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Support Towards Advancement of REDD+Readiness and the Paris Agreement Agenda in the Upper Guinean Forest Ecosystem in West Africa

REDD+/LEDs Needs Assessment in the Upper Guinea Forest, West Africa

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Background & Objectives of WABiLED

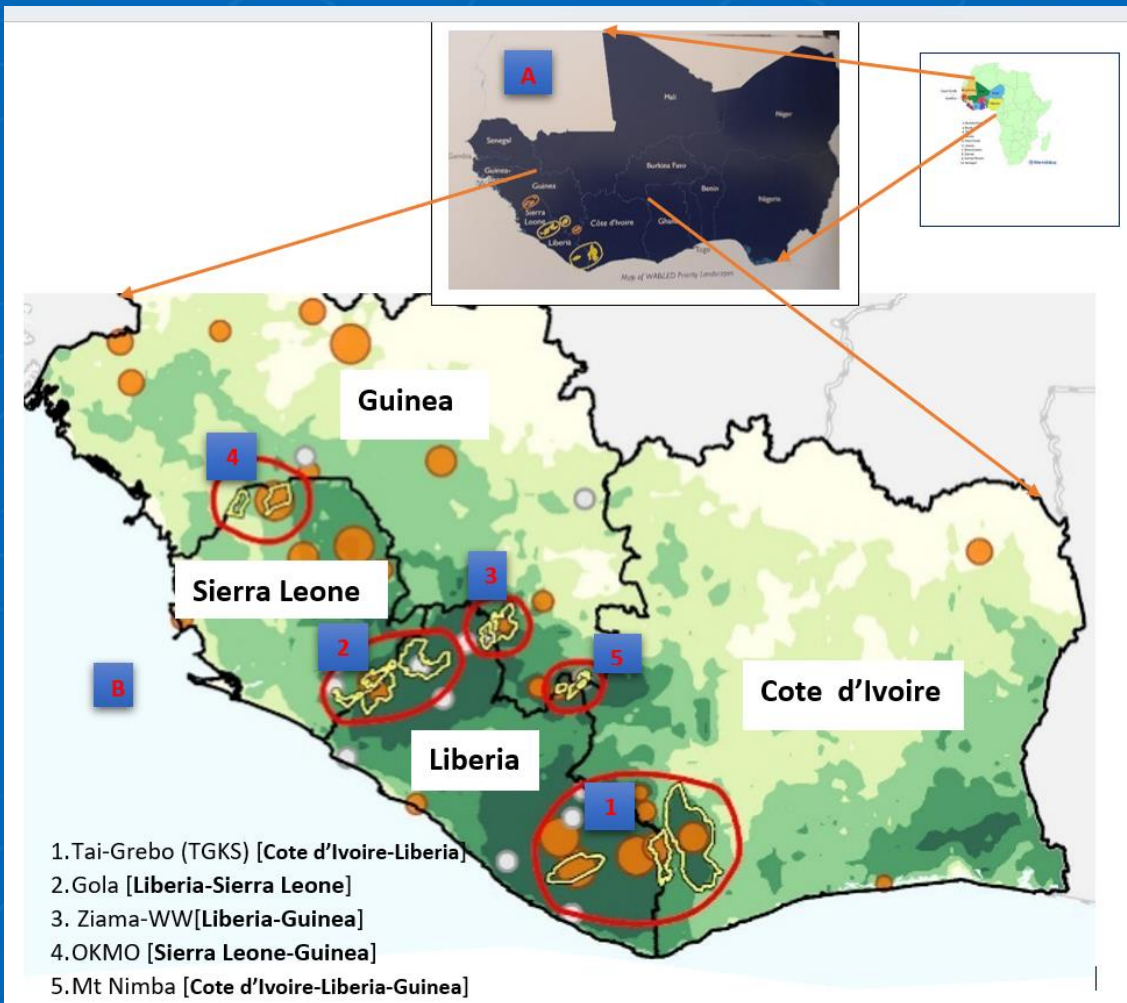
USAID funded West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED) Program is a four-year program (2021 - 2025) implemented by Tetra Tech ARD and Partners.

Overall Goal of WABiLED is to promote biodiversity conservation and climate-resilient, low emissions development (LED) in West Africa.

Objectives

1. Support combating wildlife trafficking (CWT)
2. Reduce deforestation, forest degradation, and biodiversity loss in key forests
3. Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase carbon sequestration from land use

WABiLED Program Area & Priority Transboundary Landscapes



Code	Transboundary Landscape Name
1	Tai-Grebo-Krahn-Sapo (TGKS) [Liberia – Cote d'Ivoire Border]
2	Greater Gola Forest [Liberia – Sierra Leone Border]
3	Zياما-Wonegizi-Wologizi (ZWW) [Guinea – Liberia Border]
4	Outamba-Kilimi-Medina-Oula [OKMO] [Guinea - Sierra Leone Border]
5	Mt Nimba [Liberia – Guinea-Cote d'Ivoire Border]

- High biodiversity value
- High carbon value (aboveground and soil carbon stocks).
- Threats of deforestation and Forest degradation n
- Potential for LED programming.

- Objective 3: Reduce GHG Emissions and Increase Carbon Sequestration from Forest and Land Use
- Three Key Results
- Result 3.1: Support collaboration among stakeholders to improve management and conservation of forest landscapes and resources that reduce GHG emissions
- Result 3.2: Improved tenure security and other incentives for low emissions land management of PAs, CFs & private investments
- Result 3.3: Enhanced responsible land-based private sector investment and innovation.....



Objective of Needs Assessment

- Objective 3.1.2
- Providing technical support in term of capacity development and understanding of (REDD+) and low emissions development strategies (LEDS).
- Thus, conducted a baseline assessment of the status of REDD+ and LED options in 4 countries - Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone - in the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem of West Africa.
 - Aimed to identify REDD+/LEDS gaps & needs, and to determine potential priority areas for REDD+ and LED support by WABiLED.

Objective of the REDD+/LED Needs Assessment

- One of WABILED's task is to provide technical support to countries through capacity development and understanding of (REDD+) and low emissions development strategies (LEDS).
- In this regard, a baseline assessment of the status of REDD+ and LED options was undertaken in 4 countries - Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone - in the Upper Guinea Forest Ecosystem of West Africa.
- The aim of the assessment was to identify REDD+/LEDS gaps & needs, and to determine potential priority areas for REDD+ and LED support by WABILED.

Assessment Methodology (1/2)

The assessment considered a number of REDD+ Readiness requirements, as defined in the Warsaw Framework, which include the existence of:

- a REDD+ Strategy including Policies and Measures (PaMs)
- a national forest monitoring system (NFMS)
- a forest reference level (FREL/FRL)
- a safeguards Information Systems (SIS)



Each requirement or criteria was colour-coded in Green, Yellow and Red depending on whether the requirement has been completed [**Green**], ongoing [**Yellow**] or not started [**Red**].

Assessment Methodology (2/2)

The assessment also considered mitigation actions or strategies as presented in country's:

- national communications (NC),
- greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories,
- biennial update reports (BUR),
- nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMA),
- and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- Country efforts towards achievements of LTS-LEDS.

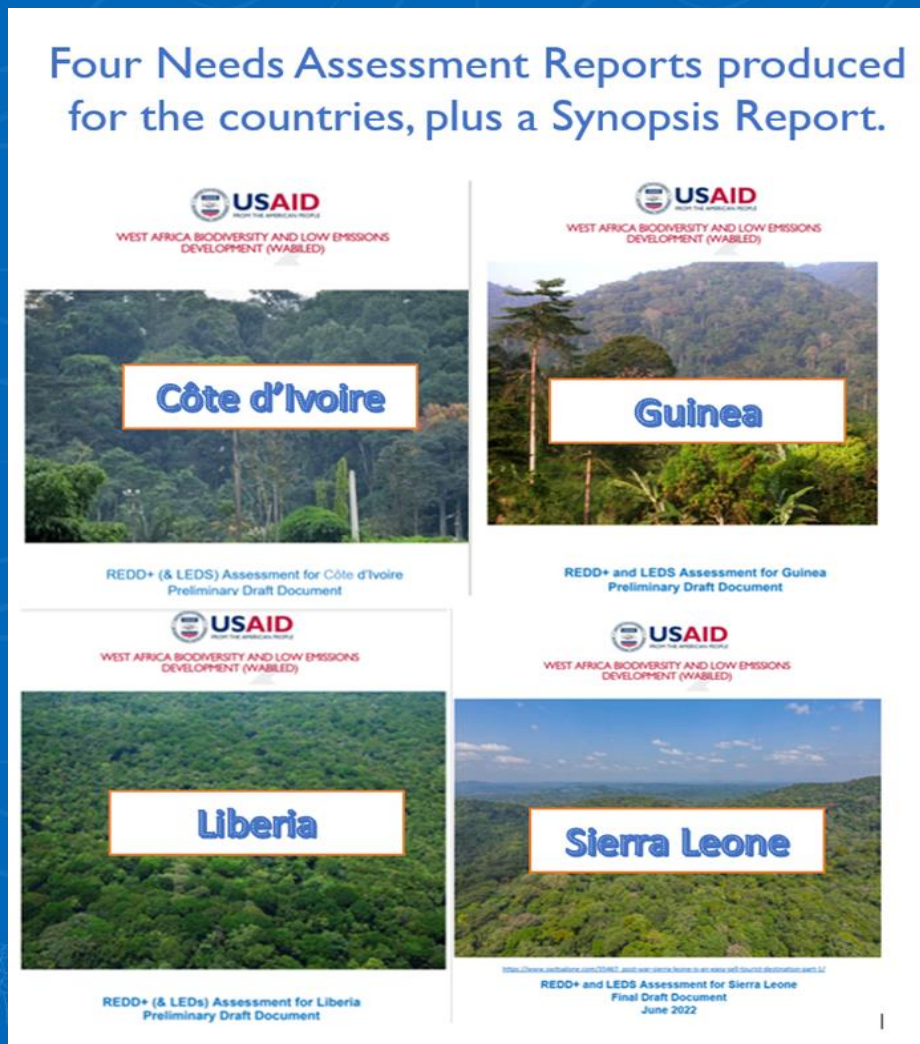
Assessment Procedure

- Initial desk-top work was undertaken, based on the bibliographic reviews; then followed by face-to-face discussions (guided by focused questionnaires) with relevant/competent authorities & stakeholders in the 4 countries during country visits.
- Competent authorities targeted were mostly those in charge of REDD+ and climate change issues, including national communications, GHG inventories, NDCs in order to discuss and collect relevant data/information to improve/update the interim reports.
- The final reports contain identified gaps from which prioritized REDD+/LEDS activities will be identified and from which technical support could be provided by WABiLED.

Assessment Results

Four Needs Assessment Reports produced for the countries, plus a Synopsis Report.

Summary Findings (Needs/Gaps)



Parameter Assessed	Country*			
	A	B	C	D
Legal/Institutional Arrangements for REDD+	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Drivers of Deforestation Studies	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
National REDD+ Strategy/Action Plan	Green	Yellow	Green	Red
REDD+ Policies & Measures (PaMs)	Green	Red	Green	Red
FREL/FRL: National	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Activity: Deforestation	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
Activity: Enhancement	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red
FREL/FRL: Sub_National /Jurisdictional level	Yellow	Red	Green	Red
Activity: Deforestation	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow
Activity: Forest Degradation	Yellow	Red	Red	Red
Activity: Enhancement	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red
National Forest Monitoring System	Green	Red	Green	Yellow
National Forest Monitoring Portal	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red
Safeguards Information System	Green	Red	Green	Yellow
Summary of Information (SOI)	Green	Red	Yellow	Red
Information on Multiple Benefits	Green	Red	Green	Red
REDD+ Projects Implementation	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow
Jurisdictional REDD+ Projects	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow
National Forest (Carbon) Inventories	Green	Red	Green	Yellow
Land Use Change Analysis undertaken	Green	Red	Green	Red
GHG Inventories for LULUCF/AFOLU	Green	Red	Green	Green
Biennial Update Report (BUR)	Green	Red	Green	Red
REDD+ Technical Annex to BURs	Yellow	Red	Red	Red
(I)NDC (2015) Submitted	Green	Green	Green	Green
Revised NDCs Submitted	Green	Green	Green	Green
NAMAs	Red	Red	Red	Green
Efforts towards LTS_LEDs	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red

Legend	Colour Code
Activity Completed	Green
Partially Completed /Ongoing	Yellow
Not Started	Red

*Country names have been left out because the aim was to identify gaps/needs and not comparing them

Summary

Results from the needs assessment indicated that:

- The four countries are at different stages in REDD+ Readiness
- Some have demonstrated considerable progress, transitioning from the Readiness Phase to REDD+ Demonstration Phase, while others are still at the early stages of the Readiness process.
- All countries are progressing well in terms of international reporting (NCs, GHG Inventory, NDCs reporting...); however, GHG Inventory reporting is still done at tier I level (using IPCC default values)
- Institutional Arrangements for MRV are lacking, and GHG compilation is still done on ad hoc basis, with dependence on external support and expertise.

Summary Cont'd

- All countries have submitted revised NDCs, however, effective implementation requires substantial external funding as national funding sources are insufficient.
- While all countries have clearly defined 2030 emissions reduction targets, none has defined long-term low emissions development strategies (LT-LEDS) or 2050 carbon neutral strategies.



Next Steps

- Based on the needs assessment, potential areas of support by WABiLED Program will be tailored to country-specific gaps and needs identified
- Depending on country's national circumstances, this could be either towards completion of the REDD+ Readiness activities or towards advancement towards achievement of results-based payments (RBP) for those at the Demonstration phase.
- A draft roadmap has been developed based on prioritized areas of support, and in line with WABiLED project objectives and scope.
- WABiLED project will also encourage and assist countries in the search of other funding sources for some important activities not included in WABiLED priority list.
- Successful implementation of the REDD+/LEDS activities will not only help countries progress towards achievement of RBP, but will also help improve on their GHG inventories in the LULUCF sector, and NDC reporting (e.g. Art. 6 Readiness and ETF (Art. 13) reporting).



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Thanks for your keen attention