

Managing Natural Resources

**The Sierra Leone Conference on Development
and Transformation
(Rethinking development after 50 years
experience)**

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Sierra Leone is endowed with many natural resources (renewable and non-renewable) including:

- Land
- Water
- Forest
- Fisheries and Marine Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Energy, etc.



Natural Resources Management in Sierra Leone has been limited due to the following:

- There is no specific legislation for NRM as a whole.
- Inadequate Institutional Framework for Natural Resources Management
- Inadequate awareness about Natural Resources Management
- NRM in Sierra Leone cuts across several sector Ministries, Divisions and Units with little vertical and horizontal cross-sectoral integration.
- Inadequate Data Collection and Information Management Systems



Natural Resources Management Issues Addressed

- Mineral Resources
- Forest Resources
- Fisheries and Marine Resources
- Land Resources.



Mineral Resources

Mining is Sierra Leone's second most important sector for employment and income generation.

Its three sub-sectors include:

- large-scale production of rutile, bauxite and diamonds,
- mechanical small-scale production of gold & diamonds
- artisanal production of diamonds and gold.



Mineral Resources

Exploitation of mineral resources in Sierra Leone has been met serious challenges and opportunities.

The key challenges are:

- **Political Challenges**
 - i.e. to ensure that the will is done;
 - Political interference and corruption;
 - Political infighting among related ministers with different agendas;
 - Inability by Government to deal with license applications and approvals to ensure that transparency prevails;
- **Sense of Optimism & Excitement in the mining Industry (e.g. Oil)**
- **Sense of Understanding Legislation governing mining and mineral resources**
- **What do we do with the Mineral Wealth?**



Mineral Resources

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Recommendation:

Review Constitution Placing Ownership of Minerals in the Hands of Government



Forest Resources

The total area of forest in Sierra Leone has declined during the last century with just under 5% of the original forest remaining.

It has been estimated that deforestation is continuing unabated at about 2% per annum with agriculture identified as the main cause of deforestation

Forest landscapes face numerous direct threats to their functioning and continued existence.

These direct threats are also related to the larger indirect political and socio-economic issues.



Forest Resources

The threats are livelihood related that include:

- illegal timber harvesting,
- farming,
- poaching and other Illegal Transboundary activities,
- wild bush fires,
- governance related such as absence of an efficient resource

management structure at grassroots level and, consequent inequity in resource use and benefit sharing.



Forest Resources

Opportunities:

The establishment of the Trust Funds and management programme for local communities livelihood.

Establishment of transboundary peace park

European Union-Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (EU'S FLEGT) initiatives to contain illegal logging, hunting, trade in bush meat in all the protected forest.

Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+)



Forest Resources

Recommendation

To improve on gender balance and access to forest resources, Because gender differences exist in forest resource utilization, land tenure and power relations means that NRM would have different impacts on men and women.

The following will provide a useful guideline for intervention:

- Design livelihood alternatives to meet the needs of women and socially disadvantaged groups to ensure that they receive equitable benefits.
- Conduct a gender analysis of the impact of forest on the environment on men and women and the how changes to land use patterns will affect different gender roles, e.g. access to Fuelwood, dependence on natural resources.
- Identify barriers to women or vulnerable groups engaging in project and identify strategies to overcome them.



Fisheries and Marine Resources

The fisheries sector plays an important role in the national economy contributing about 9.4% the GDP.

- It generates revenue and foreign exchange
- provides employment opportunities and
- serves as the largest single source of animal protein for many Sierra Leoneans.



Fisheries and Marine Resources

Fisheries resources are exploited by artisanal and industrial fisheries with the biggest proportion (around 80%) of the total production coming from the artisanal sector.

This has however been plagued and hampered in its development for long:

- The current status of the fisheries resources in recent times indicates downward trend both in catch landings and the average size of fish landed.
- The artisanal fisheries sector which contributes about 80% of the total marine fish landed locally operates with little or no proper control measures.
- The use of destructive fishing methods and fishing gears to target juvenile fish is on the increase
- Inadequate fishery policies and regulations, weak institutional capacity in fisheries Ministry.



Fisheries and Marine Resources

Opportunities

- National Frame and Livelihood surveys in the coastal marine communities.
- Collaborative stock assessment survey in the Gulf of Guinea Region supported by FAO.



General Recommendation

Improve on Fisheries infrastructure and facilitate the lifting of the ban on exporting Fish products to E.U. markets



Land Resources

Sierra Leone relies heavily on land resources for a share of its national food needs, employment and source of livelihoods.

The increasing demand for farmland and fuel wood, pressure from timber exploitation, urban and sub-urban expansion have resulted to land degradation with only 1 percent of land in Sierra Leone being protected.

Other pressures on land include increased competition between multiple land users such as farmers and herders in the north, urban elites and peri-urban agriculturists in Freetown.

The situation is now aggravated by land deals sought by international investors currently to the tune of thousands of hectares.

The global demand for biofuels and non-agricultural commodities are currently the key emerging land issues.



Land Resources

Opportunities:

- New National Land Policy
- Law Reform Commission
- Land Commission



Land Resources

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General Recommendation

Put a STOP on Land Deals and introduce Energy and Food Security

Revolution



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THANK YOU