

We start from the Premise

That we live on the wealthiest continent in terms of natural resources and biological diversity

That countries like Sierra Leone and Liberia are richly endowed with minerals, forests, water and a dynamic people and should be one of the most prosperous countries in Africa.

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But???

- why is it that we are counted among the poorest of nations in the world?
- why did we have a civil conflict that dislocated the social and economic fabric of our society?
- why have we as a nation not realized much good from the abundance that we were once endowed with?
- why are we now feeling threatened by the dire consequences of a changing climate?

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The Root Causes of the Poverty

from our perspective

A history, fraught with complex relationships with the outside world – leading to:

- Slavery
- Colonization
- Debt and Inequitable Terms of Trade
- Unsustainable Resource Exploitation
- Bad Governance and Pervasive Corruption
- Civil Wars – Darfur, DRC..
- Tribal differences
- Poor Infrastructure and Social Services
- High Illiteracy Levels
- Massive Unemployment
- Youth Crisis

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Primary Forests

in Sierra Leone and Liberia

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World Class Beaches

at the foot of coastal montane forest in Sierra Leone

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Ecotourism Resort

South Eastern Sierra Leone



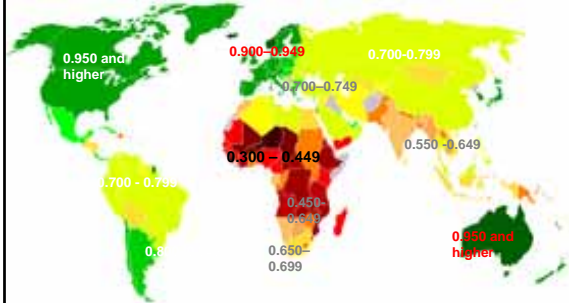
with the rare pygmy hippopotamus

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Africa in Context

Human Development Index 2005



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Deforestation Location and Trends



- Deforestation Locations
- Wilderness Areas
- Hotspots Revisited 2004

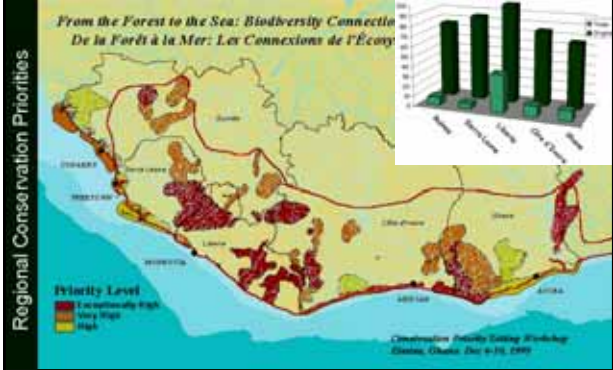
Deforestation Rate per year:
0.4 – 0.7%

Satellite data likely underestimate deforestation in Africa

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Biodiversity Hotspots in West Africa



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Logging and Deforestation

in Liberia



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Rutile Mining

Titanium ore in Sierra Leone



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Result of Rutile Mining

Attempts to rehabilitate land – Acacia planted in 1992



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The Precious Diamonds

Curse or Blessing?



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Artisanal Diamond Mining



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Bauxite Mining



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Slash and Burn Agriculture

Preparing for the farming season



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Clearing for Farming and Fuel



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Charcoal for Cooking

Transport into the city



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Rising Sea Levels

eroding economic livelihoods



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The Conflict Factor

Smuggled weapons in exchange for minerals and timber



in Liberia

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Child Soldiers

Civil Wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia



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Refugees and Internally Displaced

A result of war



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Impacts of Conflicts on Nature

Development efforts in Liberia and Sierra Leone

- Loss of species (Hunting/Bush meat)
- Forest Fragmentation & Habitat Loss
- Expansion of refugee settlements
- Over-exploitation of natural resources
- Unsustainable Forest Management Practices
- Inadequate Capacity
- Mining in Forest Reserves (Surface Mining)
- Poverty & Inadequate Access to Resources & Benefits
- Corruption – Resource Allocations
- Limited Participation of Women
- Mono Cropping Agriculture
- Land Ownership & Tenure Issues (Squatting in forest areas)
- Poor coordination among actors

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Challenges to Delivery of Assistance



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Roads and Bridges



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Schools in Remote Areas

in Liberia



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Journey to Prosperity

Early 1900's



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Journey to Prosperity

Post 2nd world war and independence



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Journey to Prosperity

Civil wars



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Journey to Prosperity

Post civil wars



Full tank

Half tank

Empty



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Journey to Prosperity

2025

Food Self-sufficiency

Poverty Eradicated


Natural Resources Managed Sustainably

Degraded Areas Reforested



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Migration to forest and mineral rich areas



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Threats from 'Overseas Investors'

Government bans timber exports
 Government has re-imposed a timber export ban because of what it says is indiscriminate plundering of forests by Chinese and other foreign companies.

"They just invaded and started doing what they felt like doing," Forestry Minister Joseph Sam Sesay said. 'BBC news report'

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Conclusions

Responsible and moral behaviour by developed nations such as China and understanding of the links between management of natural resources and poverty will accelerate the pace towards poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Sustained economic development is **only possible** when the ecological foundation on which human society has been built, is respected.

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Recommendation

The governments of African countries with vast mineral wealth and recovering from conflict, should be actively engaged and encouraged by their international partners, donors and financiers, to urgently take further bold steps to demonstrate their commitment to transparency and accountability.

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Recommendation cont.

The wealthier and developed nations must make good their promises to African countries by providing the pledged financial and technical support in a timely and transparent manner, to ensure that implementation of the poverty reduction strategic plans developed by the various governments can be effected.

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Recommendation cont.

The International Community must make available, urgently needed development assistance in post conflict countries (like Sierra Leone and Liberia) matched with **stricter funding regimes and punitive actions that hold defaulting public officials accountable now, and in the future.**

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Recommendation cont.

The public and private sector investors in mining and forestry and other recovery and reconstruction programs, **must be strongly encouraged and enabled, to mainstream the cross cutting sector of environmental and natural resource management in their program activities and fundraising strategies.**

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