the community with regard to royalties they are supposed to pay to them, and because they communities don't have any legal authority over them they become vulnerable to the miners.
11. The miners don’t refill the holes they dig when mining.
12. After mining in an area, it is hard for crops to grow there anymore.
13. Mining destroys the land and the miners receive the benefit, while the majority of our people suffer and can no longer make farms there.
14. Miners get their permits from the MLME without consulting the local people, and there is no benefit for local people in these arrangements.
15. Not all people benefit from mining in the community.

Recommendations:
1. The miners should refill the holes they dig by putting the red dirt or soil from beneath back into the holes and then putting the top soil back on top.
2. Miners should consult with communities before mining and have mining permits from the government.
3. The existing laws should be enforced to regulate mining.
4. We want international investors to participate in the mining.
5. The government should put stop to illegal mining and petty mining.
6. The community should make sure that miners reclaim their old mines before they leave the area.

D. Agriculture plantations (palm, rubber, etc.)

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. It provides job opportunities
2. Plantation will reforest and keep the land intact

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Plantation can finish the original forest.
2. Plantation can finish our farming land.
3. We can’t eat rubber, but rubber is being planted by many people. In the future, if there is a scarcity of rice, there will be a crisis. “The day rice finish in Monrovia rubber will not be cooked as rice.”

Recommendations:
1. This entire situation must be changed. When logging starts, processing should be done and factories should be established here.
2. Factories should be built to create more jobs and reduce poverty in our community.
3. Every community should be represented at all meetings relating to forest activities.
4. If loggers cut our trees, they must replant.
5. The cutting of trees should be controlled.
6. Bridges should be made with culverts for the free flow of water.
7. Stop forest farming, especially by shifting cultivation in high forest areas.
8. Rights of individuals with deeds should be recognized and respected.
9. Suggestions made at this meeting should be in line with the constitution of the country.
10. No more log bridges; instead, there must be concrete ones.
11. CRL should be locally owned (i.e., it should be printed in the vernacular).
12. Local supply of timber by companies to be ensured.
13. No company can get involved in any other activity other than what they are entitled to do.
14. Any company carrying out mining and logging in the forest at the same time should have their licenses cancelled.

THE REGIONAL CONSULTATION—LOFA COUNTY

This section summarizes the outcome of the regional consultation process of the ongoing SEA of the Liberian forest sector and the CRL drafting process for Lofa County. It covers activities undertaken by the consultation team and presents an overview of the process followed and the issues raised in the region.

Lofa County shares the Lofa-Mano proposed protected area with Gbarpolu County. The North Lorma and South Lorma National Forests are also situated within the county. The county also hosts the Wologizi and Wonogoi proposed protected areas. Meanwhile, BHP Billiton has been issued a permit to carry out exploration activities in the region. This conflicts with the FDA’s categorization of the area, because no mining or exploration activities are allowed in proposed protected areas.


The Informal and Preparatory Meetings

The team convened informal consultative meetings with local authorities and a cross section of the residents, including youths, women, and elders in Zorzor. Two grassroots-level meetings were organized in Ziggida and Boi. A total of 73 persons participated in the consultation meetings; 24 were females. The consultations in Lofa culminated in a regional workshop that was convened in Zorzor City, the provincial capital of Zorzor District, on December 17, 2008. A total of 30 persons, including a cross section of citizens, residents, and local authorities, participated in the workshop. Ten women participated in the workshop.

The Zorzor Regional Workshop

The regional workshop was convened in Zorzor on December 17, 2007. Participants were selected by their peers during the informal consultative meetings with the women, youths, selected towns and villages, etc. Following the opening formalities, including prayer and self-introduction, the team leader gave a brief presentation on the SEA to establish a context for the workshop. The presentation was followed by a period of questions and answers.

Community Rights Law

Following the period of questions and answers, participants were divided into four focus groups including women, chiefs and elders, civil society and youths, and local government officials and teachers. All the groups were given a set of questions designed to stimulate discussion under different thematic areas. These themes included elements of the CRL that had been discussed and agreed by members of the Community Forestry Working Group. These included the vision and objectives of the CRL and its role to be considered when discussing community identity, community powers and duties, the role of FDA in the context of community-based forest management, etc. Each group discussed these issues at length and returned to plenary to report. The presentations from the various groups were then consolidated and are presented below.

ANNEX 1
A. Vision and objectives: What do you expect to see in this law? What are the key things you want in this law to address? What are your targets for community forestry?

1. Anything that belongs to our great-grandfathers belongs to us, including anything that is there (in the forest), under the ground, or over the ground.
2. Anything that belongs to our great-grandfathers belongs to us, including anything that is there (in the forest), under the ground, or over the ground.
3. Everybody should be equal before the law.
4. All violations should be treated in the same manner (when you spoil the law you pay).
5. The community forests will provide benefit for us.
6. The forest should be properly managed.
7. Local stakeholders should be involved in the management and protection of the forest.
8. Issues and problems facing the community should be discussed by all community members.
9. Community views must be taken into account by any interested party who wishes to undertake an activity in the community.
10. Leadership should be opened to all members of the community.
11. The community should have the right to accept or reject any concession for logging or mining.
12. Logging activities should be carried out in the community forest.
13. Restorations should be carried out after logging.
14. Some of the forest should be conserved.
15. Logging companies should provide health, education, and other services to the community.
16. Every logging agreement should be decentralized (i.e., the community should be involved).

B. Community identity: What is a community? How do you want us to define community? Should it be based on towns, clans, chiefdom, or district level? What should be the size of a community forest? Who should decide on the size?

1. A community is defined as the surrounding villages where groups of people live—districts, clans, chiefdoms, and towns.
2. The existing community customary boundaries should identify the size of a community forest.
3. Participants at the meeting suggested that a committee should be set up by seven towns (Ziggda Community Forestry) and noted that further that:
   a. Community can be defined by group of towns, district, or clans.
   b. Community can be defined by group of towns, district, or clans.
   c. Community should be based on large-scale farming
   d. Community should be based on large-scale farming
4. Community views must be taken into account by any interested party who wishes to undertake an activity in the community.
5. Community views must be taken into account by any interested party who wishes to undertake an activity in the community.
6. The district will decide the size of the community forest.

Following the group’s presentation, a question was raised about the security of family land plots that have been alienated by the investor. The question was phrased as follows: “If a certain area is given to a family by a group (community) and this family is based there for a long time, if the head of the family dies, can anybody just come and do anything there without permission from the family?” The unanimous answer to the question was “No.”

C. Community powers and duties vs. role of FDA: What should the powers and duties of communities be? What role do they envision for the FDA?

The powers and duties of the community should include the power to:

1. decide who is or is not a member of their community based on existing norms
2. punish all violators of the community norms
3. monitor activities in the forest
4. protect forest boundaries from encroachment
5. establish a committee to guide the forest and forest management team
6. The community should have the power to approve agreements
7. the power to stop any company from operating

The FDA should:

1. provide training for people in the community in conservation
2. allow community people to cut their own logs and make planks on their own
3. stop interfering with local people’s production of logs or sawn timber and their sale or use
4. collaborate with the district to manage the forest
5. ensure transparency in the awarding of concessions
6. ensure that there is an EIA before logging starts
7. work with the community (district) to develop the terms of reference before logging starts
8. make sure that logging is followed by reforestation projects: cut and plant

D. Institutional arrangements: What kind of structures or layers of authority should be used by communities to exercise their powers and duties? How will these structures be formed or organized? Who should exercise these powers and duties? What will be their motivation (salary/honorarium/voluntary)?

1. All agreed that the structure should be the democratic form, where people are elected for a given time.
2. Every community should establish a committee made up of trustworthy people.
3. Arrangements should be made with FDA to provide training.
4. Selection of committee members, by the community, should be based on the following: trustworthy, respectful, hardworking, responsible, and leadership experience.
5. The community should decide whether or not the members of the committee should be paid.
6. Arrangements should be made with the EPA to provide technical advice on the protection of the environment.
7. The community should establish a committee to manage whatever benefits they get from the forest(s).
8. The committee shall be comprised of:
   a. the office of the superintendent,
   b. the commission office,
   c. a member of the legislature,
   d. the chairman of the DDC,
   e. the youth chairman,
   f. the chief lady, and
   g. the investor.

Members of the committee will receive the following benefits for motivation:

1. Salary, which will be determined on the general salary structure and the availability of funds
2. Exemption from community work
3. Members to get honorarium
4. Payment is the company’s responsibility
5. Committee will decide the compensation of this entrusted group

E. Governance arrangements: How should communities exercise their powers and duties? What processes and principles should be applied (e.g., decision making rules and permits)?

1. Through the leadership of the committee or management team that has been democratically elected by the community.
The session on the Community Rights Law was followed by group discussions on the elements of the SEA relating to community outsource to third parties.

F. Rights of individuals within the community: What are the rights of individuals such as women, youths, families, and strangers?
Individuals (as members of the community) should have the following rights:

1. The right to vote.
2. The right to participate in elections.
3. The right to offer suggestions during community meetings or decision making.
4. Women should have rights equal to those of men (e.g., right to survival, dignity, etc.).
5. Respect for women; there should be no gender violence.
6. Individual rights will be protected in keeping with our constitution and other statutes.

G. Forest planning and land use: What processes and principles should be applied for forest classification? Who should do what?

1. Portion of the forest to be set aside for conservation, logging and farming.
2. Farming should be avoided in the community forestry planning.
3. Leave the forest alone and go to alternative areas, such as swamps or other lowlands.
4. Ancestral area should be maintained properly.
5. FDA and other agencies of government regulation should be followed by forest classification.
6. FDA, GR, MLME, Public Work

H. Transferable versus nontransferable community powers and duties: What powers, duties, or responsibilities can the community outsource to third parties?

Transferable powers and duties:
1. Powers or rights to punish offenders
2. Contracting of third parties
3. Requesting technical advice from others, such as preparing forest management plans
4. Community power to be transferred to a third party to provide technical support

Nontransferable powers and duties:
1. Law making powers to be left with the community, no government interference
2. Forest protection to be left with the community
3. The right to negotiate and review concession agreements

I. Conflicts: How should disagreements or conflicts between different groups (e.g., company and community, FDA and company, FDA and community, committees and their community members, etc.) be dealt with?

1. Justice system should be traditional.
2. Use the law to interpret the agreement.
3. Any dispute(s) arising from the operation of any company will be resolved through the justice system.

Issues relevant to the SEA
The session on the Community Rights Law was followed by group discussions on the elements of the SEA relating to commercial forestry, conservation, protected areas, mining, agriculture, and so on in the context of their relationship to the forest sector. The discussions focused primarily on economic, social, and environmental implications of each of these activities, drawing on past experiences. The reports from the various groups were consolidated and are presented below.

Participants were asked to discuss the SEA in the context of factors (social, economic, environment, etc.) that will likely change as a result of logging and the expansion of protected areas. They were further instructed to identify issues or concerns associated with these and present recommendations on how these issues or concerns could be addressed.

A. Commercial forestry
Positive economic, social and environmental impacts:
1. Logging companies provide jobs.
2. Some companies build roads, schools, and hospitals.
3. Logging is good because it provides jobs and incomes.

Negative economic, social and environmental impacts:
1. Depletion of forests: the forest is depleting; real forests are getting smaller.
2. Forest degradation: quality of forests reducing.
3. Habitat loss: wildlife habitat destroyed or reduced.
4. Loss of water resources: rivers are drying out together with creeks.
5. Transportation: logging trucks damage the road and make it difficult for small vehicles.
6. No or limited benefits: the companies take logs and give nothing in return to the communities.
7. Pollution of water: bridges built by logging companies (with logs and dirt) block creeks and cause them to not flow normally.
9. Bridges previously built by logging companies were not durable.
10. Logging has caused irregular rainfall patterns.
11. Logging has caused rising temperatures.
12. Logging has caused a reduction of wildlife and loss of plants.

The participants also summarized their expectations about logging:
1. Logging companies will construct better roads and build good schools.
2. Logging will provide job opportunity for people in the community and some cash benefits to the communities.

Recommendations:
1. FDA needs to expedite the processes so that logging can start.
2. FDA should make sure that loggers adhere to all the regulations.
3. No round logs should leave from here; the logs should be processed before they are taken out.
4. After logging an area, there should be reforestation; when you cut the log, plant another.
5. If a company is involved in logging, it should just do that.
6. Logging companies should build good roads.
7. The government should empower FDA to implement all rights, as we have suffered too long and because we want to now benefit from our forests.
8. Ensure cordial relationship between the community, FDA, and company.

B. Mining
Positive economic, social and environmental impacts:
1. Mining is good because it brings cash and employment.
2. Individuals within the community benefit from mining activities. They sell their minerals to earn money or get employment with mining companies.
Agriculture

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Tree plantations have no effect on the land. It is a good thing.
2. There is no plantation in our area.

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Because plantations occupy most of the farming areas, farm lands are getting smaller.
2. Agriculture destroys the forest.

D. Agriculture

The government should provide livelihood through:

Recommendations:
1. Miners should fill the holes after mining.
2. There should be demarcation of mining.

C. Conservation or protected areas

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Parks make money and create employment.
2. Protected area network is a fine idea.
3. Our children will learn tomorrow to keep our culture.
4. Government should empower FDA, Ministry of Information, Foreign Affairs, International NGOs, and NGOs to take care of the parks.
5. The communities and the FDA should have a mutual relationship.
6. Make strong laws and respect them.
7. Economic viability through foreign investment.

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Poor perception for conservation activities or protected areas.
2. Conservation activities deprive communities of their livelihood and income.
3. Small land spaces to make farms (expanding conservation areas reduce the land available for farming).

Recommendations:
1. The government should provide livelihood through:
   1. introducing fish ponds so that people can have an alternative to bush meat
   2. introducing lowland farming in order to move away from shifting cultivation, which is destroying the forest
   3. introducing microloans to help vulnerable groups engage in other commercial activities besides bush meat trade

THE REGIONAL CONSULTATION IN NIMBA COUNTY

This section summarizes the outcomes of the regional consultation process of the ongoing SEA of the Liberian forest sector and the CRL drafting process for Nimba County. It covers activities undertaken by the consultation team and presents an overview of the process followed and the issues raised in the region.

Nimba County hosts the East Nimba Nature Reserve (ENNMR) and the proposed West Nimba Reserve. These two areas are perhaps the last habitats for mountain gorillas in Liberia. The world’s largest steelmaker is set to reopen the old iron ore mines adjacent to the reserve. Furthermore, the company has the right to extract timber in its concession for use in its own work; there is no clear limitation as to whether this right extends to the protected or proposed protected area that falls within the concession. In addition to these issues, over the years, the county has hosted numerous logging companies.


The Informal Consultative and Preparatory Meetings

The team convened informal consultative meetings with local authorities, youth, women’s groups, and teachers in Sanniquellie. Two grassroots-level meetings were organized in the towns of Seihnkipa and Davoe. A total of 86 persons participated in the consultation meetings; 42 were women. The consultations in Nimba culminated in a regional workshop that was convened in Sanniquellie on December 17, 2007. A total of 31 persons, including a cross section of citizens, residents, and local authorities, participated in the workshop. Eight women participated in the workshop.

3.0 THE SANNIQUELLIE REGIONAL

The regional workshop was convened in Sanniquellie on December 17, 2007. Participants were selected by their peers during the informal consultative meetings with the women, youths, and selected towns and villages. Following the opening formalities, including prayer and self-introduction, the team leader gave a brief presentation on the SEA to establish a context for the workshop. The presentation was followed by a period of questions and answers.

4.0 THE COMMUNITY RIGHTS LAW

Following the period of questions and answers, participants were divided into four focus groups including women, chiefs and elders, civil society and youths, and local government officials and teachers. All the groups were given a set of questions designed to stimulate discussions under different thematic areas. These themes included elements of the CRL that had been discussed and agreed upon by members of the Community Forestry Working Group. These included the vision and objectives of the CRL, elements to be considered when discussing community identity, community powers and duties and the role of FDA in the context of community-based forest management, and so on. Each group discussed these issues at length and returned to plenary to report. The presentations from the various groups were then consolidated and are presented below.

A. Vision and objectives: What do you expect to see in this law? What are the key things you want in this law to address? What are your targets for community forestry?

The CRL should:
1. serve as the legal basis for ownership and use of forest lands and tribal lands
2. provide that communities be consulted and contracts be signed between companies and communities
3. identify the town chief as the focal person for contacts with logging companies and the FDA
4. address the issue of infrastructure development to ensure that roads, bridges, health, schools, water, etc. are provided by logging companies as part of their social responsibility
5. address the issue of damages to individual or community property as a result of logging activities
6. provide benefits to communities from logging activities
7. set aside a portion of land to be used as community forests
B. Community identity: What is a community? How do you want us to define community? Should it be based on towns, clans, chiefdom, or district level? What should be the size of a community forest? Who should decide on the size?
1. A community may be a town with people having the same laws and values.
2. A community should be defined on a town basis.
3. Every community should identify its community land or forest area.

C. Community powers and duties vs. role of FDA: What should the powers and duties of communities be? What role should be exercised by communities and the FDA?

1. Communities should have the following powers, rights, and duties:
   a. have the right to stop any community members or groups of people who may attempt to destroy reserves or protected forest areas
   b. initiate community awareness programs to educate forest communities about its policies and activities
   c. inform the community on a quarterly basis of the cubic meters of logs harvested during this period, as well as the income generated from logging activities
   d. advise on the management of forest resources for sustainable use
   e. have the right and power to arrest and report violators to the police
   f. deposit in to a community account in a reputable bank in the Republic of Liberia
   g. have the right to stop the construction immediately.
   h. can initiate community awareness programs to educate forest communities about its policies and activities
   i. can have the right to inspect road construction in its areas, and if it finds that the construction of roads and bridges are substandard, the community should have the right to stop the construction immediately.

2. The duties of the local authorities shall be to:
   a. To check on logging companies to ensure that its logging practices are in line with the forest regulations set by the FDA.
   b. To carry out reforestation and other good forest management practices.
   c. The members of the CDC shall be placed on salary.
   d. Tenure shall be five years with a maximum of one term.
   e. Select the best person for the position.
   f. The officers (town chief, quarter chief, community police, youth chairman, and elders).
   g. community police
   h. youth representatives
   i. elders

3. Two subcommittees shall operate at the clan and town levels. Every clan shall establish a Community Development Committee (CDC). The CDCs shall have a General Chairman and officials at each level.

4. Composition of these subcommittees at the clan and town level shall be as follows:
   a. youth representatives
   b. elder representatives
   c. women representatives
   d. concerned groups

5. These sub-committees shall be constituted and shall operate as follows:
   a. Through elections.
   b. Tenure shall be five years with a maximum of one term.
   c. Shall be qualified (not academic) but morally, have good standing with community members, honest, etc.
   d. The members of the CDC shall be placed on salary.
   e. Dismissal of officials shall be for cause or bad management practices.
   f. Dismissal shall be through petition from majority of the people in the community.

E. Governance arrangements: How should communities exercise their powers and duties? What processes and principles should be applied (e.g., decision making rules and permits)?

1. All power of the community regarding forest resources management shall be vested in the following:
   a. paramount chief
   b. clan chief
   c. town chief
   d. zone chiefs
   e. elders and opinion leaders, including youths and women
   f. district commissioners shall serve as ex-officios

2. The duties of the local authorities shall be to:
   a. protect or safeguard and regulate the use of the forest
   b. be the key decision makers regarding any commercial exploitation of the forests
   c. receive community benefits from those exploitations and report to the community within one week of receiving
   d. make monthly forest management report to the community at a mass meeting
   e. advocate for compliance to forest management laws
   f. have the right and power to arrest and report violators to the police
   g. advocate for safe working conditions and proper forest management

3. Establish that logging on private land should be agreed between the owner and the company.
4. Ensure that benefits from any natural resources be used to address development needs of the community.

D. Institutional arrangements: What kind of structures or layers of authority should be used by communities to exercise their powers and duties? How will these structures be formed or organized? Who should exercise these powers and duties? What will be their motivation (salary/honorarium/voluntary)?

Two competing suggestions emerged during the Sanniquellie workshop. One view proposed establishing Community Development Committees (CDCs) as the local institution to handle forest-related issues, while another view proposed the use of the existing local government structure with some modification to include youths and women.

1. Community forest management at the district level should be handled by a committee including the following local government officials and representatives from the following groups:
   a. district commissioner
   b. paramount chiefs
   c. clan chiefs
   d. zonal chiefs
   e. town chiefs
   f. quarter chiefs

2. The committee should establish a committee. This committee should be constituted and operate as follows:
   a. Members will be elected at all levels (town and clan levels), while local government elections will be organized for paramount chiefs and district commissioners.
   b. They exercise their powers in their respective offices as granted by the local government authority of the Republic of Liberia.
   c. Five percent of revenue generated from logging activities for communities will be used to compensate these officers.
   d. District commissioners shall serve as ex-officios.

3. The rights of individuals within the community shall include the following:
   a. Have the right to stop any community members or groups of people who may attempt to destroy reserves or protected forest areas.
   b. Initiate community awareness programs to educate forest communities about its policies and activities.
   c. Inform the community on a quarterly basis of the cubic meters of logs harvested during this period, as well as the income generated from logging activities.
   d. Advise on the management of forest resources for sustainable use.
   e. Have the right and power to arrest and report violators to the police.
   f. Advocate for compliance to forest management laws.
   g. Have the right and power to arrest and report violators to the police.
   h. Advocate for safe working conditions and proper forest management.

4. The rights of individuals within the community shall include the following:
A. Commercial forestry

- Participants were asked to discuss the SEA in the context of factors (social, economic, environment, etc.) that will likely change as a result of logging and the expansion of protected areas. They were further instructed to identify issues or concerns associated with these and present recommendations on how these issues or concerns could be addressed.

G. Forest planning and land use: What processes and principles should be applied for forest classification? Who should do what?

1. Land shall originally belong to the community and not transferable as such.
2. Every land-use agreement must meet the full approval of the community.
3. The process of demarcating or apportioning land spaces for specific usages should be participatory.
4. The needed land spaces included:
   a. agriculture land,
   b. reserved forest,
   c. inhabited land,
   d. industrial site, airport,
   e. recreational sites,
   f. garbage disposal sites, and
   g. public facilities sites.
5. The community shall lead and facilitate the selection and allocation of sites for specific purposes.
6. Government shall
   a. enforce the protection of these sites, and
   b. report any infringement upon any of such premises.

H. Transferable versus nontransferable community powers and duties:

Communities shall not unilaterally contract third parties to provide technical support to carry out some of their duties.

I. Conflict resolution

1. Conflicts come about when the companies fail to carry out development in the community.
2. If the companies change, there will be no conflict.
3. All conflicts should be settled through the law.

5.0 Issues Relevant to the SEA

The session on the CRL was followed by group discussions on the elements of the SEA relating to commercial forestry, conservation and protected areas, mining, agriculture, and so on, in the context of their relationship to the forest sector. The discussions focused primarily on economic, social, and environmental implications of each of these activities, drawing on their past experiences. The reports from the various groups were consolidated and are presented below.

Participants were asked to discuss the SEA in the context of factors (social, economic, environment, etc.) that will likely change as a result of logging and the expansion of protected areas. They were further instructed to identify issues or concerns associated with these and present recommendations on how these issues or concerns could be addressed.

A. Commercial forestry

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Creation or availability of markets: loggers empower women through business

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Exploitation and abuse of local populations: the companies are coming to exploit us again.
2. Destruction of properties without compensation: loggers will destroy our crops and villages and nothing will be done about it.
3. Exclusion and marginalization: government officials will not consult with villagers or communities about logging companies, and they will make decisions on behalf of the entire community.
4. Threats to livelihood: we depend on the forest for food and medicine, but the loggers can destroy these livelihoods. We also depend on the forest for the future.
5. Forced migration of wildlife: noise from logging equipment can drive animals away.
6. Negative social impacts: girls are influenced by money; loggers abandon them with pregnancies and babies. Loggers (men) create confusion in families.
7. Extinction of animal species: as a result of increase in hunting activities.
8. Depletion of forest resources.
9. Aridity of land as a result of the loss of forests.
10. Increase in the rate of evaporation of water from creeks and streams.

B. Conservation and protected areas

1. Because of protected areas there can be limited farming land.
2. Conservation and protected areas lead to increases in animal and tree species.
3. Protected areas conserve trees and animals species for future generations to see.

Recommendations generated in plenary:
1. All logging roads should be built or constructed in conformity with government standards.
2. Each harvested log shall be replaced by five planted trees.
3. Companies should be fined according to forestry law for destroying young trees or abandoning cut logs.
4. Qualified local citizens should be given first preference for employment.
5. Instead of 30 percent, the host community should benefit 40 percent of the revenue from logging.
6. Farmers whose crops or properties are destroyed in the process of forest exploitation shall be duly compensated in accordance with the law.
7. Logging companies should contribute significantly to the development or rehabilitation of roads/infrastructure in the locality of their operation.
8. Communities should be compensated for unavoidable environmental degradation.

Logging companies should do the following:
1. build good roads with iron bridges, not log bridges
2. build good health centers
3. provide compensation to victims of accidents on the job, destruction of crops and properties, etc.
4. construct houses with durable materials so that the communities can use these facilities when they leave
5. provide training to local unskilled laborers
6. establish factories such as sawmills in rural areas to provide more jobs and other benefits to the communities in which they operate

C. Mining

1. Mining accounts for few people’s livelihoods.
2. Mining destroys farmlands and drinking water because the miners use the streams and creeks to wash their gravel.
3. Mining only benefits a few members of the community.
4. The quantity of the forest is diminishing, and the quality is getting poorer.
Section 5: Small miners are always over shadowed by large miners, and this is because of their financial strength.

Section 6: Farmlands are destroyed by mining activities, which reduce farmers’ profits.

D. Agriculture

1. When people plant cash crops on their land, it provides secure ownership to the land.
2. Cash crops provide sustainable income.
3. Plantations provide economic benefits to owners and enhance social status.
4. Land planted with rubber trees remains fertile after the period of cultivation, unlike land on which sugarcane or oil palm has been planted.

Following the group presentations, some additional issues and questions were raised in plenary. These included the following:

Should the community or individual owner decide that no one can enter their forest—what should the law say?

Is it good to have the government come to you to ask for your inputs?

Yes, because it helps us to better understand the law when it is passed and to respect the rights of the country people. But this was not done in part, so this is good.

THE REGIONAL CONSULTATION IN GRAND GEDEH COUNTY

This section summarizes the outcomes of the regional consultation process of the ongoing Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Liberian forest sector and the Community Rights Law drafting process for Grand Gedeh County. It covers activities undertaken by the consultation team and presents an overview of the process followed and the issues raised in Grand Gedeh County.

The forest in Grand Gedeh is largely a corridor between the Sapo and Tai national parks in Liberia and Ivory Coast, respectively. The county hosts the Grebo and Gbi National Forests and part of the Krahn Bassa National Forest; it has hosted numerous logging companies in the past. The county sits at the border with Ivory Coast, and significant cross-border activities, including bush meat trade, affect the forest and conservation in the region.

The regional consultation in Grand Gedeh County ran February 22–28, 2008. The team convened informal consultative meetings with local authorities, the Zwedru City Corporation, youths, the Grand Gedeh Women Association for Peace and Development, and teachers in Zwedru. Two grassroots-level meetings were organized in the towns of Jarbah and Glaypal. A total of 91 persons participated in the consultation meetings; 27 were females.

The consultations in Grand Gedeh culminated in a regional workshop that was convened in Zwedru on February 28, 2008. A total of 30 persons, including a cross-section of citizens, residents, and local authorities, were involved in the workshop. Ten women participated in the workshop.

The Zwedru Regional Workshop

The regional workshop was convened in Zwedru on February 28, 2008. Participants were individually selected by their peers during the informal consultative meetings with the women, youths, selected towns and villages, etc. Following the opening formalities, including prayer and self-introduction, the team leader gave a brief presentation on the SEA to establish a context for the workshop. The presentation was followed by a period of questions and answers.

How will other pertinent issues not addressed in the thematic area, outlined in the presentation, be addressed?

Any outstanding issues can be discussed and documented.

FDA had previously held workshops addressing issues like these and recommendations were made; why are you again asking? What assurance is there that you would use the information gathered?

This workshop is intended to provide the necessary information to inform the drafting of the CRL and influence decision-making at the highest level.

What is the Community Rights Law and what does it say?

The National Forestry Reform Law 2006 contained just three paragraphs about community rights; it did not say much; but required the FDA to develop a comprehensive law within one year of the passage of that law; which is why we are here.

THE COMMUNITY RIGHTS LAW

Following the period of questions and answers, participants were divided into four focus groups including women, chiefs and elders, civil society and youths, and local government officials and teachers. At the groups were given a set of questions designed to stimulate discussion under different thematic areas. These themes included elements of the CRL that had been discussed and agreed upon by members of the Community Forestry Working Group. The elements agreed included the vision and objectives of the CRL, factors to be considered when discussing community identity, community powers and duties and the role of FDA in the context of community-based forest management, and so on. Each group discussed these issues at length and returned to plenary to report. The presentations from the various groups were then consolidated and are presented below.

A. Vision and objectives: What do you expect to see in this law? What are the key things you want this law to address? What are your targets for community forestry?

1. The government should make laws to protect the community forest.
2. The government should honor community laws and penalize those who break the community laws.
3. The company should meet with the elders and youths of the area before starting operations.

B. Community identity: What is a community? How do you want us to define community? Should it be based on towns, clans, chiefdom or district level? What should be the size of a community forest? Who should decide on the size?

1. Community members, including elders, should decide and determine the size of the community forest, depending on the total size of the community land.

C. Community powers and duties versus role of FDA: What should be the powers and duties of communities? What role do they envision for FDA?

The community powers and duties include the following:

1. We own the forest, therefore:
   a. representatives from the community should form part of or have shares in the company
   b. the community should monitor the activities of FDA and the companies
2. The community should cooperate with the logging companies and provide security for them
3. The community should tell the company where to build its camps

The role of the FDA should be:

1. encourage employment within the community
2. implement all plans of the community
3. encourage sustainable farming to avoid destruction of the forests and wildlife
4. give technical support to the community

Plantations provide economic benefits to owners and enhance social status.

Cash crops provide sustainable income.

When people plant cash crops on their land, it provides secure ownership to the land.
The steps in the process should be:

1. Identify the community land area including the forest
2. Survey the community land
3. Acquire deeds so that the community ownership of its land is secured

The FDA should identify the forest in conjunction with the community. FDA should survey and the community must obtain deeds.

H. Transferable versus nontransferable community powers and duties: What powers, duties, or responsibilities can the community outsource to third parties?

1. If communities lack the expertise, it is better to contract third parties to carry out some technical duties but management duties should be maintained.

I. Conflicts: How should disagreements or conflicts between different groups (e.g., companies and community, FDA and company, FDA and community, committees and their community members, etc.) be dealt with?

1. Bad leadership within the community must not be allowed, as this is one of the key factors that lead to conflicts.
2. Laws must be made, enforced, and consistent with the justice system.
3. Dispute resolution should also be done in line with positive traditional norms of the people in the area.

ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE SEA

The session on the CRL was followed by group discussions on the elements of the SEA relating to commercial forestry, conservation, protected areas, mining, agriculture, and so on in the context of their relationship to the forest sector. The discussions focused primarily on economic, social, and environmental implications of each of these activities; drawing on their past experiences. The reports from the various groups were consolidated and are presented below.

Participants were asked to discuss the SEA in the context of factors (social, economic, environment, etc.) that will likely change as a result of logging and the expansion of protected areas. They were further instructed to identify issues or concerns associated with these and present recommendations on how these issues or concerns could be addressed.

A. Commercial forestry

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Commercial forestry provides mass employment, economic empowerment, and an improvement in livelihoods.

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Local people were not consulted about logging in their area.
2. Logging companies did not pay attention to providing good roads, health care nor education facilities.
3. The forest is diminishing; the good logs have been cut and taken away.
4. Animals are disappearing.
5. Our rivers and creeks are polluted as a result of logging.
6. There is a low water level in rivers due to logging, also there is reduction of water in our water bodies due to blockings of the rivers.
7. The company staff spoiled our young girls with money and spoiled their school business; sometimes our children wear uniforms to go to school but they don’t go to school; they go and spend the whole day in the camp with the men.

Recommendations:
1. This time we would like to see concrete structures and good roads, concrete bridges, clinics, guest house, and payment of teachers by the company within the area of operation area.

D. Institutional arrangements: What kind of structures or layers of authority should be used by communities to exercise their powers and duties? How will these structures be formed or organized? Who should exercise these powers and duties? What will be their motivation (salary/honorarium/voluntary)?

The participants resolved that the community should establish a committee on a community basis to transact business on their behalf. The committee shall be arranged as follows:

1. Members of the committee and the leaders should be selected in a general meeting held by the members of the community.
2. The committee should exercise the powers and duties of the community to be granted to the community in the CRL on behalf of the community.
3. Committee members should serve on a voluntary basis.
4. Local officials should not be part of the community leadership committee.

Institutions that the communities will work with are:
1. Forestry Development Authority (FDA)
2. Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)
3. Ministry of Lands Mines and Energy (MLME)
4. Ministry of Agriculture
5. Environmental Protection Agency (EPAI)
6. NGOs

E. Governance arrangements: How should communities exercise their powers and duties? What processes and principles should be applied (e.g., decision making rules and permits)?

1. There should be equal representation of women, men, and youth.
2. The head of a community should be selected by all the people in the community.
3. Management duties and final decisions rest on the shoulders of the community members, not on the head alone.
4. The head has power to represent and not to make decisions for the group.
5. The head should inform the community of all meetings or transactions with other partners in a transparent way.
6. To be a head of the community should be based upon the accepted rules and existing laws of the land.
7. Women should not only be represented, but should be heard and their views respected.

F. Rights of individuals within the community: What are the rights of women, youths, families, and strangers?

Individuals (as members of the community):
1. Women should have the right to attend development meetings, have their voices heard in decision making, make their own farms, and be respected at all times.
2. Youth have the right to education (especially the girl child), opportunities, form associations, and have their voices heard.
3. Families and individuals have the right to organize and develop themselves (sporting activities), contribute to community development, and have the right to access community forest resources.
4. Strangers who live in the community for less than one month should not hold position or be a community leader; they cannot be a part of the management team except if they have spent a year or more in the area, attend community development meetings, contribute to the welfare of the community, and obey the rules of the community.
5. Strangers can enjoy other rights in the community like citizens—for example, the bush and other forest resources—and can establish a home.

G. Forest planning and land use: What processes and principles should be applied for forest classification? Who should do what?

The steps in the process should be:
2. Sawmills and logging camps should be built near the towns where the company operates so that the community can benefit.
3. The government should put a stop to all single-barrel shotguns and must specify period for hunting in the forest.
4. Community forest areas should be set aside for community use and have animal husbandry (piggery and fish pond, etc).

B. Conservation and protected areas
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Transform the socioeconomic life and community
2. Creates job and business opportunities
3. Opens avenue to interact with people from foreign countries
4. Exposes the community to new ideas and cultures
5. Give our future generations the opportunity to see those animals

Negative economic, social, and environmental issues:
1. Deprives people of sources of livelihood
2. People are stopped from farming, hunting and fishing in the protected areas
3. Reduces the land available for farming

Recommendations:
1. Sensitize people living near the protected areas
2. Provide educational facilities
3. Empower local people (e.g., microcredit) and create jobs
4. Government, civil society, and international partners provide funding and resource materials and carry out capacity building and implementation of the process
5. Provide alternative livelihoods

C. Mining
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Income for local people
2. Creates and increases job opportunities for community members

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Men have left the towns and villages, focusing on mining and not farming.
2. There are food shortages
3. Lack of farm land.
4. Poor yield after farming.
5. There is no safe drinking water; it causes the streams to go dry.
6. After mining, the soil is turned over and becomes unproductive for planting crops. As a result no one plants anything there and it continues to lay bare.

D. Agriculture plantations (palm, rubber, etc.)
Positive economic, social, and environmental issues:
1. Job opportunities
2. Economic empowerment
3. Red soil and palm kernel oil from palm plantation

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Affect the livelihood of the community members.
2. There will be no land for farming.
3. There will be food shortage.
4. Areas occupied by plantations cannot be used for rice farming or vegetable gardens.
5. Rubber, particularly, depletes the fertility of the soil.

THE REGIONAL CONSULTATION IN GRAND BASSA AND RIVERCCESS COUNTIES
This section summarizes the outcomes of the regional consultation on the ongoing SEA of the Liberian forest sector and the CRL drafting process for Grand Bassa County. The regional consultation in Grand Bassa covered both Grand Bassa and Rivercess counties. This section covers activities undertaken by the consultation team and presents an overview of the process followed and the issues raised in Grand Bassa County. The forest in Grand Bassa County is one of the most logged in the country. The county hosted the single largest logging company in Liberian history from 1989 to 2003. When logging ceased in the mid-1990s, the logging company TIMCO continued to operate in the region. The Oriental Timber Company also logged over most of the regions that had also been logged by other companies before its arrival. In addition to being excessively logged, the port in Buchanan records more than half of Liberia’s log export. Actual logging and export activities combined provide a backdrop against which discussions about forest and logging often take place.

The regional consultation in Grand Bassa County took place March 5-11, 2008.
Five meetings were organized in Grand Bassa and Rivercess Counties to facilitate the selection of participants to the regional workshop in Buchanan. These included meetings with youths and women’s groups, civil society actors in Buchanan, Bacconie Community in Grand Bassa, and Yarpah Town in Rivercess County. A total of 92 persons participated in these meetings, 49 males and 43 females. The regional consultation culminated in a regional workshop that was convened in Buchanan on March 10, 2008.

The Buchanan regional Workshop
The workshop in Buchanan was convened on March 10, 2008. A total of 30 persons participated in the Buchanan workshop. Of this total, eight were women. After the introductory session, a detailed presentation was given on the SEA. This was followed by brief informal remarks from the SEA focal persons in the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and the National Investment Commission. Hon. Quioh from the Ministry of Planning introduced and explained the concept of “fair-share” versus “equitable-share.” This he said was necessary given the different levels of expectation about benefit sharing from the forest sector. In his conclusion he urged communities to advocate for their fair share of benefits from the forest instead of equitable share. The NIC focal person urged participants to contribute meaningfully to the discussion.

Nora Gaye (Rivercess) and Bill Davis (Bassa) were chosen by their peers to attend the national workshop.

THE COMMUNITY RIGHTS LAW
Following the two speakers, the participants were divided into three groups comprised of youths, women and men leaders and participants from civil society. All the groups were given a set of questions designed to stimulate discussions under different thematic areas. These themes included elements of the CRL that had been discussed and agreed upon by members of the Community Forestry Working Group. These included the vision and objectives of the CRL, elements to be considered when discussing community identity, community powers and duties, the role of FDA in the context of community-based forest management, and so on. Each group discussed these issues at length and returned to plenary to report. The presentations from the various groups were then consolidated and are presented below.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE FOREST SECTOR IN LIBERIA

ANNEX 1
The community should govern itself as follows:

1. the communities get good roads and good hospitals as benefits from logging
2. communities get schools with proper management and trained teachers
3. the 30 percent for affected communities and counties be put into the bank pending its use
4. buildings for schools, clinics, and bridges be built with concrete
5. when logging companies come into our community, they build good road, bridges, schools, clinics, etc.
6. the FDA and the logging companies should manage the forest well
7. we get our fair share of benefits from logging, including employment for our community members
8. the rights of the people are made clear in the law
9. the community law be accepted and implemented by all the people

B. Community identity: What is a community? How do you want us to define community? Should it be based on towns, clans, chieftaincy, or district level? What should be the size of a community forest? Who should decide on the size?

1. The community should be identified at the district level.
2. The local community should decide on the size of the community forest.

C. Community powers and duties versus the role of FDA: What should the powers and duties of communities be? What role do they envision for the FDA?

The community should be law abiding. The community should have the power to:

1. negotiate with concession holders, companies, and the FDA
2. be the highest decision maker
3. put a stop to trespassing
4. monitor and manage roles of stakeholders
5. protect the forest from illegal activities and at the same time it has the duty to do so

The FDA should:

1. monitor and ensure compliance
2. work alongside the community
3. have local offices in the community
4. implement the forestry law
5. inform the people adequately on unfolding issues

D. Institutional arrangements: What kind of structures or layers of authority should be used by communities to exercise their powers and duties? How will these structures be formed or organized? Who should exercise these powers and duties? What will be their motivation (salary/honorarium/voluntary)?

1. The community should establish committees at the district level.
2. The committees should be set up by the community to manage community forest activities.
3. All relevant stakeholder (community, EPA, FDA, and Internal Affairs) should work together in the committee.
4. Members of the committee should be paid honoraria.

E. Governance arrangements: How should communities exercise their powers and duties? What processes and principles should be applied (e.g., decision making rules and permits)?

The community should govern itself as follows:

1. one person should be selected to represent each town in the district or community on a committee.
2. decisions should be made in consultation with the community.
3. the members of the committee should brief the community they represent regularly.
4. the committee members should be voted by the town they represent.
5. the community should operate democratically.

F. Rights of individuals within the community: What are the rights of women, youths, families, and strangers?

Rights of individuals within the community should include the following:

1. Rights to company social facilities
2. Rights to freedom of movement around the place where the logging is taking place to observe the company activities if they feel unhappy with activities
3. The right to report any illegal activities
4. Rights of women to be represented on the committee
5. Rights of women to equal representation on committee
6. Rights of women to air their view
7. Rights of youth to be represented on committee
8. Rights of youth to be heard
9. Rights of the family to community resources
10. Right to challenge decisions that will not benefit the community
11. Right of strangers to become community members after staying for a year and obeying the laws of the community can establish homes
12. Right of strangers to share in community benefits and to participate in community decision
13. Rights of individuals within the community based on our constitutional status and conventions that Liberia is a party of

G. Forest planning and land use: What processes and principles should be applied for forest classification? What should do what?

1. Communities know their boundaries (for example, when they brush the road, the two towns stop their brushing at the boundary).
2. There are no open spaces (or no man’s land) between towns or communities.
3. The community must make the decision about where logging and farming should take place.
4. Logging and mining should be done in different areas.
5. People should not farm in the forest. They should farm in the old farmland after the regular fallow period.
6. All the relevant stakeholder holders should participate in all the processes.

H. Transferable versus nontransferable community powers and duties: What powers, duties and/or responsibilities can the community outsource to third parties?

1. The FDA, EPA, and MLME should serve as a supporting arm for the community in the technical aspect to fulfill their duties
2. Financial matters and decision making cannot be transferred, e.g. decision making about the land are not transferable
3. Communities should be allowed to contract third parties to provide technical support in the fulfillment of its duties
4. Third parties can be brought in to provide technical support to the communities
5. The community can hire people to help them with their accounting and reporting

I. Conflicts: how should disagreements or conflicts between different groups (e.g., companies and community, FDA and company, FDA and community, committees and their community members, etc.) be dealt with?

1. The government and the community rights law should empower the FDA and the community committee to settle disputes.
5.0 ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE SEA

The session on the Community Rights Law was followed by group discussions on the elements of the SEA relating to commercial forestry, conservation and protected areas, mining, agriculture, etc. in the context of their relationship to the forest sector. The discussions focused primarily on economic, social and environmental implications of each of these activities; drawing on their past experiences. The reports from the various groups were consolidated and are presented below.

Participants were asked to discuss the SEA in the context of factors (social, economic, environment, etc.) that will likely change as a result of logging and the expansion of protected areas. They were further instructed to identify issues or concerns associated with these and present recommendations on how these issues or concerns could be addressed.

A. Commercial Forestry

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. It will improve the economic sector.
2. There will be good roads with concrete bridges, good hospitals, and good schools.
3. The company should build the camp on the road and not in the bushes anymore.
4. The company should build factories so that the locals can be employed.
5. Provides employment and income for community.

Negative social, environmental, and other impacts
1. Logging reduces our land for farming; we cannot farm in the concession area.
2. In the past, logging companies destroyed our crops.
3. Diminishes the fertility of the land.
4. Where ever the logging machine passes, it destroys the vegetation.
5. Logging companies can damage the roads (bad roads).
6. The logging camps have poor housing facilities and are built far away from the town, which means that when the logging company leaves the facilities cannot be used by the community.
7. The bridges built by the logging companies are made of logs (poor bridge construction).
8. Logging companies were supposed to build clinics, but they did not do so, and as a result health facilities are lacking in the area.
9. Secret burial of employees in the bush camps by the logging companies.
10. The chiefdom does not have the listing of all those employed by the company working in the area.
11. No death benefits are paid by the logging companies to family members.
12. In the past they government took some land by force and give it to logging companies.
13. Commercial forestry causes a reduction in forest size.
14. Migration of animals.
15. More rain than ever before.
16. Logging companies did not provide benefits to the communities, including schools and clinics, even though they promised that they would provide those benefits.

Recommendations:
1. There should be good consultations and a consultative working relationship between the FDA, the loggers, and the community.
2. Properties destroyed by a logging company should be paid for by the company.
3. Women must be employed in unskilled jobs and jobs that they are knowledgeable of.
4. There should be separate land for farming and for logging.
5. We want to see logging activities going on now.
6. Should logging companies start logging, the concession agreement should be between the government (FDA), the company, and the community.
7. People are willing and happy for logging to start, but companies should address environmental concerns and benefits.
8. Government (National Investment Commission (NIC), FDA, etc.) should bring investors to invest in the forest sector and ensure environmental protection and benefits.

B. Conservation and Protected Area

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. People in the area feel good about conservation.
2. Sometimes communities decide that certain areas should not be farmed, people should not hunt there, and certain animals should not be killed. Because of these traditional values or taboos, conservation of those areas is good.
3. The strength of the community is in its tradition. Conservation help keep the strength of the community by promoting respect for those traditions.

Recommendations:
1. The government should ensure that our traditional values (listed above) are respected.
2. The traditional laws of the protected areas should be respected and observed to the letter.

C. Mining

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Mining brings economic benefits to the area.
2. Mining brings empowerment (financial).

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. There is less availability of farmland.
2. The land loses its quality to produce, because of diminished fertility.
3. Pollution of our water.
4. Forced relocation due to the lack of safe drinking water.

D. Agriculture (Rubber, Palm, etc.)

Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Employment opportunities.
2. Increase in income for those employed.
3. Health care for employees.
4. Schools for employees’ children.
5. Recreation and entertainment.

THE REGIONAL CONSULTATION IN RIVER GEE COUNTY

This section summarizes the outcomes of the regional consultation process of the ongoing SEA of the Liberian forest sector and the CRL drafting process for River Gee County. It covers activities undertaken by the consultation team and presents an overview of the process followed and the issues raised in River Gee County.
River Gee, like Grand Gede County, is considered a critical corridor (on the southern side) between Tai-Sapo complex. The relatively small population and the bad road conditions have had positive outcomes for forest cover in the region. River Gee is the most forested county in Liberia. The bad road conditions particularly challenge logging companies and slow logging activities for most of the year. Very small portions of the forest have been converted to plantations.

The law should:

- to plenary to report. The presentations from the various groups were then consolidated and are presented below.
- the context of community-based forest management, and so on. Each group discussed these issues at length and returned
- discussed and agreed by members of the Community Forestry Working Group. These included the vision and objectives of
- designed to stimulate discussion under different thematic areas. These themes included elements of the CRL that had been
- and elders, civil society and youths, and local government officials and teachers. All the groups were given a set of questions
- Following the period of questions and answers, participants were divided into four focus groups including women, chiefs
- issues such as “How will local government be represented in the workshop?” are not presented.
- The Fishtown Regional Workshop

The workshop in Fishtown was convened on February 28, 2008. Participants were individuals selected by their peers during
- informal consultative meetings with the women, youths, selected towns and villages, etc. A total of 30 persons partici-
- consultation culminated in a regional workshop that was convened in Fishtown on February 28, 2008.

Issues including concerns, questions, and suggestions gathered from the consultative meetings prior to the regional work-
- were consolidated and presented below. Procedural questions such as “How will local government be represented in the

The Community Rights Law

Following the period of questions and answers, participants were divided into four focus groups including women, chiefs
- and elders, civil society and youths, and local government officials and teachers. All the groups were given a set of questions
- to stimulate discussion under different thematic areas. These themes included elements of the CRL that had been
- discussed and agreed by members of the Community Forestry Working Group. These included the vision and objectives of
- the CRL, elements to be considered when discussing community identity, community powers and duties, the role of FDA in
- discus
- role do they envision for the FDA?

C. Community powers and duties versus role of FDA: What should the powers and duties of communities be? What
- role in regard to use of the forest.
- Communities should establish laws that the committee will use as a working tools.
- These laws should cover credibility, accountability, transparency, penalty, etc.
- The community has the right to manage the forest.
- Negotiations for contractual agreements between logging companies and government should start from the local
- The community should have the power to agree or disagree on the use of the forest.
- The community should have concrete agreement with the logging companies before the logging companies can enter the forest.
- The community should be empowered to monitor the activities of the company operations in the forest.
- Community should manage their own forest.
- 12. Community should manage their own forest.
- 13. Logging companies wishing to log should come and meet the community members before starting logging.

The role of FDA should include the following:

1. Provide training to community in the area of forest management
2. Enforce law and make sure that all logs cut by company should be used and not be abandoned
3. Give the average size of a log before it is cut (e.g., 65 to 70 cm diameter)
4. Replant trees
5. Provide and conduct regular awareness on the forest uses
6. Train CBOs to carry on awareness on the forest uses
7. Regularly confer with the community for the betterment of our community
8. Ensure that the following are put in place: Clinic, School, Better Road, Good Water, Bridges
9. Ensure that logging companies pay the community for damaged logs left behind

The Community Rights Law

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- and elders, civil society and youths, and local government officials and teachers. All the groups were given a set of questions
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8. Ensure that the following are put in place: Clinic, School, Better Road, Good Water, Bridges
9. Ensure that logging companies pay the community for damaged logs left behind

B. Community identity: What is a community? How do you want us to define community? Should it be based on
towns, clans, chiefdom, or district level? What should be the size of a community forest? Who should decide on the size?

1. Communities are composed of towns, clans, and chiefdoms.
2. Our identity starts from the clan level and goes up to the district level.
3. Communities should have district forests.
4. Citizens should decide on the size of the community forest.

C. Community powers and duties versus role of FDA: What should the powers and duties of communities be? What
role do they envision for the FDA?

1. The community owns the forests.
2. The community should be consulted before any company can operate the forest.
3. The community should be responsible for making decisions about the forest.
4. The community should set up a committee, which should represent the community in exercising their powers and
role in regard to use of the forest.
5. Communities should establish laws that the committee will use as a working tools.
6. These laws should cover credibility, accountability, transparency, penalty, etc.
7. The community has the right to manage the forest.
8. Negotiations for contractual agreements between logging companies and government should start from the local
level with the people in the community.
9. The community should have the power to agree or disagree on the use of the forest.
10. The community should have concrete agreement with the logging companies before the logging companies can
enter the forest.
11. Community should manage their own forest.
12. Community should be empowered to monitor the activities of the company operations in the forest.
13. Logging companies wishing to log should come and meet the community members before starting logging.

The role of FDA should include the following:

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4. Replant trees
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6. Train CBOs to carry on awareness on the forest uses
7. Regularly confer with the community for the betterment of our community
8. Ensure that the following are put in place: Clinic, School, Better Road, Good Water, Bridges
9. Ensure that logging companies pay the community for damaged logs left behind

D. Institutional arrangements: What kind of structures or layers of authority should be used by communities to
exercise their powers and duties? How will these structures be formed or organized? Who should exercise these
powers and duties? What will be their motivation (salary/honorarium/voluntary)?

1. The community should set up a committee that will include women, elders, youth, and students.
2. The committee should be elected by the community.
3. The community should help the committee members with small salaries for their work.
4. The leadership of the community is nongovernmental (should not be part of the government).
5. The youths, elders, women, and CBOs should form part of the committee.
6. The committee should report to the community through the chairman monthly.
7. The committee should represent the community in signing any document on behalf of the community.

E. Governance arrangements: How should communities exercise their powers and duties? What processes and principles should be applied (e.g., decision making rules and permits)?
1. The community should sit among themselves and elect their own leaders comprising of women, elders, youth, and students.
2. Woman, elders, youths should exercise their power in managing the forest resources.
3. Women should have the right to participate in the decision making of the forest sector.
4. Women, elders, and youths should come together in making decisions.

F. Rights of individuals within the community: What are the rights of women, youths, families, and strangers?
1. Community members should have the right to employment, training, etc.
2. The rights of individuals should be in accordance with the constitution.

G. Forest planning and land use: What processes and principles should be applied for forest classification? Who should do what?
1. The new forestry law should be respected.
2. Stakeholders should make sound decisions on the use of forest land.
3. Forests should be classified based on district level.
4. The affected towns within the district should be most consulted.
5. In towns or areas where logging companies will operate, the companies should consult with the community’s committee, established to work on behalf of the community to locate suitable areas for the company to establish its camp.
6. Any forest that is not permitted by the community to be used by any company should not be used.
7. Government should protect the communities’ rights in the use of their forest and land.
8. No farming should be allowed in the national forest.

H. Transferable versus nontransferable community powers and duties: What powers, duties or responsibilities can the community outsource to third parties?
We agree that a third party should be allowed. However, we cannot outsource the contractor negotiation.
1. Community should involve FDA, EPA, and others to plan and implement decisions pertaining to the forests.
2. The community or individuals should not sell land to outsiders, but rather strangers should be allowed to use the community land when they live there.

I. Conflicts: how should disagreements or conflicts between different groups (e.g. Companies and community, FDA and company, FDA and community, committees and their community members, etc.) be dealt with?
1. Both the community and company should set up a committee to probe into the conflicts when they arise.
2. A mediation committee should be set up comprised of women, elders, youths, companies, FDA, and others.
3. Criminal cases should be handled by the courts.
4. Committee members found cheating should be removed and punished to serve as deterrents for other committee members.
5. The FDA should be called upon to investigate conflicts between the community and logging company.

Issues relevant to the SEA
The session on the CRL was followed by group discussions on the elements of the SEA relating to commercial forestry, conservation, protected areas, mining, agriculture, and so on in the context of their relationship to the forest sector. The discussions focused primarily on economic, social, and environmental implications of each of these activities, drawing on their past experiences. The reports from the various groups were consolidated and are presented below.

Participants were asked to discuss the SEA in the context of factors (social, economic, environment, etc.) that will likely change as a result of logging and the expansion of protected areas. They were further instructed to identify issues or concerns associated with these and present recommendations on how these issues or concerns could be addressed.

A. Commercial forestry
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Logging brings development and economic empowerment.
2. Our people will get employment and earn income.
3. Children will have schools, hospitals, etc.
4. Logging companies help to build feeder roads, schools, etc.
5. The roads will be maintained.

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. It destroys farms and engages most of our productive farmers.
2. The size of the forest is diminishing.
3. The quality is lower, and some of the wildlife are no longer found.
4. Some of products we got from the forest are not found today.
5. Children did not employ our children.
6. Did not build clinics, schools, water and sanitation systems, better camps.
7. Gently decrease our wildlife by hunting.
8. Direct economic benefit to the community.
9. Rainfall pattern and seasons are changing.
10. In the past, logging companies built bad roads.
11. Pollute the creeks, rivers and streams.
12. Destroy crops.
13. Teenage pregnancy.
14. Interfere with our culture rights such as zoe-bush.
15. Decrease our wildlife by hunting.
16. It also is increasing the hunting activities in the community.

Recommendations:
1. We want logging to start now.
2. Logging companies should fix our roads and bridges with concrete.
3. They should build concrete camp houses.
4. Citizens should have share in the logging.
5. Logging companies should build schools, hospitals, churches, and a good water and sanitation system.
6. Agreements that are signed between the community and logging company must be honored, because this will prevent conflict.

B. Conservation and protected areas
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts of protected areas:
Recommendations:
1. Future generations will benefit from forests.
2. When the forest is protected, the way people can kill animals will be limited.
3. Community people support setting aside forest reserves for future generations.
4. Government and community should agree to set aside forest areas for future use.

Negative economic, social and environmental impacts of protected areas:
1. Animals from the reserve will destroy farm crops and human lives.
2. Movement of people will be restricted in the reserve area.

Recommendations:
1. FDA should carry on awareness programs about protected areas and protected animals.
2. FDA, NGOs, and communities should have a strong law to protect the forests and wildlife.
3. We need to protect the areas and still be able to support the peoples’ livelihoods.
4. We want the animal and plant species to increase and be protected.
5. FDA should find a way to protect the community from wildlife populations in the reserve.
6. Community people should take care of the resources from the forest for future development and improvement.

C. Mining
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts of mining:
1. Increased financial strength
2. Good jobs and increased self employment
3. Employment for the youths
4. Business can be good
5. Employees of companies will socialize with the community

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts of mining:
1. Mining can spoil farmland and undermine food production.
2. Most people turn away from agriculture.
3. It reduces our farming areas by creating holes on the land.
4. It pollutes the water by dumping waste into streams and rivers.
5. It destroys the trees and reduces the quality of the forest.
6. It discourages our youths from going to school.
7. Only miners are benefiting from mining.
8. It destroys marriage between couples.
9. It transfers diseases from other countries (spread of STDs, STIs).
10. Small and illicit miners do not recover most of the minerals, therefore contract should be given to an investor for improved mining.
11. It reduces forest land.

Recommendations:
1. Employees of companies will socialize with the community
2. Community should be cautious by apportioning land for plantation; people should not establish plantations anywhere they want.
3. There should be improved farming practices for sustainable land management.
4. Community should be cautious by apportioning land for plantation; people should not establish plantations anywhere they want.

THE REGIONAL CONSULTATION IN SINOE COUNTY
This section summarizes the outcomes of the regional consultation process of the ongoing Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEAs) of the Liberian forest sector and the Community Rights Law drafting process for Sinoe County. It covers activities undertaken by the consultation team and presents an overview of the process followed and the issues raised in Sinoe County.

Sinoe County hosts the Sapo National Park, the country’s largest protected area. Over the last few years, miners and hunters have entered and occupied the park. The county also hosts several mining settlements; it shares the Gbukon Gedeh mining region with Grand Gedeh County. This region is said to hold the largest known gold deposit in Liberia. Mining and logging have occurred side-by-side in the county for about three decades now.

The regional consultation in Sinoe lasted from February 29 to March 6, 2008.

The Informal Consultative and Preparatory Meetings
Informal, grassroots-level meetings were organized in Sinoe to facilitate the selection of participants to the regional workshop in Greenville. These included meetings with youths and women’s groups and local government officials in Greenville, as well as Bannah Wortah Township and Panama. A total of 64 persons participated in these meetings, 36 males and 28 females.

The regional consultation culminated in a regional workshop that was convened in Greenville on March 5, 2008.

The Greenville Regional Workshop
The workshop in Greenville was convened on March 5, 2008. Participants were selected by their peers during the informal consultative meetings with the women and youth groups, selected towns and villages, and so on. A total of 30 persons participated in the Greenville workshop. Of this total, 12 were women. Following the opening formalities, including prayer and self-introduction, the team leader gave a brief presentation on the SEA to establish a context for the workshop. The presentation was followed by a period of questions and answers.

The Community Rights Law
Following the period of questions and answers, participants were divided into four focus groups including women, elders, youths, and others (local government officials, teachers, civil society). All the groups were given a set of questions designed to stimulate discussion under different thematic areas. These themes included elements of the CRL that had been discussed.
and agreed upon by members of the Community Forestry Working Group. These elements included the vision and objectives of the CRL, elements to be considered when discussing community identity, community powers and duties, the role of FDA in the context of community-based forest management, and so on. Each group discussed these issues at length and returned to plenary to report. The presentations from the various groups were then consolidated and are presented below.

A. Vision and objectives: What do you expect to see in this law? What are the key things you want this law to address? What are your targets for community forestry?

The law should:
1. protect the community forest to benefit the community and future generation
2. provide that there should be incentives for the community when they allow logging companies into their area
3. provide that logging companies wishing to log in a community should meet with the community dwellers before going to the government
4. establish community rights to ensure protection of the forest
5. provide that logging will be accompanied by reforestation
6. provide for proper management of the forest resources
7. ensure that people should abide by the law by establishing string punishments for those who do not abide by it
8. for many years logging companies have been logging here and there is no tangible benefit to show for it; the development from logging revenue (schools, hospitals, roads, etc.) should reflect the value of logs extracted from our forest

B. Community identity: What is a community? How do you want us to define community? Should it be based on towns, clans, chiefdom, or district level? What should be the size of a community forest? Who should decide on the size?

1. Community is equal to a clan.
2. Community owns the forest and so should decide on the size of community forest.
3. The size of the community forest should be based on the size of the community. (Community forest should be based on district)
4. Community forestry should be based on the size of the community.
5. The size of the community forest should be 50 percent of the forest within their area.
6. The size of community should be based on ownership (infrastructures, inheritance, towns).

C. Community powers and duties vs. role of FDA: what should the powers and duties of communities be? What role do they envision for FDA?

1. The community owns the forest.
2. The community-dwellers should decide on the size of their forest.
3. Power belongs to the community.
4. The community should be in charge of management and protection of the forest.
5. The community should decide how community forest should be controlled or maintained.
6. The community should ensure that locals are available at all times to take part in meetings.
7. The community should provide local resources/manpower as further contribution to community development projects.
8. Community should exercise their powers and duties for the benefit of the community people.

The FDA role should include:
1. formulating laws for the management and protection of the forest
2. holding consultations on forest usage
3. informing the community on any irregularity in the forestry sector
4. assist the community in securing the forest and proper management of the forest
5. help to educate the community members on forest management

D. Institutional arrangements: What kind of structures or layers of authority should be used by communities to exercise their powers and duties? How will these structures be formed or organized? Who should exercise these powers and duties? What will be their motivation (salary/honorarium/voluntary)?

1. The community should manage its forest at the clan level.
2. We should have incentive for the elected people (serving on committee).
3. We decide how much to pay them.
4. Members of the community should receive honoraria once there is money coming in from logging in their area.

E. Governance arrangements: How should communities exercise their powers and duties? What processes and principles should be applied (e.g., decision making rules and permits)?

1. Community must unite and work together to manage the forest.
2. A special committee on forest management should be set up and composed of chairman, co-chairman, etc., and include FDA.
3. The community must elect their own leaders to take care of forest-related activities.
4. We should have incentives for the elected people (honoraria).
5. We should decide how much to pay them.
6. A community committee, to be known as forest management committee, should be set up at the clan level.
7. Members shall be drawn from the clan, FDA, EPA, and conservation groups.
8. Established/elected committee must be respected.
9. People on the committee must be God-fearing.
10. They must be accountable.
11. The committee should be accountable to the community in that the community will make law that will govern the committee.
12. The committee should be established by vote.
13. The committee should use consultative, regular meetings and voting to make decisions.

F. Rights of individuals within the community: What are the rights of individuals such as women, youths, families, strangers?

1. Rights of individuals within the community shall be on the basis of the individuals’ rights as enshrined in the constitution.
2. Women must have the right to attend meetings to decide on community issues.
3. Women’s views should be respected.
4. All humans in the community should enjoy equal rights.
5. All should abide by the rules and regulations of the community.

G. Forest planning and land use: What processes and principles should be applied for forest classification? Who should do what?

1. Decision that will emuluate from the Governance Commission should be the guiding principles.
2. Land use planning should involve stakeholder including the community, EPA, FDA, MLME, Agriculture, and Internal Affairs.
3. Women should participate in land use planning.
4. Land use planning should be based on district level.
5. Mining and logging should not be done on the same piece of land at the same time.
6. Community alone will not make decision that will affect the forest or environment.
7. Women must have the power to give go-ahead in forest operations just as the men.
8. The community should plan on what to be done with the community forest.
9. The community should survey their forest with FDA assistance.
10. The community should set aside forest to include portion for reforestation, tourism, farming, etc.

H. Transferable versus nontransferable community powers and duties: What powers, duties or responsibilities can the community outsource to third parties?
1. Communities should be allowed to contract third parties to help carry out some of their responsibilities.
2. Technical contract with specialized work can be outsourced, but ownership cannot be outsourced.
3. Lawyers or legal personnel should work with communities to draw up contractual agreements between the logging companies and the community.
4. The community should manage its share of the revenue for the benefit of the people.

I. Conflicts: How should disagreements or conflicts between different groups (e.g., companies and community, FDA and company, FDA and community, committees and their community members, etc.) be dealt with?
1. Any committee member that is found to be corrupt must be punished.
2. Pay fine or go to jail.
3. People with strong minds should be on the committee to settle conflict.
4. For minor cases involving the community and a company, the two groups should constitute a committee to handle them.
5. Enforce the laws and set up special conflict mediation committee in the community.

Recommendations: The law should be strong so that the communities get:
1. Better schools
2. Paved roads
3. Concrete camps (houses) so that the community can use them when the logging companies leave
4. Sawmills and plywood factories for more jobs
5. Concrete bridges instead of log bridges
6. Children’s playgrounds
7. Church buildings

Issues relevant to the SEA
The session on the CRL was followed by group discussions on the elements of the SEA relating to commercial forestry, conservation and protected areas, mining, and agriculture in the context of their relationship to the forestry sector. The discussions focused primarily on economic, social and environmental implications of each of these activities; drawing on their past experiences. The reports from the various groups were consolidated and are presented below.

Participants were asked to discuss the SEA in the context of factors (social, economic, environment, etc.) that will likely change as a result of logging and the expansion of protected areas. They were further instructed to identify issues or concerns associated with these and present recommendations on how these issues or concerns could be addressed.

A. Commercial forestry
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts of logging:
1. It provides job opportunities (employment).
2. It helps in the national development drive (e.g., road construction).
3. It improves peoples’ lives.
4. It empowers people.
5. It provides salaries that can be used for:
   a. Buying sufficient good food
   b. Sending children to good schools
   c. Sending families to good hospitals
6. It improves our socioeconomic and living conditions, or provide resources to improve our living conditions.

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Logging undermines food production.
2. Forest quality and value are reducing, there are less valuable trees and some forest products such as wild fruits and nuts are not easily accessible today.
3. Loss of wildlife.
4. Logging companies exploit the forest unsustainably.
5. Rainfall pattern is changing, erratic climate condition.
6. The quality and quantity of water in rivers and streams have dropped.
7. Logging can scare away animals.
8. The forest will be finished if there is no replanting.
9. In the past there was:
   a. No consultations with the local communities
   b. Whenever we asked, we were told that they the loggers have already spoken to the Big people
   c. Very few of our people were employed
   d. No good road infrastructure
   e. No good health care
   f. No better school system
   g. No churches

Recommendations:
1. Logging companies should abide by the new forestry law.
2. Make law to address new issues.
3. FDA should buttress law enforcement more.
4. FDA should bring improvements to logging activities and create awareness within the community on the laws.

B. Conservation or Protected Areas
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Forest products—trees and animals will be protected
2. Very good business
3. Law will prevent hunting and farming in protected area
4. Conservation of our animals
5. Good water resources will be intact
6. Employment
7. Building of schools
8. High medicinal values

Negative economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Decrease in farmlands

Recommendations:
1. FDA should coordinate and monitor the activities of local and international NGOs in the conservation aspect.
2. FDA should set rules.
3. FDA and government need to enforce their powers, because there are illegal miners in the Sapo National Park.
4. FDA should help to protect the forest in consultation with the community.
5. There should be good working relationships between the community, FDA, international NGOs, and Liberian NGOs.
6. Government should reinforce FDA capacity.
7. Community people capacity should be built.
8. Community relationship with the FDA/INGOs is far, but needs to be improved.
9. There is a need for a partnership between the community and FDA in protecting the park.
10. Discourage the illegal mining of the park and Butaw oil Palm Company area.

C. Agriculture (Rubber, Palm, other plantations)
Positive economic, social and environmental impacts:
1. Provides job and income opportunities.
2. Provision of more food workers earn salaries and use that to buy food to feed their families.
3. It provides social services including schools and clinics.

Negative economic, social and environmental impacts:
1. Takes away more of forest lands
2. Makes farming difficult by its occupation of large areas of land
3. Suppresses local farming
4. Threatens food security
5. Depletes the land
6. Forest value lost as result of plantations

D. Mining
Positive economic, social, and environmental impacts:
1. Mining is a good thing because it brings self-employment and group employment.
2. People hire their own group to do mining for them.
3. Large miners provide social services.

Negative economic, environmental and social impacts:
1. It destroys the forest (trees are uprooted).
2. Soil is turned around.
3. Pollutes water.
4. Spoils land (local loses fertility).
5. Pits are dug and holes left behind.
6. Destroys forest.
7. Destroys animals as hunting increases.
8. Hunger in the area because few people are engaged in farming.
9. Turning soil around and blocking of water changes soil quality and quantity (e.g., pollution of surface water).
10. Use of chemicals poisons ground water.

Recommendations:
1. Mining should be mechanized and controlled.
2. The government should enforce the mining and conservation laws to deal with violators.
3. FDA, MLME, EPA, MOA, etc. should coordinate activities involving mining, whether small- or large-scale, in forest area.
4. The community must agree before mining.
5. There must be strong mining law.
6. MLME should ensure that mining laws are respected by all.
7. Laws should be implemented.
8. Statutory institutions including MIA, FDA, MLME should enforce mining laws.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The regional consultation process was meant to inform two interrelated processes, SEA and the drafting of the CRL. This section summarizes the key points that stakeholders should bear in mind in association with these processes.

As stated above, the feedback from the communities was mixed. It is important that those using the information presented in this report keep in mind that the local contexts, though similar in some respects, have their own peculiarities; therefore, issues that appear to be the same were not necessarily raised in the same context. Also, the results should be reflected upon from a broader perspective. Subjective interpretation may lead to erroneous conclusions. One example that stands out throughout the report is the persistent question about the resumption of logging. Taken alone, this could be interpreted as pressure from the communities to resume logging; however, if reflected upon in the context of the other issues that were raised in all the regions, especially marginalization and lack of benefits from logging, the picture that emerges is one of a need to restart logging in an environment that is different from what existed before. Therefore, to get a proper understanding of the issues, readers are urged to reflect on the issues presented while also taking full account of the associated issues that are presented.

The key issues—including benefit flow to the community level, lack of technical capacity at the local level, and the meaningful involvement of local populations—will have the greatest impact on the implementation of the forest policy and the national forest management strategy. All of these issues are critically important, considering that failure to address one will have serious consequences for the sector, even if the others are addressed. While communities strongly recommended a central role for themselves or a more meaningful involvement in the sector, they also acknowledged the capacity constraints they face. They see their involvement as the primary means through which their issues will be addressed and their interests protected. Therefore, their recommendations should not be neglected because of capacity constraints.

Concerns about bad leadership at the community level were raised. This was identified as one of the key factors that led to community-level conflicts in the past. Hence, strict rules on corruption should be adopted and high standards of accountability developed to safeguard community involvement in the sector. Proposals presented by the people themselves that are aimed at addressing these issues, including greater transparency, full and active democratic participation of the different segments of the population, adherence to the rule of law, are essential. They are a reflection of a new wave of thinking at the local level; this was summarized accurately by one participant: “I urge the women to take this workshop very seriously, because time around there is no more ‘that the Monrovia people think’ or ‘when we say it what will happen?’ This time it is for everybody to participate and they will be heard.”

Because these are all linked to high expectations at the community level, they should be discussed with their long-term implications for forest governance and management borne in mind.

In summary, the key points relevant to the drafting of the CRL are as follows:

- Forest communities now have well-developed notions of ownership and control of their lands.
The new law will have to accept or reject these notions in unambiguous terms. This is a critical and strategic choice that has to be made, and failure to do so could lead to conflicts driven by the uncertainties and the economic interest now associated with timber extraction on private lands.

Communities have high expectations that the new law will protect their rights against commercial logging companies and preclude the negative impacts they associate with commercial forest operations.

There is a need for the CRL to deliver on the objective of meaningful community involvement in the forest sector; participation, accountability, equity, and transparency are critical elements of this concept.

In summary, the key points relevant to the implementation of an integrated 3Cs forest policy and the SEA are:

- The issue of arrear salaries will likely reemerge as soon as commercial logging activities start, and unless clear policy decisions are made on this point and these are communicated to the affected communities, this could become a source of conflict.
- There is an overall lack of awareness among forest communities of the implications of the new forest management regime. This is evidenced, for example, by their lack of knowledge of the mechanics of benefit sharing as laid down in the new forest legislation.
- Although political and social interest in participating in forest management is high at a community level, there is little technical capacity. This could potentially create problems, not only when community interests are to be represented in negotiations between communities and logging companies on the social agreements to be entered into, but also in relation to the third C—community forest management.
- Forest communities view commercial logging as the sole indicator of economic value or activity in the forest sector and believe that to derive economic benefit from the sector they need to be involved in commercial logging. This focus on commercial logging at a community level is at odds with the stated policy of an integrated 3Cs approach to forest management, and it is clear that if a 3Cs policy is to be successfully implemented, additional awareness raising in terms of the new policy—as well as explanations of the practical implications of conservation and community forestry—are necessary.

Adhering to principles of transparency and participation, this is a consolidated list of all of the issues raised in the SEA process to date. It has been drawn up and provided to the SEA team and key stakeholders from within the FDA, EPA, and other key agencies and ministries for deliberation and prioritization in line with the above-referenced objectives of the SEA. This prioritization will be the subject to an initial prioritization workshop on June 26, 2008, and subsequently published for comment in the scoping report. During the comment period members of the SEA team will interview key stakeholders to obtain their input on the initial set of prioritized issues. Prior to the finalization of the scoping report the full SEA team (i.e., the core members from the FDA and EPA as well as those from other key ministries) will reevaluate the prioritized issues in light of the survey results.

For ease of presentation the issues have divided into four thematic areas that correspond to the four situation assessments plus an area on emerging issues:

1. Social
2. Economic
3. Environmental
4. Legal and institutional
5. Emerging issues in the forest sector

For the current ranking of issues the stakeholders involved were given the following instructions:

1. Read the entire document first, as some issues may be captured under different headings from what you one might expect.
2. Review the complete list of issues and indicate in the columns on the right of the table whether or not a particular issue is strategic.
3. Add any issues that you feel are strategic, as defined above. Please include a brief explanation of why you feel the additional issues are strategic in nature.
4. After the initial review and the identification of issues you find to be strategic, return to the list and indicate the top three issues in each of the six groups that are most important from a strategic perspective. Include a brief rationale for your choice.
5. At the same time, indicate the three issues in each of the six groups that you feel are least important from a strategic perspective. Include a brief rationale for your choice.
**BANKING QUESTIONNAIRE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>STRATEGIC V</th>
<th>STRATEGIC X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>A combination of certain economic, institutional, and environmental issues are presented under this heading, as they have the potential to define future interactions between these local populations, commercial forestry operators, government in general (and the FDA in particular), and nongovernmental organizations will occur, and those interactions could have either have negative or positive consequences for socially equitable forest management.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Community awareness of the new integrated forest law, regulations and policy is very low. In general, there is relatively little awareness of the details of the new forest legislation and policy and (for example, the details surrounding the extent of community benefits available, and how those benefits will be delivered).</td>
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<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>S3 Community-level leadership, accountability, transparency Forest communities expressed concerns about poor leadership at the community level in previous dealings with logging companies. Under the new forest management regime, strict rules on corruption should be adopted and high standards of accountability developed to guide the local committees that would administer the community interactions with commercial logging interests and contracts.</td>
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<td>S4</td>
<td>Consultation and benefit sharing High expectations exist at the community level that they will be consulted regarding future logging contracts, and that future agreements on providing community benefits and benefit sharing will be binding on the logging companies. Many stakeholders noted that the previous distribution of benefits from forest operations was not done equitably and stated that they hoped for an improvement under the new forest management policy.</td>
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<td>S5</td>
<td>Cultural impacts of developments in the forest sector These include impacts on the Sande and Poro.</td>
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<td>S6</td>
<td>Delay in logging Some stakeholders have felt that the delays in restarting logging operations is causing economic hardship due to lack of direct employment and lack of infrastructure development (specifically roads and bridges), which has increased the cost of transportation. One community stakeholder said there is a perception that commercial logging will alleviate poverty in rural areas and thereby decrease discontent and corrupt political stability. It is clear that there is an overarching view of a &quot;need for forest revenue.&quot; While this has been acknowledged by virtually all stakeholders, a small number have questioned whether or not some of this pressure is related to political patronage. Despite the reforms in the forest sector, one baron noted that the people own the forest and everything in it. This could indicate a growing local political rejection of sustained forest management.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S7</td>
<td>Expectations concerning financial benefits from commercial logging There is a pronounced belief that logging operations will commence, this is linked to the expectation of financial benefits logging operation could bring.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S8</td>
<td>Focus in the community on commercial forestry There is an extremely strong bias, at the community-level, in favor of logging as the preferred option for forest use. The notion of an integrated 3Cs approach to forest management is unknown at community level. Conservation is recognized as a potential option for forest management, but the idea of community-based forest management as a policy or management system is unknown at community level.</td>
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**SOCIAL ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>STRATEGIC V</th>
<th>STRATEGIC X</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S9</td>
<td>Pressure on the commercial &quot;C&quot; There are strong political, economic, and social pressures for commercial forestry to restart, and these pressures are evident at all levels of government.</td>
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<td>S10</td>
<td>Ownership and settlement Communities have felt marginalized and excluded under the previous forest management policies. The regional consultation showed evidence of an increasing claim of rights, summed up in this sentiment: &quot;We own the forest and everything in it.&quot; This could indicate a growing local political rejection of continued marginalization once forestry operations begin under the new forest policies. Given the increased awareness of the details surrounding land ownership and a growing political awareness, forest communities are a blaring rights and objecting to what they see as top-down approaches from the government and FDA (examples of Sine and Nimba park boundary and Garblu recent altercation with FDA).</td>
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<td>S11</td>
<td>Settlement of disputes arising out of logging contracts Community-level conflicts with logging companies, other interests, property owners, or community members should be dealt with according to the law. Conflicts directly related to the forest should be taken to appropriate authorities including the FDA for settlement.</td>
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<td>S12</td>
<td>Technical capacity Community members claim to be more involved in the decision-making process, although there is recognition of the need for increased technical capacity at a local level. Communities feel strongly felt that their interests should not be neglected because of capacity constraints.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S13</td>
<td>Types of benefits shared between communities and logging companies Community benefits from logging contracts should include both direct benefits from employment as well as improved infrastructure (roads and bridges). Communities insist that any infrastructure should be better than that provided under previous contracts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S14</td>
<td>Unpaid salary arrears Forest communities expressed strong views that the unpaid arrears in salaries for forest workers should be paid before additional logging contracts are issued in their areas. In some instances, communities felt that the government should play an active role in resolving this issue and even be responsible for payment of arrears.</td>
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**SOIAL ISSUES**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>STRATEGIC V</th>
<th>STRATEGIC X</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S15</td>
<td>Are there additional social issues that you feel are nicht missed from a strategic perspective to the successful implementation of Liberia's integrated 3Cs forest policy? If so please list in the space below. Be sure to include a motivation why you feel those issues are strategic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S16</td>
<td>What are the top three strategic issues from a social perspective? Be sure to include a motivation why you feel these issues are strategic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S17</td>
<td>What are the least three important strategic issues, from a social perspective? Be sure to include a motivation why you feel those issues are NOT strategic.</td>
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**Banking Questionnaire**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Economic Issues</th>
<th>Strategic V</th>
<th>Strategic X</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>Diminishing commercial viability of the forest</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Forest communities believe that the overall economic value of the forests has declined and that the commercial viability of forests is diminishing. This was summed up as “all the good logs are gone and the forest trees have been reduced due to repeated logging of the area.”</td>
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<td>E2</td>
<td>Economic expectations among forest communities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Forest communities have high expectations regarding the amount and type of jobs that they would derive from the commercial logging industry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>Economic value of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) not recognized</td>
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<td>At the community level there is little appreciation for the economic value of NTFPs or the possible restrictions to NTFP collection posed by protected areas and/or logging concessions. There was no explicit acknowledgment that NTFPs are also a source of economic benefits from the forest (e.g., purification, pollination).</td>
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<td>In areas where issues related to hunting and/or the bush meat trade were raised, it was in the context of negative practices that needed to be curtailed and not positive economic opportunities that could or should be properly exploited.</td>
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<td>Forest communities view commercial logging as the sole forest economic activity with economic value, and feel that any economic benefit from the sector must be derived through involvement in commercial logging.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>At an institutional and policy level, there has been relatively little work done on NTFPs, and there are no estimates of the importance of NTFPs to the household, local, or national economy—or whether there is a regional trade in NTFPs. There has been relatively little development of markets nationally or internationally for NTFPs, although they are important (but economically not quantified) in local markets.</td>
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<td>E4</td>
<td>Economic policy issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The distribution of benefits to communities is different in forestry sector from that undertaken in the mining sector.</td>
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<td>E5</td>
<td>Employment in the forest sector:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>There is a high expectation from forest communities that commercial forestry operations will bring employment and thus increased real income to the rural areas. This expectation is also present among stakeholders in Monrovia, many of whom feel that the forest sector will lead to the revitalization of the rural economy. Additional employment-related issues identified include dealing with the large number of former logging workers that are still unemployed and who pose a potential source of discontent and conflict. Employment opportunities for ex-combatants are also an issue that should be addressed in the SEA.</td>
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<td>E6</td>
<td>Forest Policy issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Little recognition at community or institutional levels of the nature or extent of benefits that could or should be enjoyed by the communities from the “other two Cs” — conservation and community forestry.</td>
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<td>E7</td>
<td>Local value addition</td>
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<td>Strong calls exist for there to be local value addition of cut timber; communities see this as a key element to ensuring that additional local economic benefits from commercial forestry.</td>
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<td>There are two complimentary perspectives. On the one hand, local value addition has the potential to create more jobs, and on the other hand local people will benefit from finished products such as sawn timber. The general perception is that if logging companies diversify into processing at the local level, it will create more jobs and increase their income earning potential. The issue of value addition was brought up during the regional consultations and by stakeholders in Monrovia, many of whom feel that the forest sector will lead to the revitalization of the rural economy. Additional employment-related issues identified include dealing with the large number of former logging workers that are still unemployed and who pose a potential source of discontent and conflict. Employment opportunities for ex-combatants are also an issue that should be addressed in the SEA.</td>
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<td>Management of forest revenues</td>
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<td>Some stakeholders noted that the expectation regarding the increase in benefits that should be passed on to the community under the new forest policies.</td>
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<td>Community expectations were that the forest sector will lead to the revitalization of the rural economy. Tourism, recreation, and other forest-related activities would provide economic benefits to the community.</td>
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<td>Forest communities were commercial logging as the sole forest economic activity with economic value, and feel that any economic benefit from the sector must be derived through involvement in commercial logging.</td>
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<td>At an institutional and policy level, there has been relatively little work done on NTFPs, and there are no estimates of the importance of NTFPs to the household, local, or national economy—or whether there is a regional trade in NTFPs. There has been relatively little development of markets nationally or internationally for NTFPs, although they are important (but economically not quantified) in local markets.</td>
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A defining characteristic of the legal and institutional issues that have been noted in the SEA process is that many relate to the drafting of the legislation governing community rights to forest lands. In part this is a reflection of the importance of this piece of legislation in its own right, and in part it is a reflection of the decision to consolidate the respective community valuation processes for both the SEA and the CRL. The full list of issues relating to the community rights issue can be found in the separate report on the regional consultation process.

Capacity issues

Some stakeholders questioned whether or not the FDA had the “field capacity” to implement and enforce the new forest laws and regulations.

Some stakeholders felt that FDA capacity still needed to be built for it to be able to implement its new mandates, especially with regard to logistical support in law enforcement and in the area of community forest management.

With regard to the FDA’s new mandates, some stakeholders noted that more work needed to be done to distinguish between a managerial function that the FDA could have over logging on private land and a law enforcement function.

Some stakeholders within the FDA and conservation sector have noted that there is a need for additional donor coordination to ensure that the limited technical capacity available within the FDA can be accessed across multiple donor initiatives.

Stakeholders within the FDA have noted that there is an ongoing need for capacity building within the FDA and a need to fund such activities. There has, however, been little done thus far on the strategic identification of capacity gaps, and it has been suggested that this ought to be one of the goals of the SEA to identify what type of capacity building needs to take place and where it should be done.

Community Rights Law and Land Tenure

The key points arising from the regional consultation process in relation to the community rights law indicate the belief among rural communities that they “own the forest and everything in it”, and that the CRL needs to recognize this and respect local people and their land rights.

Forest communities believe that they should be involved in decision-making affecting the management of forest reserves, have a say in commercial forest operations, and have tangible benefits from commercial forestry operations in their areas. There is a strong movement toward the democratization of decision-making processes and a rejection of an old-style top-down management approach. The final outcome of both the CRL and the forest management law is to have major implications for the relationship between the FDA and the forest communities and the way that forests are managed. These issues will be addressed in the assessment report of the SEA.

Coordination across government

It is clearly articulated by virtually all stakeholders that there needs to increased coordination between FDA, DRI, the MNA, and the MUNE. What is less clear at this point is what is the appropriate mechanism or mechanisms for this improved coordination would be. This is an area that will require more attention in the balance of the SEA. Examples that illustrate the need for increased government coordination include:

- Logging and mining on the same tract of land
- Separation of mining claims holders from that of forest concessions holders
- Competition between a variety of different government agencies for land proposal as protected areas
- The issuance of tax clearance certificates as part of the prequalification process where another agency in which additional coordination and cooperation were needed between the FDA and the Ministry of Finance
- Multiple uses of NUNE, FDA and DRI need to be coordinated to avoid conflicts on different land use options—including Wildlife, Lake Foya, Parks in Sierra
- Forest land use conflicts—forestry companies have an interest in protection while wildlife departments have an interest in protection
- Logging and mining on the same tract of land—merely the consent of the land owner is needed for a valid logging contract, assuming the land is a government owned forest
- Forest land use conflicts
- Mining for minerals
- Communities do not oppose mining
- Forest land use conflicts
- Mining and forestry share many of the same strategic challenges in the same geographic areas
- The issuance of tax clearance certificates to mining companies
- Management of mining companies
- Mining companies have more control over mining than in the past
- Mining companies can influence the interpretation of the law
- Mining companies have a stronger history of enforcing its laws and regulations and that this had been a contributing factor to the corruption and mismanagement within the forest sector.

Poor law enforcement and governance of existing legislation and policy

A number of stakeholders stated one of the key challenges facing sustainable forest management in Liberia was a lack of enforcement of the existing laws. Some stated the FDA did not have a strong history of enforcing its laws and regulations and that this had been a contributing factor to the corruption and mismanagement within the forest sector.

Outstanding legal issues

At this point it is still unclear what different permitting processes for potentially competing land uses fit together and which permit process should take priority. This lack of clarity affects strategic decision-making in the forest sector. Specifically, which takes precedence in a particular area, mining or forestry (including all 3Cs of Commercial, Community, and Conservation)? How is this decision made, on what criteria, by what process? Is there any role for community participation or input? The differences in authorizing commercial forestry operations on private or a deeded land. A problem is that the current forest legislation was that there no bidding process is necessary for privately deeded... merely the consent of the land owner is needed for a valid logging contract, assuming the logging company is properly licensed. However, deeded lands with concessions must also file all taxes and regulations in order under the forest law.

Some stakeholders stated that the lack of rights of private or deeded land granted during the Tellnet and Dace regimes.

Confusion about allocation of concessions on private or deeded land as a result of conflicting interpretations.

The legalities and formalities governing negotiations of timber contracts between the private sector and private land owners have not been fully clarified:

Conceptual clarity on what is meant by community forestry:

What level of decision-making powers vested at which level of government for local forest resource allocation:

Community expectations with regard to the content of the community rights law and the benefits accruing to them from logging and other forest uses:

Institutional capacity in the field, particularly with regard to community forestry:

Need to develop legal guidelines on intersectoral decision-making covering issues affecting the forest sector:

Consequences of there being no land use planning legislation.
EMERGING ISSUES

Em1. Bioculture and other agroforestry connections to forest management

There has been an increase in interest in the potential introduction of bioculture plantations (for example, in Firee, where a proposed plantation project fell within the area for the proposed Dukpa National Forest), and a number of proposals have been discussed with the MoA, but it is unclear how Liberia’s forest policy and management would deal with these proposals, particularly if they were to involve the clearing of existing forest lands for plantation purposes.

A separate example of the need for increased policy links between the FDA and the MoA relates to the timber derived from old rubber plantations. Whose jurisdiction (the FDA’s or MoA’s) are these trees under?

Em2. Climate change/deforestation/deforestation mechanisms

Despite not receiving much attention in formal forest policy documents to date, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of addressing climate change concerns in the management of Liberia’s forests, and a number of initiatives have started. For example, there was a delegation of Liberian government members to the COP in Bali where a special event on Liberia was held; a proposal for “Redundant Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation” (REDD) has been prepared by Conservation International and the ILU. At present, however, there is little actual information available on the potential impacts that climate change could have on the Liberian forest, or on the vulnerabilities Liberia’s forest systems could have to possible changes in climate, and the government has not adopted a formal policy in relation to the role that Liberia’s forests could or should play in accessing potential carbon funding.

Em3. Coordination among donors and development agencies

Coordination among various donors and development agencies can be improved—at least that is the key donor coordination body within the forest sector, the Liberian Forest Initiative (LFI). The LFI should reformulate its role after the lifting of the UN sanctions and define new strategic goals.

An area of concern is the number of new concepts that have been introduced since the elections. Some stakeholders from within the FDA have voiced concerns over the number of new concepts that have been introduced—each of them valid, but which, when taken together, have created extraordinary demands on the technical staff within the FDA.

Broader issues introduced include share of custody, a new management and financial tracking system within the FDA, the new DLI, and discussions and initiatives relating to carbon financing mechanisms (including REDD). Technical staff members within the FDA have noted that these need to be more closely integrated with the overall strategic plan of the FDA, to allow them to more easily incorporate these initiatives in their daily work plans.

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Em5. Coordination among donors and development agencies

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RESULTS OF THE RANKING WORKSHOP

The ranking questionnaire presented above was deliberated by the SEA team, comprising staff from the FDA and EPA. As part of this prioritization process, the group of national experts discussed the ranking questionnaire and then split into two groups, each of whom proceeded to rank the issues on the basis of selecting the three most important and three least important in each area. The top three issues from each group in each thematic area form the basis of the prioritized issues.

As a result of the suggestions made during this process, certain issues that were originally split out into separate points were combined. The presentation of issues in Section 4 of this report, as well as the prioritized issues noted in Section 5 of the report, reflect these suggestions. For example, the issues that were presented as Social issue 1 “Communities reject previous lack of accountability from logging companies,” and Social Issue 3 “Community leadership,” have been combined into Section 4.1.1 of the scoping report, which has attempted to capture these points under the heading of “Forest communities have rejected ‘business as usual.’”

It should be noted that during the prioritization process the following reduction and consolidation of issues took place.

From the above table, it seems clear that there is general agreement among the members of the SEA team on the priority issues in the first four areas. There is less agreement on what constitutes the priority emerging issues that need to be addressed in the forest sector. The ranking process by the SEA team did not, for example, highlight carbon and climate change related issues as a priority. However, given the interest that is currently being shown in this area, IUCN, SDI, and ProAct felt that such issues should be identified as a priority emerging issue of equal significance and, consequently, the scoping report outlines all six issues identified as issues emerging strategic significance.

The results of the ranking process undertaken by the two groups of the SEA Team are presented in the tables on the following pages.

Annex 2
EMERGING ISSUES: STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE FOREST SECTOR IN LIBERIA

EMERGING ISSUES:

GROUP 1

GROUP 2

Emerging Issue

Priority 1

Priority 2

Priority 3

Priority 4

Priority 5

Priority 6

Pit-sawing

This is the only means of getting timber on the local market; however the issue will be addressed when full-scale logging begins with the establishment of sawmills.

Nationwide strategic decision making

The involvement of people in rural areas in the decision-making process.

Coordination among donors and development agencies

The involvement of the donors will help provide funding for the other 2Cs; conservation and community.

Biofuels and other agroforestry connections to forest management

It hampers food security, has complex environmental and social implications; but there is little recognition of these issues by government.

Forest curricula

It is the key underlying factor for the current mindset within the FDA; limited understanding of social and development issues in the forest sector.

SEA10

The SEA should be used to fill in the conceptual gaps in community forestry.

The SEA should be used as an early warning mechanism for potential environmental problems.

The SEA should include an assessment of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), consider how environmental issues are covered in the PRSP, and consider the implications of land tenure on poverty reduction.

The SEA should be used to ensure government coordination.

The SEA should be used to fill in the conceptual gaps in community forestry.

UNRANKED ISSUES

GROUP 1

GROUP 2

UNRANKED ISSUE

Priority 1

Priority 2

Priority 3

Priority 4

Priority 5

Priority 6

SEA10

The SEA should be used to fill in the conceptual gaps in community forestry.

SEA4

The SEA should be used as an early warning mechanism for potential environmental problems.

SEA7

The SEA should include an assessment of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), consider how environmental issues are covered in the PRSP, and consider the implications of land tenure on poverty reduction.

SEA10

The SEA should be used to fill in the conceptual gaps in community forestry.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the case studies is to help inform policy discussions by providing practical examples of how the 3Cs are working in actual field contexts. The study looks at the practical implication of possible alternatives identified during the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) so as to help define specific actions needed for implementing the recommended approach to minimize negative potential priority environmental and social concerns/impacts associated with the 3Cs.

METHODOLOGY

Site Selection

Six possible areas were identified by the SEA team to illustrate the practical application of forest policy in Liberia. In the course of several meetings, a number of decision criteria were established that would allow the potential case study sites to be ranked against each other. Although the terms of reference for the SEA required that two case study sites be chosen, the team felt that a similar approach to that which had been adopted for the regional consultation process would be beneficial. Consequently, it was decided to undertake case studies at three locations. The entire field team would visit the first location to test the methodology adopted and would then refine this before undertaking a separate case study in another location.

Case Study Selection Criteria

The case studies are meant to illustrate the 3Cs policy implementation in practice. Locations would be chosen to illustrate some of the key points raised in the SEA. The information from the case studies would complement that obtained during consultations in the SEA and from the four situation assessments covering the social, environmental, legal, and economic aspects of the 3Cs policy.

Possible Case Study Topics and Locations

The SEA team reviewed the issues that had been raised in the scoping process and identified six possible areas that would illustrate the practical application of forest policy in Liberia. In the course of several meetings, a number of decision criteria were established that would allow the potential case study sites to be ranked against each other. Although the Terms of Reference for the SEA required that two case study sites be chosen, the team felt that a similar approach to the one that had been adopted for the regional consultation process would be beneficial. Consequently, it was decided to undertake case studies at three locations. The entire field team would visit the first location to test the methodology adopted and refine the methodology as needed. The team would then undertake a separate case study in another location.

Table 1 summarizes these discussions and presents the six potential case study locations, as well as the decision criteria used to choose among them.

Annex 3: CASE STUDIES OF THREE SELECTED SITES: BUTTER HILL, KPAYAQUELLEH, AND DULAY

Table 1: SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AND PRESENTS THE SIX POTENTIAL CASE STUDY LOCATIONS, AS WELL AS THE DECISION CRITERIA USED TO CHOOSE AMONG THEM.
The following sectors were used to select the three study sites: Forestry (commercial—timber sales contracts [TSCs], forest management concessions [FMCs], pit-sawing), conservation—proposed, actual, community; Mining (informal, industrial, exploration); and Agriculture (tree crops, shifting cultivation). Sites with potential interactions between the sectors were identified. The three sites with the highest number of interactions with the activities in the three sectors were chosen and confirmed with the Forest Development Authority (FDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the case studies. These sites are Butter Hill, Grand Cape Mount County; Kpayaquelleh, Lofa County; and Dulay, Nimba County (see maps of these locations at the end of this report).

The ranking exercise resulted in the following sites being selected for the case studies:

- East Nimba
- Kumgbor area of the Gola National Forest
- Salayea

These sites allow the SEA team to examine the application of an integrated 3Cs policy in TSC and FMC areas, as well as protected areas. This was meant to assess how local communities and other stakeholders understand the community and conservation aspects of the forest policy and how these relate to commercial activities. Aspects considered for a TSC/FMC area were the processes that informed the selection of these areas for commercial activities, the manner in which these activities were implemented as well as the manner with which communities responded. Potential conflicts between sectors as identified in the SEA were also assessed.

Subsequent to the ranking of the sites by the SEA team, the FDA team members maintained that the Kumgbor area falls within Gbapolu County, where there had earlier been difficulty getting the TSCs accepted by citizens. It was felt that the risk of being rejected by another community of that county would be high. It was therefore felt not to be prudent to go to Kumgbor and, if rejected, return to the drawing board to select a new site; hence, the team selected Butter Hill, which is within a TSC. There is high bush meat hunting activity close to the proposed Gola Nature Reserve (one of three proposed protected-area networks [PANs]), and it is an area with very high mining activity. There is also shifting cultivation in the area, making it to fit the selection criteria.

Field work
The two-step approach that was adopted for the data collection is as follows:

1. Interviews of the relevant government agencies in Monrovia to obtain policy perspectives and the official position on what should be happening on the ground at the three selected case study sites. The team also reviewed parts of the SEA scoping report that relate to the issues to be examined on the ground.
2. Key informant and group interviews to identify what the practical reality is at the three selected case study sites and how these relate to commercial activities, the manner in which these activities were implemented as well as the manner with which communities responded.

Separate interviews were held by team members with key informants at the case study sites when appropriate as to cross-check the findings from the above group discussions. The results of the respective group discussions were reviewed and compared by all members of a team and harmonized into one summary report. The summary report was subsequently validated with the representatives of the case study sites. The results for the three study sites are presented in Sections 2–4 below.

All three teams combined to undertake the assignment at the first site (Butter Hill) before subsequently separating to do the other two remaining sites (Kpayaquelleh and Dulay). This was meant to ensure consistency in the methods used for all three study sites.

CASE STUDY SITE 1: BUTTER HILL, CAPE MOUNT COUNTY

Social Issues
Logging and mining
There were no consultations with the community regarding logging or gold mining that was undertaken in the area in the past. The infrastructures constructed by the logging firms—such as bridges and culverts—were not durable, and hence the benefits in this respect were not sustainable.

The stakeholders in the community were of the opinion that there should be full consultation of the community before the issuance of any mining or logging license or permit.

With regard to mining, there are two teams that are regulating affairs on the ground. There is a management team that works on behalf of the community to ensure that the artisanal miners pay Butter Hill the agreed share of the proceeds of the mining activities. The other is the authority team, which issues permits to prospective artisanal miners to facilitate the issuance of mining licenses by the Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy (MLME). The suggested procedure by the community with regard to mining is for an applicant to indicate his or her intention to the town chief, who then conveys it to the authority team to issue the mining license or permit. The town chief thereafter consults the occupant of the land concerned before the case is processed through the mining chairman to the mining agent, who in turn refers the applicant to the MLME in connection with the issuance of the mining license or permit.

The community’s expectations from the mining and logging companies that may operate in their area include the provision of schools, health facilities, good roads and concrete bridges, recreation and training facilities, jobs, microcredits, water and sanitation, and market buildings.

Separate interviews were held by team members with key informants at the case study sites when appropriate as to cross-check the findings from the above group discussions. To facilitate the interviews, guide questionnaires were prepared for the priority thematic areas that were identified during the SEA. After the introduction of the study concept and objectives to the group of representatives of the sites visited, they were divided into three groups as follows in consultation with them:

- Group 1: The town chief, chiefs of satellite towns, Butter Hill Chief’s Council, elders, tribal governors, the Community Forest Development Committee (CFDC) members, and church leaders, collectively referred to as “elders” in the report.
- Group 2: The youth, including hunters, miners, and teachers/school administration—referred to in the report as “the youth.”
- Group 3: Women’s co-op, midwives, petty traders, Marketing Association, and Farmers’ Association—“the women” in the report.

The stakeholders in the community were of the opinion that there should be full consultation of the community before the issuance of any mining or logging license or permit.

The suggested procedure by the community with regard to mining is for an applicant to indicate his or her intention to the town chief. The town chief thereafter consults the occupant of the land concerned before the case is processed through the mining chairman to the mining agent, who in turn refers the applicant to the MLME in connection with the issuance of the mining license or permit.
Land ownership and access to forest land

Land can either be owned in the community by statutory (i.e., deeds) or traditional means. In the latter case, the community land has been divided among families and handed down from generation to generation within a given family. Natural features and soap trees are used to mark the boundaries of the lands. The control of access to forest land is through the town chief, elders, and occupants of the land in question.

Economic Issues

Major NTFPs from the forest and their value

The indicated major NTFPs used in the community include bush meat, fish, rattan, bitter root cane, bitter cola, thatch, poles, plant medicine, bamboo, honey, fruits, nuts and water. All NTFPs are considered to be very important for the livelihoods of the members of the community. Value could not be placed on them.

However, an example was given with respect to rattan that is mostly used, instead of nails, in holding roof rafters together. The opportunity cost of using rattan for a typical three-bedroom house in the community was about L$1,500 or 30 packets of nails.

Economic activities and abandoned logs

The economic activities that are undertaken in the community include gold mining (very intensive alluvial mining involving citizens of neighboring countries, including Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Mali), hunting, petty trading, farming, fishing, firewood collection, and collection of building materials (e.g., poles and thatch).

There are abandoned logs and pit-sawn lumber near Camp Israel, about nine hours’ walk through the forest from Butter Hill. The distance limits utilization of these products by the community. However, some of the logs are collected for domestic use, including the fabrication of doors and windows of houses.

Benefits sharing

The community is aware of the 30 percent of land rental, US$1/m3 benefits from logging and the responsibility for the management of such funds by the community. The benefits expected by the community were reiterated here. These include such social services as water health, road and bridges and job creation. There is no mobile phone service in the area. Hence the community hopes that advent of forest harvesting activities will lead to the installation of such services in the area.

When asked which commercial forest activities the community would like to be involved in, the responses were: commercialization of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) (e.g., rattan, medicinal plants, bitter root canes), commercial agriculture, chain sawing, working with logging companies.

Environmental Issues

Mining and logging activities in the same area

The community indicated that the execution of mining and logging activities at the same place at the same time will create serious conflicts. Hence, they stated that they will not tolerate such overlapping activities in their forests and that they must be undertaken in separate areas. The risks mentioned include water pollution, mining pits as dangerous (for humans and vehicular traffic), and the fact that farming would be impossible after mining.

Extension of traditional protected forest areas

There are sacred bushes for both women and men in the area where no activities are allowed. The youth and the women stated that there is no need for the expansion of such bushes. The elders, on the other hand, would like the sacred bush areas expanded as the population of the community increases.

Suggestions for forest management

The suggestions given by the community as to how the forest may be made to grow after harvesting include allowing the bush to fallow; replanting of trees; the retention of fire-resistant trees on farms; and the retention of those big trees—which require a great deal of time and effort to cut—as mother (seed) trees.

In the opinion of the community, there are no specific tree species whose numbers are decreasing in the area.

Legal and Institutional Issues

Knowledge of forestry laws and intersector cooperation

The community has seen some FDA staff at work during boundary line cutting and socioeconomic surveys. Assessment was that the quality of work was generally good.

The community is aware of the National Forest Reform Law (NFRL 2006). They could not, however, differentiate between the CRL and the NFRL. The elders and youth have not heard about the 3Cs. Women are aware of the individual Cs.

The government agencies that are operating in the area are the MLME, Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Liberia Marketing Agency (LMA), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Commerce (MoC), Ministry of Education (MoE), and Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). The community has never seen any group of them working together in their area, and no conflicts have been observed between any of them.

Involvement of the community in conservation and commercial forestry

The community acknowledged that it is possible for conservation and commercial forestry to be undertaken with their involvement. However, they were more interested in obtaining control over their own forests than in only being consulted.

Emerging Issues

Replacement of forests with biofuels

The youth and the women would not accept the clearance of large portions of the community forests for the purposes of establishing plantations of, say, rubber or firewood species. They would like to protect the indigenous species for themselves and the future generations. The elders, however, were open to such a venture so as not to forestall developments in the area.

Their decision would be dependent on negotiations with the interested party.

Climate change

All community members interviewed acknowledged that there have been changes in the weather pattern. The dry season and rainy seasons are mixed up and not predictable. The reasons given include deforestation, the world coming to an end, and “white people’s” space exploration.

Carbon financing

The community would not accept payment to set aside part of their forest without using it as this would have adverse effects on their livelihoods.

Pit-sawing

There are no pit-sawing activities in the area with the exception of those done to produce lumber for domestic use. It was reported that pit-sawing goes on in the surrounding communities. It can therefore be deduced that the generally bad condition of the access road to Butter Hill may have prevented commercial pit-sawing in the area.
Other Issues

Community forests and private lands
There is communal forest in the area. The size could not be indicated. About half of the community forest is earmarked for farming, while the other half is meant for hunting and the exploitation of NTFPs. There is private land that is covered with deeds and tribal certificates. There have been no land disputes in recent times. Past disputes were resolved through traditional means.

Community Forest Development Committees
A Community Forest Development Committee (CFDC) has been formed in the area in connection with the TSC in the locality. However, some dissatisfaction was expressed about the manner in which representatives for Butter Hill were selected. An FDA team was said to have been in the area to organize the election of the CFDC members. The latter team provided a list of five towns (three from Porkpa District, including Butter Hill; two from Golokombeh District) that were expected to provide three representatives each for the election of the five executives of the CFDC on the following day at a nearby town, Benduma. Due to time limitations given by the FDA team, some satellite towns of Butter Hill were not consulted. In haste, the three representatives were appointed at a meeting at Butter Hill. It was learned that the elders and chiefs present upheld the process despite dissent from some of the community members present. Some members of the community are still dissatisfied with the disenfranchisement of Butter Hill’s satellite towns and villages.

The FDA team indicated to the community that the town chiefs and elders were not qualified to stand for elections. The status of the chiefs and elders in this regard appears not to be well understood by the community. The community is opposed to the election of the CFDC chairman, whom they claimed is a government employee. It was eventually learned that the CFDC chairman is not a government employee.

The lesson that can be learned from the above is that the FDA should allow adequate time for the communities to elect their representatives.

TSCs/PAs
Other than a TSC, there are no protected areas (PAs). Apart from the hunters, the community is not aware of the TSC bounds. However, some dissatisfaction was expressed about the manner in which representatives for Butter Hill were selected. An FDA team was said to have been in the area to organize the election of the CFDC members. The latter team provided a list of five towns (three from Porkpa District, including Butter Hill; two from Golokombeh District) that were expected to provide three representatives each for the election of the five executives of the CFDC on the following day at a nearby town, Benduma. Due to time limitations given by the FDA team, some satellite towns of Butter Hill were not consulted. In haste, the three representatives were appointed at a meeting at Butter Hill. It was learned that the elders and chiefs present upheld the process despite dissent from some of the community members present. Some members of the community are still dissatisfied with the disenfranchisement of Butter Hill’s satellite towns and villages.

The community has received a copy of the Justification Document with regard to the establishment of the TSC in the area.

Agriculture
Some of the community members engage in small-scale farming and requested support with extension services.

Hunting
Hunting is done in part of the community forest. There are local traditional bylaws that prohibit the hunting of certain animal species. The protected animals include lions, chimpanzees, elephants, leopards, and crocodiles, as well as pregnant animals. Other than the latter, the reason given for the protection of such animals is the fact that they are very dangerous to the whole community if they are wounded and don’t die.

CASE STUDY SITE 2—KPAYAQUELLEH, LOFA COUNTY

Social Issues
Logging and mining
Five logging companies operated in the area in the past. These were Gateway, KLC, American Woods, Forest Hill Corporation, and Varja. Only the chiefs were on the payroll of the logging companies, and the communities generally did not benefit from the logging activities. The bridges on the logging roads, which were constructed from logs, did not last.

There has been no mining in the area in the past. Only prospecting for gold is currently going on. The community proposes that before any prospecting or mining license is issued, a community committee must be consulted. Miners should also establish Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the communities before mining, and prospecting should not last for more than three months. (It has been learned that this is in fact the case for alluvial/artisanal mining.)

Land ownership and access to forest land
Traditionally, land was divided among the families in the community and has been handed down from generation to generation within the families concerned. “New entrants” pass through the community landlord. The landlord in turn meets the chief, who subsequently consults with the community to confirm that the land in question is not occupied.

The Gbarlin clan owns the land in the area, of which the town of Kpayaquelleh is part. The access to the forest land is controlled by the Gbarlin Resources Development Committee (GRDC).

Economic Issues
Major NTFPs from the forest and their value
The NTFPs in the area are as follows in accordance with the ranking by the community: (1) medicinal plants: Kojolobo (malaria), water bark (malaria), ganagana (skin rashes), Bushia (bowel disorders, constipation), tree parts (bark, leaves, roots); (2) Food: walnuts, locusts, yam, bitter cola, palm, wild bush pepper, bush meat, water, country spices, fish, rattan, palm wine, honey, bitter roots, water ropes, Aframomium (pepper), bamboo worms; (3) minerals: gold and diamonds; and (4) construction material: poles, ropes, thatch, bamboo.

Economic activities and abandoned logs
The community is principally one of farming, with the principal crop being rice. It was reported that there are many abandoned logs still lying in the forest. However, the community lacks the necessary capacity and resources to utilize them. The distance to the abandoned logs coupled with the bad conditions of the roads and bridges leading to them are also hindrances.

Benefits sharing
The youth and elders are aware of the expected benefits of 30 percent land rental and of US$1/m3. The women, on the other hand, are ignorant of them. The elders and the youth appear happy with the expected benefit to the community. The youth are, however, skeptical about the effectiveness of its implementation. The expectations are that the pending logging activities will lead to the building of roads and bridges, employment, and the provision of school and health facilities.

If the community had the choice of being involved in commercial forest activities, their preferences would be pit-sawing and commercial logging.

Environmental Issues
Mining and logging activities in the same area
Logging and mining in the same place at the same time is not acceptable to the community, as they indicated that it will result in conflict and destruction of the land.
Extension of traditional protected forest areas

There are sacred bushes in the community. These include the Poro, Sande, Morlee, and Horn bushes. The women are indifferent to their expansion, while the youth do not favor it. The elders, on the other hand, are of the opinion that they should be expanded as the population grows.

Suggestions for forest management

With regard to suggestions in connection with how the forest can be regenerated after timber harvesting, the women proposed an eight-year fallow period. The three interventions suggested by the youth are planting after felling; letting land lie fallow 10–15 years in the case of shifting cultivation; and planting tree crops (e.g., rubber, cocco). The elders suggested a fallow period, but were not specific on its length.

The women indicated that they used to collect Niangon seeds around the compound of the town to roast. But they can now be found far from town, indicating that the presence of Niangon may be declining. According to the women, farming and logging may be the cause of this decline. The youth and elders, on the other hand, were of the opinion that there is still plenty of Niangon in the forest.

Legal and Institutional Issues

Knowledge of forestry laws and intersector cooperation

All groups have seen FDA staff at work in the area in connection with socioeconomic surveys, forest inventory, and FMC boundary cutting, in addition to the sensitization about the expected benefits from the forests. The community’s assessment of the work performance was positive.

The FDA has informed the community about the forest law for the community. They are happy for the involvement of the community this time around. The elders especially were appreciative of the bottom-up approach.

The government agencies operating in the area include MoE, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHe), MoA, FDA, MIA, and MoJ. The women and elders have never seen any group of them in a meeting in the area. The youth indicated that they have seen the teachers (representing MoE) meet with the town chiefs (representing the MIA). No one has seen any conflicts between the government agencies in the area.

The youth and the elders (though not the women) were aware of the NFRL and the 3Cs. The managing director of the FDA and an FDA team have been to the community to talk about them. The youth have a copy of the NFRL but have yet to read it.

Involvement of the community in conservation and commercial forestry

All groups interviewed were of the opinion that conservation and commercial forestry can be undertaken with the involvement of the community. The community’s understanding of the term “community forestry management” is the management of the forest by local or traditional byelaws and their effective enforcement. In connection with the expected roles of the community in forest management, the youth suggested the determination of conservation areas and the setting up of a group or committee for mediation with timber firms that may be operating in the area. The elders proposed the provision of guards for the protection of the forest, as well as trained manpower for employment in the forestry activities. The women would participate by ensuring compliance with any agreement between the community and prospective timber firms.

Emerging Issues

Replacement of forests with biofuels

The feedback from the community with regard to the replacement of forests with biofuels was mixed. The women are indifferent to their expansion, while the youth do not favor it. The elders, on the other hand, are of the opinion that they should be expanded as the population grows.

Climate change

The community members confirmed that there have been changes in the climate in the area during the past few years. According to the women, the rainy and dry seasons have swapped places and this is “the work of God.” The youth and elders stated that the water sources are getting dry, and the rain storms are heavier. This situation was attributed to logging without replanting by the youth, and the cutting of the big trees by the elders.

Carbon financing

With regards to payment for the community to conserve part of their forest, the women and the elders would not accept this, as they would like the future generations to have access to the forests for livelihoods. The elders are of the opinion that the Government of Liberia (GoL) will support them on this stand. The youth, on the other hand, would give this proposal consideration, as they believe it will help conservation of the forests and that the GoL can enforce it for the same reason.

Pit-sawing

It was acknowledged that there has been pit-sawing in the Kpayaquelleh area in the past. This has been stopped because of bad road conditions and no benefits to community. The former district commissioner did not give Kpayaquelleh its share of the tolls that he collected.

Currently, pit-sawing is undertaken under community-controlled conditions for housing and community development projects. Fuel is supplied to those with pit-sawing skills in the community to produce for the community or individuals.

Other Issues

Community forests and private lands

There is a community forest for the town. The women have no idea about its extent. The elders knew but were not definitive and indicated that it is very large. The youth were more specific and gave the towns on the boundaries as Gboneyea, Kpotehyaa, New Town, Ganglota, Kpoyoianyaa, Gaaquata, Golu, and St. Paul.

There are private lands in the area. They are acquired traditionally through inheritance, as well as by tribal certificates. In the case of “new entrants,” a team composed of landlords, chiefs, and elders are responsible for apportioning land.

Generally, land disputes in the area are settled traditionally. The youth gave three examples of disputes in the area and how they were settled or are being settled as follows: (i) a dispute between two individuals from Kpotehyaa and Kpoyoianyaa was settled traditionally; (ii) the pit-sawing dispute between Kpayaquelleh and Ganglota has not been totally resolved because Kpayaquelleh has not yet received its part of the past benefits from pit-sawing; and (iii) there is an existing dispute between the Gbarlin clan and Gbarpolu County over part of the land around the Via River. According to the youth, the issue has been taken over by the Legislative Caucus of Lofa County. The elders confirmed the latter case, stating that it is pending and a complaint has been lodged with the House of Representatives.

Community Forest Development Committees (CFDCs)

A CFDC has yet to be formed in the community, but the youth are aware of the committee’s roles and responsibilities. A copy of the Justification Document with regard to the FMC in the area has been received, but the women are not aware of this.

The youth have yet to study the document, while the elders indicated that the document has been accepted and will be used to guide logging in the FMC in the area.

FMCs/PAs

The elders and youth (though not the women) are aware of the FMC in the area. No FDA protection area was reported. The women and elders are aware of the FMC in the area. No FDA protection area was reported. The women are consequently unaware of the boundaries of the FMC. It was learned from the elders that they are aware of line cutting by an FDA team recently, but they do not know whether such lines form the boundaries of the FMC.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE FOREST SECTOR IN LIBERIA

ANNEX 3
The women and youth have no idea about any farms within the boundary of the FMC. The elders, on the other hand, stated that some farms fall within the FMC in the area. According to the youth, there are a good number of timber species that are retained on farms; their size and the farmers’ knowledge of their economic value make it difficult to cut them. It was learned that these are available for sale to timber merchants. This, while offering the potential for reasonable income for the farmers, would require the institution of an equitable compensation mechanism for the destruction of crops by felled trees.

Agricultural Issues
The crops that are farmed through upland and lowland, shifting cultivation in the Kpayaquelleh area, include rice, cassava, corn, beans, sweet potatoes, pineapples, and peanuts.

The elders and youth are unaware of any outside support for the farming activities in the area. Such support was confirmed by the women, who indicated that there has been the provision of seed rice and farm tools by such NGOs as CRS (KDRO), Concern, Red Cross, and DEN-L. No support from the MoA was reported.

Hunting
Hunting is done mostly in the forest with some done in the bushes in the area. The women are unaware of where hunting is done. There are local bylaws that prohibit the hunting of the following animals: leopards, elephants, bush cows, lions, baboons, hippos, and antelopes. The latter are protected because they are very dangerous to the whole community when they are wounded and not killed during hunting. In case any such animals are wounded, the offender will be made to pay for the cost of other hunters to stalk and eliminate the wounded animal.

CASE STUDY SITE 3: DULAY, NIMBA COUNTY

Social Issues
Logging and mining
There has been logging in the past—by ITC (before the civil crisis) and MGC (during the Taylor regime)—but it did not benefit the people. The companies made promises to the community but failed to honor them.

There is no mining currently taking place in the area. Only prospecting for minerals has been carried out in the area in the last few years. In the opinion of the community, the issue of mining licensing in the area should be done in a participatory manner through consultations with them. The expectations of the community from future mining activities in the area include the provision of social amenities and equitable sharing of revenue from the mining activities. They would like the activities of the mining companies in the area to be monitored by representatives of the community.

Land ownership and access to forest land
Land is owned through traditional inheritance of land allocated by the chief and elders to the families in the community.

Squatters are not allowed to plant perennial cash crops (cocoa, coffee, oil palm, rubber), but may plant food crops. This is meant to prevent the squatters from perpetuating their presence on land that is collectively owned by the community.

The community owns the forest lands with the elders and chief as their custodians. The access to the forest lands is controlled by the chiefs, elders, quarter chiefs, or family landowners.

Economic Issues
Major NTFPs from the forest and their value
The major NTFPs in the Dulay area are palm wine, palm nuts, rattan, thatch, round poles, ropes, bitter cola, ropes, honey, bamboo, bush pepper, water, fish and meat, fruits, and raffia palm fronds. The community regard these as very valuable, as they provide construction materials, food, and medicine that support the livelihoods of the community members.

Economic activities and abandoned logs
There are abandoned logs in the forests. The community did not take any action on them during the civil war. Any attempted action before the war was thwarted by the company (MGC) using the permit from the government as cover.

Benefits sharing
There is only an awareness of expectations from logging companies, which include the provision of safe drinking water, good roads, health facilities, and schools.

The community members would like to be involved in such commercial forest activities as the development and marketing of NTFPs, including rattans, raffia palm, cane for making furniture, pit-sawing to provide lumber for local use, and production of climbing rope for harvesting palm nuts.

Environmental Issues
Mining and logging activities in the same area
The community is against the implementation of logging and mining activities in the same place at the same time. They reasoned that it will create environmental problems and conflicts and pose danger to life and property.

Extension of traditional protected forest areas
There are sacred bushes in the forest for both men and women. But surprisingly, there have been encroachments on such bushes in the recent past. The community would like such bushes to be expanded through the cutting of new boundaries and for their effective protection to exclude activities like mining, logging, hunting, and farming.

Suggestions for forest management
Suggestions for growing forests after timber harvesting include allowing the bush to lie fallow to regenerate naturally in addition to the replanting of trees to replace those that had been cut.

The only plant species that was confirmed to be declining in numbers is isonch (Mano name) that was used to poison arrows in the past. The loss is attributed to deforestation through farming and logging activities.

Legal and Institutional Issues
Knowledge of forestry laws and intersector cooperation
The FDA has undertaken awareness creation with regard to protected area management, including the necessity for the community not to farm and hunt in the protected areas. The FDA’s promise to build the headquarters of East Nimba Nature Reserve (ENNR) in Dulay was not fulfilled, and the headquarters has been relocated to another town. The community is unhappy with this change, as they had incurred significant costs in feeding and paying workers to clear the land that was earmarked for headquarters in the town.

Unlike the women, the elders and youth were not aware of any forest law for the community.

The women could not express any opinion about the law, but they would like the law to be reviewed to facilitate the readjustment of the protected area boundary. The current proposed boundary line is considered too close to the town’s farming area.

The government agencies that are operating in the Dulay area include the FDA, MoE, MoJ, MoA, MIA, and MoF. No meeting or coordination involving any group of these has been observed in the area. Nevertheless, no conflict has been noted between any of them.

There appears to be awareness about what the individual terms commercial, conservation, and community represent, but the 3Cs as a concept is not understood by the community.
Involvement of the community in conservation and commercial forestry

In contrast to the women, the elders and the youth indicated that conservation and commercial forestry can be implemented with the involvement of the community.

The suggested role of the community was to participate in the management and the monitoring of all conservation and commercial forestry activities.

Emerging Issues

Replacement of forests with biofuels

As a result of inadequate land for farming in the area, the community was unanimous in their disapproval of any proposal for the establishment of biofuel plantations in the area.

Climate change

The community confirmed changes in the climate in the area during the recent past. The timing of the rainy and dry seasons has not been as predictable as before. They attribute such abnormality to deforestation as a result of logging and farming.

Carbon financing

The youth and elders said the community would not agree to being paid for not using part of its forest. The women, on the other hand, would prefer to make a decision after the community negotiates with the interested party.

Pit-sawing

As a result of the bad condition of the roads in the area, there is no commercial pit-sawing. Pit-sawing is undertaken in the area for local purposes only, and access to trees for such purposes is regulated by the elders, the chief, and the affected landowners.

Other Issues

Community forests and private lands

There is a community forest in the area, but no estimate could be put on its extent. There are no private lands in the area. There is an ongoing land dispute with an adjacent village (Nyantuko) with regard to encroachments. The dispute has not yet been resolved and becomes tense when “brushing” time approaches for making new farms.

Community Forest Development Committees

There is no TSC or FMC in the area. Hence, no CFDC has been formed.

TSCs/FMCs/PAs

There is an area earmarked for protection (the ENNR), whose boundary is yet to be demarcated. The community stopped the line cutting when they realized the line was encroaching on their farming area. Farming activities did not occur beyond the proposed boundary of the ENNR this year, as the boundary dispute with the government (FDA) has not been resolved.

There is no agreement with respect to the areas earmarked for logging. The areas in question fall within the Zor clan’s land, which Dulay and the adjacent towns share.

Agriculture

The farming activities in the area mainly involve shifting cultivation of such food crops as rice, cassava, plantain, and pepper. There are also plantations of cocoa, coffee, oil palm, kola, and rubber.

Hunting

Hunting takes place on farms and within community forest lands. There are local bylaws that prohibit the hunting of chimpanzees, leopards, bush cows, monkeys, elephants, and hippopotamuses.

- Due to the limited time available to carry out the case studies, only the FDA and the MLME could be visited before the field work.
- The majority of the inhabitants at Butter Hill are from the neighboring countries (e.g., Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Mali). They engage mostly in intensive artisanal alluvial mining. For fear of antagonizing the locals, they were generally tight-lipped. Hence, the study may not have captured all the necessary information on artisanal mining in the area. Similarly, the antagonism of the community at Dulay toward the FDA may have affected the results there.
- Many of the prospective mining and forest harvesting activities have yet to go into the operational phases. It was mainly preparatory tasks such as forest inventory, boundary demarcation, and mining prospecting that were taking place at the time of the study. Even most of this preliminary work is far from the location of the communities. Hence, such activities have yet to have any concrete or measurable impact on the communities concerned.
- The lack of telephone communication links between the teams at Kpayaquelleh and Dulay prevented any exchange of information while in the field.

Lessons from the case studies

- The communities studied have already identified community forest areas (i.e., the CRL does not create something new).
- Communities have arranged structures to deal with resource management issues (e.g., collection of alluvial mining “fees,” prohibition of pit-sawing due to inequitable sharing of toll fees collected).
- Communities are at best skeptical about being paid not to use “their” forests (relevant, for example, to potential carbon projects), but for the most part appear to reject the possibility.
- A common understanding still needs to be developed for interaction between government and community structures (e.g., allocation of adequate time for the selection of community representatives to be presented for election to the offices of the CFDCs, ensuring the “spread” of the information in the justification documents of the timber concessions to all sectors of the affected communities).
- All communities rejected the idea of mining and forestry in the same area.
- Communities will need to develop new skills in relation to the CRL and a better understanding of the 3Cs policy.
A National Stakeholders Workshop on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the forest sector was held on November 17-18, 2008. The workshop brought together a cross section of stakeholders including the Forestry Development Authority (FDA), Environment Protection Agency (EPA), other government agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private sector donor agencies, members of the Liberian Forest Initiative (LFI), as well as participants from civil society in eight counties. The participants from the counties came from Grand Bassa, River Cess, Sinoe, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Nimba, Lofa, and Gbarpolu counties. Participants from the counties included chiefs, elders, teachers, women, youths, and community-based organizations.

The purpose of the workshop was to:
- Identify strategic challenges facing the Liberian forest sector, validating the work done in the scoping phase and situational assessments of the SEA
- Determine elements of an action plan (including indicators for monitoring) for addressing the challenges
- Agree on next steps

The key results and outcomes of the included:
- Continued dialogue on forest issues. Participants welcomed the platform provided by the national workshop as an opportunity for multistakeholder and intersectoral discussions. In particular, the community representatives welcomed the opportunity to state their cases directly to the FDA (and other government agencies) and hearing their responses firsthand. Participants felt that the principles that had underpinned the establishment and operation of the SEA team and national workshop (intersectoral, interagency, joint field work, participatory involvement with forest communities, etc.) were sufficiently useful to be continued. On the basis that the SEA team was a project-based concept, all stakeholders present at the workshop endorsed the idea of a platform to be established along the same lines. The main focus of such a platform would be to create a space where the issues themselves could be discussed, as opposed to focusing on the positions adopted by different stakeholders on those issues. This would help ensure a free flow of information and exchange of views on forest sector processes, and extend to the management of other natural resources, particularly the mining sector.
- Community benefits and community involvement. The need for a clear definition and mechanism for the distribution of those benefits was articulated, not only for the forest sector, but also for the other natural resource sectors. This would require not only a determination of the appropriate policies and administrative mechanisms but also a thorough dissemination of these new ideas to affected communities.
- Community Forestry Development Committees (CFDCs) and social agreement. There was recognition of good intentions, but proper implementation was challenged by a variety of factors.
- Bridging the gap between policy and practice. There was a need to “walk the walk” and not only “talk the talk,” that is, to implement the good policies that exist.
- Appreciation of the approach to the SEA. Participants expressed their perceived usefulness of the principles that underpinned the creation of an SEA team.
- Priority issues. Workshop participants were presented with the priority issues that had been identified during the earlier prioritization workshop and were invited to add, delete, or modify issues. After discussion, participants felt
that the issues identified previously were in line with how they saw the priorities as well, and did not see the need for changes. This allowed the earlier priority issues to be validated by a larger and more diverse set of stakeholders, who then developed action plans for each of the issues (as reported in the main report). A list of emerging issues was generated, but the participants felt they did not have enough information or knowledge of these to treat them in a separate breakout group or to develop an action plan on these. The emerging issues have been summarized in the main report.

A total of 59 participants attended the workshop. This group included 15 participants from eight counties; 4 from three case study sites; and 40 from government, NGOs, international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), industry, and other stakeholders. The FDA was well represented by a mix of technicians and middle- and senior-level managers.

KEY POINTS RAISED DURING THE NATIONAL SEA WORKSHOP

The workshop started with a session on expectations. This concluded with participants developing a list of their expectations for the workshop. The following is a summary of the expectations:

1. To get an update of the entire SEA process;
2. To acquire tools to carry out awareness in counties;
3. Representatives from leeward counties to understand from national participation in reform processes;
4. Coherent interpretation of forestry laws and policies as well as the challenges in doing so; and
5. Moderate language to be in simple Liberian English.

Participants commented on the SEA process so far and whether the issues identified are indeed issues that attest to the findings of these processes. The comments generated (in plenary) are as follows:

1. Forest fringe communities are not given the chance to fully participate in issues affecting the community
2. No equity in benefits derived from the forest for the community
3. Lack of awareness on forest issues
4. Tribal people not really benefiting from their forest
5. FDA needs to be more proactive when it comes to conducting social contract between communities and companies
6. FDA has been given a warning not to engage in or conduct any social contract without communities’ full participation.

Participants also commented and made suggestions regarding the situation assessments and case study information they received. The comments included:

1. Prepare communities to be part of the forest sector reform—new commercial process
2. Adopt standards
3. Suitable land use policy
4. Forest value
5. Revenue sharing
6. Land tenure
7. Time frame for benefits
8. Community management capacity
9. Strategy for channeling community benefits still has to be worked out with Ministry of Finance (MoF) and awareness raised with communities in accordance with national constitution
10. Reform processes not understood at community level
11. Issue of capacity should start with FDA building network of stakeholders in the sector in order to build local community capacity
12. Challenging species loss: question of language or hasty conclusion
13. How to prevent environmental impacts (deforestation, climate change)

COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

- Potential for dispute
- Human wildlife conflicts—proposals do exist to mitigate
- Livelihoods
- Ecotourism
- Employment

The below listed issues were the “recurring emerging issues” during the plenary discussions summarized above.

1. Benefits
2. Community ownership and land tenure
3. Information sharing
4. Mechanism platform
5. Technical capacity building
6. FDA needs to be more proactive in its work
7. Issues of boundaries
8. Mass public education through consultative meetings

Participants further discussed these recurring emerging issues to ensure that all participants had a common understanding of the context in which they were being raised. The discussions aimed to raise questions for reflection by participants and suggestions for moving forward.

1. Community participation: What does it mean practically?
2. Stakeholders: Who are they? What partnerships should be built?
3. Community ownership and land tenure: What exactly does this mean?
4. Benefit sharing: What is the common understanding?
5. Improve mechanism and process platform to share information
6. What is needed to integrate 3Cs (conceptual understanding): What is required?
7. CFDCs: Were they democratically selected? Are they technically equipped community representatives?
8. FDA working hard, but gaps exist and must work harder
9. Definition of “community” needed before talking about boundaries
10. Benefits over time
11. FDA must brief representatives so they understand the situation
12. Public education through consultation meetings
13. Stakeholders—FDA, different levels of community, private sector, civil society

Participants discussed definition of and clarity on community and reviewed the list of stakeholders. A summary of the main points discussed follows:

1. Community Groups/Types
   - Youth groups
   - Women’s groups
   - Elders, chiefs, and traditional leaders (Zoes)
   - Disabled groups
   - Clans/chieftains
   - Handicrafters (weavers)
   - Palm wine tappers
   - Charcoal producers
   - Hunters and trappers

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE FOREST SECTOR IN LIBERIA

ANNEX 4

MODERATE LANGUAGE TO BE IN SIMPLE LIBERIAN ENGLISH.

Coherent interpretation of forestry laws and policies as well as the challenges in doing so; and
2. Stakeholders
   - Forestry Development Authority
   - Ministry of Agriculture
   - Ministry of Internal Affairs
   - Development partners (Flora and Fauna International, Conservation International)
   - Civil society organizations
   - Governance commission
   - Communities
   - Ministry of Justice
   - Ministry of Finance
   - Environmental Protection Agency
   - Ministry of Public Works
   - Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy
   - Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs
   - Miners
   - National Legislature

Action Planning
The plenary discussion was followed by group discussions. The breakout groups were mixed, comprising community-level participants and participants from Monrovia. The breakout groups, five in total, were instructed to discuss elements of a possible action plan for the SEA. Each group was asked to identify how to address the issues identified by the SEA based on their expertise, objectives for the forest sector, and information from the SEA.

The main proposed actions are summarized in an action matrix in the main report. Participants were invited to identify key next steps beyond the SEA. The primary suggestions are summarized next:

- Capacity building programs for FDA, CSO, and communities. There was a general recognition among participants of the need to increase capacity, targeting all national stakeholders involved in forest sector. The level of external experts’ involvement in all matters suggests limited internal capacity. This underscored the need for capacity building to ensure that forest outlook 2028 is an achievable target. This will ensure national ownership of sustainable forest management processes in Liberia and guarantee the practicality of achieving this vision.

- Initiating forest dialogue platform. There was also an agreement on the need to establish a platform for stakeholder interaction and information sharing. Participants were unanimous about continuing the forest sector multi-stakeholder and intersectoral dialogue. A proposal was made to establish a platform that will provide the medium to sustain forest sector engagements and assist in filling the information gap between community-based and Monrovia stakeholders. This will reduce the tension between government agencies and some communities and will encourage mutual cooperation for sustainable natural resource management approaches that promote “public participation.”

- Expanded SEA team to address the remaining emerging issues. This suggestion came about as a result of the desire of Monrovia participants to sustain the process beyond the SEA project end date. The details of how this will work out in practice could not be determined during the workshop, as participants had earlier agreed to close each day’s session at 4:30 pm. In this case, the mechanism for such expansion was left to the current SEA team to figure out when they meet. From the plenary discussions, it was evident that the particular government agencies knowledgeable about the given issues will be engaged to join the SEA team to carry out such task or activity.

- Extend and continue stakeholder dialogue outside Monrovia. The presentation on the SEA process to date highlighted how the process included regional consultations in which community people from eight forest fringe communities of the country participated. The results of the regional consultations, involving a cross-section of community residents, is a key component of the scoping report. Issues identified during these processes are contained in the priority issues identified in the SEA process to date. These issues were confirmed by all participants at the SEA national workshop. Community representatives at the SEA workshop agreed that regular regional consultations would do more to raise awareness about forest sector initiatives as well as address early inaccuracies in disseminating information about the sector at the local level.

- Community benefits and community involvement: The need to clarify “community benefits” was urged. Some participants also expressed concern that, to date, no mechanism had been developed between the FDA and the Ministry of Finance as to how “affected communities” will access their benefits under the law. Some participants, most representing NGOs, said they were baffled at times by the seemingly endless demands made by communities in the name of benefits. They said their field staff are faced with the challenge of how to get communities, which benefit from livelihood initiatives around the forest, to recognize these as community benefits. There was a general consensus amongst NGO participants during this workshop on the need to quantify elements constituting community benefits and raise awareness among community dwellers about it.

- Simplification and dissemination of laws and policies to communities. During the workshop it appeared that none of the community representatives present were aware of the Social Agreement Handbook that had been developed within the FDA. In most cases where social agreements have been signed with affected communities the text of the agreement has been drafted well in advance of the formation of the CFDC, and communities are given less than 24 hours to read, comprehend, and sign it. The case studies indicated that a Social Agreement has been signed the same day of the formation of the CFDC. This situation may leave communities open to the consequences, good or bad, of these social agreements, which for an FMC may encompass 25 years. Against this background there was a suggestion that FDA be more proactive in carrying out its work. During group work on the forest outlook 2028, the FDA seemed to agree with this suggestion when they stated that public participation is requirement number 1 for achieving sustainable forest management. Key to this objective is disseminating forest sector information to communities in a simple, clear, and concise manner.

- Emerging issues. In addition to the priority issues raised during the SEA process, workshop participants identified the following as “emerging issues” in the forest and related sectors: biofuels and other agroforestry connections to forest management; climate change/carbon financing mechanisms; coordination among donors and development agencies; forest curricula and training; and nationwide strategic decision making.

While working groups developed action plans for the identified issues during the SEA, they felt that they did not have enough information or awareness of detail about the emerging issues identified. Given this feedback and the lack of time during the action planning segment of the workshop, an action plan on emerging issues was not developed. These have been summarized by the SEA team and are included in the assessment report.
Implementing partners include:
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE LIBERIAN FORESTRY SECTOR