The Good Growth Partnership Landscape | LIBERIA

The overall objective of the Good Growth Partnership (GGP) project is to support the sustainable production of palm oil while conserving forests and safeguarding the rights of forest-dependent communities. It will ensure the reduction of Green House Gas (GHG) emission, sustainable agriculture practices and smallholders to improve their livelihoods.

THE GGP LANDSCAPE | NW LIBERIA

The GGP landscape, in North-West Liberia covers more than 1 million hectares and is home to about 320,000 inhabitants (HES2016). The area is shared by four counties- Bomi, Bong, Gbarpolu, and Grand Cape Mount which have some of the highest poverty rates of the country.

In this landscape, oil palm development is at a nascent and promises to grow substantially within the current concession areas and smallholders plantations. A major palm oil concession has been granted over an area that was assumed to be unencumbered public land, but in reality large portions of the concession feature forest-dependent communities, high biodiversity value forest and competing natural resource interests such as logging, mining and rubber.

As part of the NW Liberia Conservation Corridor, the GGP landscape is rich in biodiversity and plays an important role in the well-being of its inhabitants. Bomi County has the highest accumulated deforestation in the landscape, which has resulted in significant cultural and economic impacts on local and indigenous communities. Furthermore, deforestation throughout the GGP landscape has become a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The project presents a unique opportunity to support the efforts of the National Government to reduce deforestation and associated greenhouse gas emissions, and to contribute to long-term sustainable economic development.

By the 2020, the GGP Landscape aims to: reduce the rate of forest degradation and deforestation to 0 ha/yr, improve sustainable agricultural practices by 50%, improve wellbeing of local communities, and increased involvement in enforcement and decision-making processes by local governments.

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

In order to track on-the-ground implementation, the GGP has developed a low-cost holistic Landscape Assessment Framework to monitor the status and change of key indicators that collectively characterize a sustainable landscape.

By tracking not only ecosystem health and loss, but also key human development and agricultural production indicators, the GGP is able to measure impact, understand the interlinked relationships between ecosystem health and human well-being, target project investments, and support local decision makers.

In addition, this type of monitoring can enable end-users / buyers of commodities operating in these areas to confidently meet their “zero-net deforestation” buying pledges, and to motivate governments and farmers to invest in cost-effective and sustainable production methods.

What is a Sustainable Landscape?

In a sustainable landscape:
- Natural capital is maintained or enhanced by promoting appropriate land-use management;
- Resilience to climate change is improved;
- Best practices are used in production and planning; and
- Local decision-making processes are included for the improvement of human well-being.

** Text in grey is to be updated in as GGP project data become available **
THE GOOD GROWTH PARTNERSHIP (GGP) LANDSCAPE, LIBERIA

State of Natural Capital, Production & Human Well-Being

**THE GGP LIBERIA**

The GGP Covers approximately 1,089,547 hectares and is home to approximately 320,000 inhabitants.

**NATURAL CAPITAL**

**RATE OF DEFORESTATION**

- 11% of the 2003 tree cover lost since 2000-2001
- 6.5% of the 2003 tree cover was deforested from 2014-2017
- 27% of the 2003 tree cover is estimated to be lost by 2025 at the current rate of deforestation

**FIRE RISK**

A large percentage of the fires that occurred in the landscape were within 30m of areas of deforestation events. However, a majority of the fires were found to occur elsewhere within the GGP Landscape.

**BIODIVERSITY PRIORITIES AREAS**

- Only 2% of the Biodiversity priority areas are located within protected areas.

**FOREST FRAGMENTATION**

- Deforestation can lead to forest fragmentation which decreases habitat connectivity.
- The forests of the landscape are being affected by frontier deforestation, which does not lead to extensive fragmentation.
- The Core represents the portion of the forest that is more than 90m away from the edge of the forest.
- The dataset represents disjointed patches of forest that are too small to contain forest Core.

**AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES**

The following represents the production estimates on the landscape scale for GGP Liberia's major agricultural crops.

**PRODUCTION**

**LAND USE**

In a set of sample points randomly distributed across areas of deforestation from 2001 – 2017, 51% of the points fell on lands converted to fallow, and only 6% on land converted to Palm plantations.

**HUMAN WELL-BEING**

Although it is commonly assumed that Palm and Mining represent the top commodities and the leading cause of deforestation of the GGP Landscape, satellite image analysis of areas of deforestation suggest Palm and Mining only account for approximately 6% of the deforestation.

**GHG EMISSIONS**

These are the GHG emissions calculated using GtC Trends Earth Tool using a 70% forest cover mask. There is a local maximum in 2009 but there has been a clear and dramatic increase in GHG since 2010 with a absolute maximum in 2015. This trend corresponds with the increases in deforestation observed during this time period.

**Landscape Statistics in 2016**

- 64% of the landscape’s population lives in absolute poverty.
- 73% of the inhabitants average income is spent on food.
- 45% of the landscape’s population is living in food poverty, unable to afford enough food to meet their daily food requirements.
- Crop disease or crop pests have been found to be the second most common shock to households within the GGP landscape.

**National GDP**

The HDI measures the ability of a nation to provide its citizens with (1) Long and Healthy Life, (2) Access to knowledge, and (3) a decent standard of living. For reference, the USA received an HDI score of 0.9. Despite the dramatic increase in GDP in Liberia since the 90s, the HDI has been increasing at a much modest rate.

**Human Development Index**