

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security, Forestry Division of Sierra Leone (FD) and The Forestry Development Authority of Liberia (FDA)



Transboundary Collaboration Action Plan

Introduction:

The Governments of the Republics of Sierra Leone and Liberia recognized the importance of the Gola forest that extends across the borders of both Countries, due to its vast biodiversity richness and the ecosystem services contribution to the region and the world at large. In addition, both Governments also recognized the threats to the forest if not properly protected. As a result, they signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) committing both Countries to establish the "Greater Gola Peace Park" and outlined series of actions to be taken to actualize their goal.

While Sierra Leone has established the Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP), Liberia is moving towards achieving the same mark. The Gazettement Package of the Liberia Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) was submitted to the office of Her Excellency, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on May 27, 2014 for on-ward submission to the National Legislature for passage into law. It is anticipated that the GFNP gazettement Act will be enacted into law by the end of October 2014.

The MoU on the cooperation in management, research, protection and conservation of the Greater Gola Peace Park calls for three cardinal actions to be taken by both Countries to ensure the successful establishment and management of the Peace Park: (a) Planning towards the establishment of the Greater Gola Peace Park (b) Enhanced cooperation between the two Countries to advance the management, monitoring and further development of the Peace Park, and (c) Effective coordination between both Countries in the implementation of concrete joint actions that engender and foster cooperation and protection of the Peace Park.

The MoU also considers both short and long term actions, which lead to achieving the long term goal. To realize this goal, it is therefore necessary to commence concrete actions with timeline and assigned responsibilities.

Predicated upon this transboundary collaborative agreement, a two day meeting was held in Freetown, Sierra Leone, between Forestry Division (FD) of Sierra Leone and the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) of Liberia on June 16 -17, 2014. The meeting resulted into the development of an agreed Transboundary Collaboration Action Plan that lays out concrete activities to be implemented in accordance to the objectives of the MoU. The Action Plan activities emphasize collaborative law enforcement mechanisms, free cross border movement of staff assigned to the parks, research, monitoring, community engagement, marketing, etc.

Below is the action plan developed and endorsed by senior Management of both the FD of Sierra Leone and the FDA of Liberia on behalf of the two Countries.

[Handwritten signatures and initials]



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Transboundary Collaboration Action Plan



No.	Key milestone	How	When	Where	Who's responsible	Resources
1	Identify activities for collaboration in Greater Gola peace park and develop a Transboundary Collaboration Agreement (TCA) in accordance with forest sector policies & legislations in both Countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Collect legal documents from both countries -Compile joint activities to be incorporated into the ToR of the legal consultant -Hire a legal consultant for the development of the TCA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -By 27th June, 2014 -By 27th June, 2014 -TCA should be ready by 31st July, 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Liberia & Sierra Leone -Liberia & Sierra Leone -Liberia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -PA Managers FD & FDA -PA Managers FD & FDA PA Manager FDA & Legal consultant 	
2	Joint cross border patrols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop TOR -Design & agree on easy access pass with Joint security at the border 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On a monthly basis after GFNP gazettement in Liberia 	GRNP, GFNP & Greater Gola Peace Park	PA Managers (FD & FDA)	
3	Joint community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Radio discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After GFNP 	GRNP,	PA	

		-Community meetings -Design & distribution of awareness materials -Community exchange visits -Nature clubs exchange visits	gazettement in Liberia	GFNP & Greater Gola Peace Park	Managers (FD & FDA)	
4	Joint briefing/updates meetings	Rotational transboundary meetings	Quarterly	In both Countries	PA Managers (FD & FDA)	
5	The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security of Sierra Leone to send a letter of encouragement to the Liberian Government to fast track the GFNP gazettement in Liberia	-Letter from the Minister/SL to the FDA board chairs on the status of the Gola Park establishment in Liberia	-By 4 th July, 2014	-Sierra Leone	-Acting Director/FD	
6	Conduct a rapid assessment of the biodiversity status of the Greater Gola Peace Park	-Research activities	After establishment of the Peace Park	SL & Liberia	Research technicians of FD & FDA	
7	Drafting a management plan for the Greater Gola Peace Park	-Consult management plans of GRNP & GFNP	Dec. 2014	SL & Liberia	- PA Managers -Consultant	
8	Official proclamation of GFNP in Liberia	-Formal ceremonies	Upon gazettement of GFNP	Liberia	-FDA	
9	Physical demarcation of the Greater Gola Peace Park	-Identify the corridor areas in both Countries	After establishment of	-Liberia & Sierra Leone	-FD & FDA (technicians)	

		-Ground truthing -Boundary demarcation	the Peace Park			
10	Participation in joint security meetings at the border	-FD & FDA request to participate in joint security meetings	Immediately	Bo water side border	PA Managers	
11	Resource mobilization	-Transboundary proposals development -Seek government support -Seek FD & FDA partners and donors support	After establishment of the Peace Park	Sierra Leone & Liberia	-FD & FDA -Partners	
12	Monitoring implementation of Transboundary collaboration action plan	-Communication -Field visits	Immediately	Liberia & Sierra Leone	CSSL/SCNL	
13	Next Transboundary meeting	-FDA to organize	2 nd meeting Mid August	Liberia	FDA	