

Presentation given at the Katoomba XV Meeting entitled

Integrated Solutions: Water, Biodiversity and Terrestrial Carbon in West Africa

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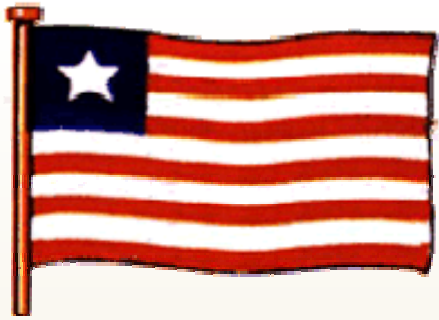
Accra, Ghana

Hosted by:

The Katoomba Group, Forest Trends,
and the Nature Conservation Research Center



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LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF PRO-POOR REDD (LIBERIA CONTEXT)

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INTRODUCTION

- Liberia contains 42% of the Upper Guinean Forest of West Africa; the largest portion possessed by a single country in the region; Guinea 8%, Ivory Coast 28%, Ghana 16%, Sierra Leone 5% and Togo 1%.
- One of the 25 global biodiversity hotspot: 2000 flowering plants, 225 timber species, 600 bird species, 150 mammals and 75 reptiles (endemic).

THE CONTEXT FOR PRO POOR REDD IN LIBERIA

Policies/ Development Framework (REDD will have to be defined within the following):

- The Poverty Reduction Strategy – contribution from the forestry sector will be meaningful in the PRS
- Commitment to carbon neutrality as contained in the Energy Policy of Liberia
- FAPS – Sustainable and intensive agriculture to move away from shifting cultivation and slash and burn agriculture.

- NFRL 2006 and other forestry reforms: 3-C policy; the inclusion of community participation in forest governance and management (new in the statutory, but old in the customary) e.g. social agreements within commercially exploited forests; and benefit sharing mechanisms;
- CRL (Community Rights Law) empowering communities to have exclusive forest management rights for timber concessions, conservation and environmental services (including carbon sequestration)

MAJOR ISSUES RELATED TO “PRO POOR REDD” IN LIBERIA

- Global markets for carbon credits represent potentially substantial economic opportunities for Liberia (e.g REDD). mainstreaming carbon finance into the country’s poverty alleviation strategy.
- Inadequate enabling policies and legislative framework for REDD (land tenure, equitable benefit sharing, community rights to forests, and the legal basis for communities to negotiate contracts or agreements)
- Organization and governance of carbon contracts (national versus sub-national or local based forests (project sites)

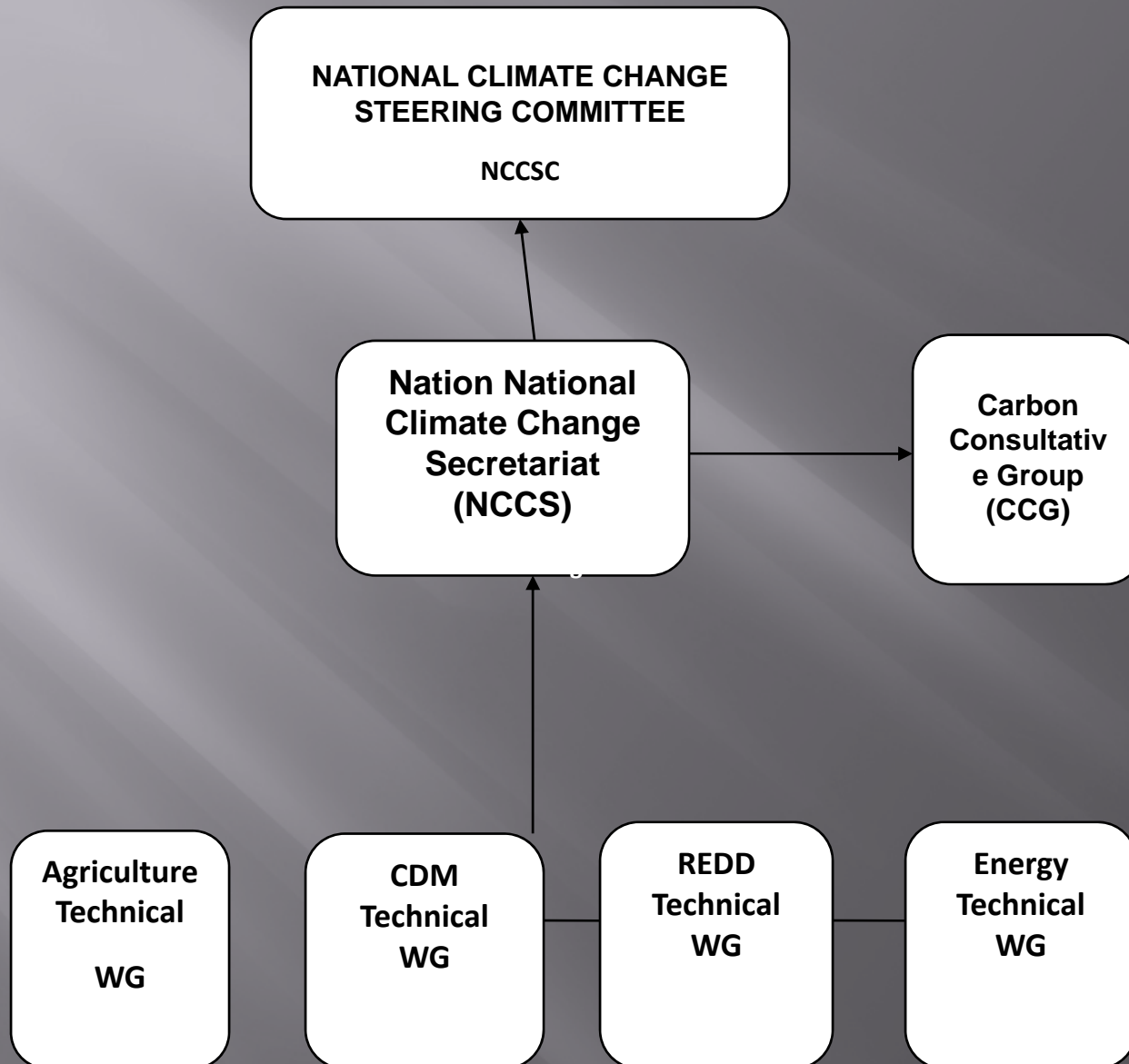
THE GoL RESPONSE TO THESE ISSUES

- Chain of Custody System (benefit sharing for timber concessions, etc. this can be applied to REDD)
- LEITI, publishes all payments received by the companies and revenue paid to GoL from all Sectors: agriculture, mining, and recently forestry.
- Draft community rights law which is about empowering communities to take full ownership of community forests under the 3C.

THE GoL RESPONSE TO THESE ISSUES (Cont.)

- ▣ Access to the FCPF (WB) following a successful R-PIN, the R-PP process is underway with development partners and local CSOs; CI, IUCN, FFI who among other activities are supporting:
 - ▣ Cost benefit analysis and development of reference scenario (CI)
 - ▣ multi-stakeholders consultations and governance issues with focus on forest dependent communities (IUCN)
 - ▣ policy development processes including benefit sharing mechanism (FFI)

Proposed Institutional Framework



TECHNICAL CHALLENGES RELATED TO THE PRO POOR REDD

Formulation of baseline scenario for a functional REDD monitoring:

- ▣ agreeing on drivers of deforestation and degradation at national (government) and local level (communities) in terms of land use
- ▣ agreeing on rates of deforestation and degradation considering the unique context of civil war making historical rates inappropriate
- ▣ provision of field data for MRV

TECHNICAL CHALLENGES RELATED TO THE PRO POOR REDD (cont)

Current lack of institutional capacity to deal with

- Monitoring and verification
- Issues related to land and resource tenure
- Coordination between local and national land use (planning)- overlaps

TECHNICAL CHALLENGES RELATED TO THE PRO POOR REDD (cont)

How REDD will contribute to sustainable development that will

- Define and allocate responsibilities to both the central government and local communities
- Identify cost efficient and socially acceptable options for emissions reductions
- Regulate and distribute future revenues

CONSIDERATION FOR ASSESSMENT OF KEY SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

- ▣ Gender Equality and Women Empowerment: paying particular attention to the importance of gender in governance and benefit- sharing mechanisms
- ▣ Environmental Sustainability: inclusion of REDD in Liberia's forest management strategy has the potential to sustainably integrate human livelihood development, poverty alleviation, environmental conservation and carbon storage

- Institutional Capacity- to set up systems to assess carbon emissions and removals, using methodologies recognized by IPCC (IPCC Good Practice Guidance) so that future results could be demonstrable, transparent, verifiable, and estimated consistently over time.
- Human Rights and Equality: One of the key principles that should underpin REDD is the recognition of local Community Based Organizations rights, specifically their right to improved livelihoods, equitable and transparent governance of natural resources.



Thank You