



**GAZETTEMET PACKAGE<sup>1</sup>  
KRAHN-BASSA PROPOSED PROTECTED AREA**



**FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
WHEIN TOWN, MOUNT BARCLAY  
MONTSERRADO COUNTY  
LIBERIA**

**June 2023**

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<sup>1</sup> Final Package will be compiled of Notice and Comment.

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## **Acronyms:**

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CLF	Customary Land Formalization
COPAN	Consolidation of Protected Area Network
CW	Conservation Works activity project
EXPAN	Expansion of the Protected Area Network
FDA	Forestry Development Authority
GoL	Government of Liberia
GP	Gazette Package
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
KBPPA	Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area
LLA	Liberia Land Authority
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MME	Ministry of Mines and Energy
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NF	National Forest
NFRL	National Forestry Reform Law of Liberia
NP	National Park
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PA	Protected Area
PAN	Protected Area Network
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNREDD	United Nations REDD Programme
WCF	Wild Chimpanzee Foundation

## **I. Executive Summary**

The Constitution of the Government of Liberia provides, in Article 7, that the government shall efficiently manage its resources to benefit all of its citizens. Within this context, and historically, the Government of Liberia (GoL) has always recognized the biological importance of its forest landscape. Since 1976, the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) has been given the mandate to “*sustainably manage and conserve all forest resources for the benefit of present and future generations*” throughout the years, in collaboration with other governmental institutions, partners and donors. Additionally, FDA has ratified international instruments and developed various national instruments to regulate the sustainable management of Liberia’s forests.

Among the national instruments are the National Forestry Reform Law (NFRL) of 2006 under which the FDA was further mandated to establish a Protected Area Network (PAN) to cover at least 30% of Liberia’s remaining forested areas, back then representing 1.5 million hectares. The Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP) with funding from the Government of Norway and managed by the World Bank, has supported the gazettelement activities for several Proposed Protected Areas (PPAs), including of the Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area (KBPPA), which is entirely located within Krahn-Bassa National Forest, in Sinoe, Grand Gedeh and River Cess Counties in southeastern Liberia. The LFSP and few other donors (Great Ape Conservation Fund/US Fish and Wildlife Service, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund) have supported the feasibility studies for the establishment of a Protected Area (PA) in KBPPA, conducted by the FDA in collaboration with the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF). FDA and WCF have accomplished the pre-gazettelement requirements for KBPPA, now named the **Kwa National Park** (KNP), which are described in detail in this Gazettement Package (GP). A brief summary is provided below.

Following the creation of the Sapo National Park in 1983, East Nimba Nature Reserve in 2003, Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve in 2011, the gazettelement of Gola Forest National Park in 2016, and gazettelement of Grebo-Krahn National Park in 2017, the FDA has prioritized the pre-gazettelement for the establishment of the Krahn-Bassa Protected Area, which shall be called Kwa National Park, located in Sinoe, Grand Gedeh and River Cess Counties, southeast Liberia. Its location is West of the Tai-Grebo-Krahn-Sapo (TGKS) Transboundary Forest Complex and biodiversity hotspot, an initiative the GoL has adhered to since 2009 in collaboration with its Ivorian counterparts. Since 2012, the FDA represents the Government of Liberia in the TGKS Steering Committee, and the discussion of the inclusion of the future Kwa National Park in the TGKS forest landscape is ongoing, as it is critical in ensuring the integrity of this transboundary forest block and biodiversity hotspot in the Upper Guinean tropical forest of West Africa.

To achieve the sustainable protection of Kwa National Park (KNP), various stakeholders have worked closely with the FDA, including the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF). This GP presents all completed pre-gazettelement activities with detailed reports being included in the Annexes.



A summary of the main results are as follows:

- i) **Political and transboundary importance:** The location of KNP West of the TGKS forest complex represents a crucial extension of this complex, providing additional habitat to threatened and endemic key species. Launched in 2009, the FDA has been working alongside its counterparts in Côte d’Ivoire to manage the complex for the “conservation of biodiversity and participatory sustainable management of natural resources of the ecosystems of the TGKS forest complex while taking into account the well-being of the local populations”. The establishment of the KNP is politically supported in an area that suffers often from civil unrest, and where over the past years uncontrolled immigration of foreign cocoa farmers and miners has increased the risk of conflict. KNP and will contribute to help controlling cross-border illegal trades of Liberia’s natural resources, as well as the uncontrolled immigration. Efforts to establish landscape corridors between the western, central and eastern parts of the TGKS forest complex, KNP’s vicinity to Sapo National Park and its connection to Cestos-Senkwehn PPA are crucial for the entire southeastern forest complex and existing transboundary initiatives.
- ii) **Fauna and flora presence:** Results from nationwide surveys and ecological modeling have identified KNP as the most diverse area for biodiversity in the whole of Liberia (Junker et al. 2015) and that it is a biodiversity hotspot within a hotspot. Specific KNP biodiversity surveys conducted between 2016 and 2019 (WCF 2017, 2019), as well as results from community ecoguard patrols from 2020 to 2023 have shown that KNP is home to the second largest populations of the critically endangered West African chimpanzee, as well as a very large population of critically endangered forest elephant, the endangered pygmy hippopotamus, vulnerable leopards, and various threatened monkey and duiker species, to name a few. Furthermore, the results from biological rapid assessments in various taxonomic groups, such as plants, birds, amphibians and reptiles, butterflies and beetles, have identified several new species to science of trees (4 species, Jongkind 2019), and frogs (2 species, Rödel et al. 2019). The beetle survey has identified a large number of first country records, and the total number of species found during the surveys is not yet known. In total, the various surveys showed that KNP hosts more than 411 species of fauna of different kinds of taxonomic groups, excluding the beetles (39 species of mammals, 110 species of birds, 15 species of reptiles, 36 species of amphibians, 209 species of butterflies). These species include 30 species of conservation concern, which are species listed as threatened (critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable) on the IUCN Red list (IUCN 2023) and many of which are endemic to the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem. For the floral aspect, the surveys confirmed the presence of 344 species of plants. A full list of faunal and floral species so far observed at KNP is presented in Annex 17, while full biodiversity baseline reports can be found in annexes 2c, 3b and 4.

The biomonitoring surveys identified four areas of very High Conservation Value within KNP, in terms of density of key species, such as the critically endangered West African chimpanzee and forest elephant. The four areas with the highest conservation priority inside KNP are located in Sinoe County (three locations): 1. along the road from Buchanan to Jacksonville, 2. around Shaw David, 3. Seekon District (at the level of Pellokon Community Forest), and 4. in Grand Gedeh County (entire northeastern side of KNP). These areas must be prioritized for future protection, in order to protect KNP’s key biodiversity, and also considering the fact that in these are areas with the highest chimpanzee and elephant density, if they are not protected, human encroachment will inevitably lead to substantial human-wildlife conflicts.

- iii) **Socio-economic setting:** An estimated number of 26,698 people live within 75 towns and villages that are located within 5km around KNP. Ninety percent of these villages

have a population below 600 people. The main results demonstrate that there are three main ethnic groups living in and around the KBPPA: Krahn, Kru and Bassa, and that 96.62% are Christian. Only 30.11% had lived in these towns/villages their whole lives, suggesting a trend towards inward migration. Literacy levels were slightly above the national average, though women tended to be less literate than men (22.86% compared to 51.43% respectively).

Detailed socio-economic baseline reports led in communities around the KNP can be found in Annexes 2b, 3b and 4.

- iv) **Community, regional and national consultations:** All communities have been engaged for the past three years in creating the Kwa National Park, through a series of consultations and awareness raising programs led by FDA, Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Liberia Land Authority (LLA), and WCF. Besides the 75 communities located within 5km around Kwa National Park, additional 24 towns were included in the engagement activities, considering their importance as towns leading community clusters. In total, 78 towns gave their Free Informed Prior Consent (FPIC) and approval for the creation of the national park. This is proven through signed community consent forms, which also show consent to the harmonized boundaries, as identified through the participatory land use mapping with local communities. County and district authorities, as well as representatives from other key government institutions, such as MIA, LLA and Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and observers from national Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) witnessed the consultation meetings and also signed the consent forms. The scans of these consent forms are available in Annex 13. At the regional level, an initial awareness tour was conducted in May 2020, and final consultation in June 2023. The regional consultation was led by FDA targeted the County and District authorities, including representatives from other key ministries, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and Ministry of Public Works. The national consultation targeted key stakeholders from other government institutions, legislature, national and international NGOs, CSOs, and academia. An initial multi-stakeholder information-sharing meeting was held in December 2020 (Annex 7). Other major national consultation meeting were held through a legislative forest in November 2022 (Annex 10) and a final national consultation was held in June 2023.

The detailed report on all community, regional, and national consultation is available in Annex 11a.

- v) **Co-management & benefits:** A key result of the various consultations and also a request made by the national legislature was the development of a draft co-management framework for Kwa National Park, including a draft benefit-sharing framework and a draft Feedback Grievance Redress Mechanism. Based on the request from national legislature, these drafts are the result from intense consultation starting with an independent consultation with local communities and further consultation with government and other national and international key stakeholders. The drafts were developed by an independent national consultant and can serve as the basis for the management plan and the co-management structure to be developed after the gazettelement of Kaw National Park. The field report for the co-management consultation, the signed forms from the local communities committing to the future co-management of Kwa National Park as well as the draft Co-Management Framework can be found in Annexes 16a, b and c.
- vi) **Livelihood Strategy:** Several socio-economic studies (Annexes 2b, 3b and 4), the information from the co-management workshops (Annexs 16a and c), as well as a

specific livelihood assessment (Annex 15a) helped to develop a draft livelihood strategy, which is the basis for sustainable livelihood programs with local communities, based on their preferences. Besides direct employment through partly already ongoing programs, such as the community ecoguard program, biomonitoring and an FDA Auxiliary program, and agricultural programs linked to the establishment of conservation enterprises, improving food security and sustainable income, the ecotourism and research potential of Kwa National Park, including infrastructure development, will increase the development and economic benefits for the local population, besides providing unique opportunities for capacity building.

- vii) **Sustainable funding mechanisms:** Sustainable funding through a REDD+/carbon trade project and other forms of payments for ecosystem services are expected to be obtained for Kwa National Park, and initial funding to develop such programs after the gazettelement is available.
- viii) **Boundary lines and location:** The various surveys and feasibility studies (for summary see Annex 4), defined the initial boundaries of Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area (KBPPA) within Krahn-Bassa National Forest. Through the intense consultation with the local communities from 2020 to 2023 (Annexes 11a and b), the participatory land use mapping from 2021 to 2023 (Annexes 12a and b), and the participatory flagging of the boundary in 2023 (Annex 14) after the communities consented to the harmonized boundary, allowed to define the boundaries for Kwa National Park. During this process, the boundary line was adjusted based on the requests of the local communities. The areas of farms, towns and settlements, and one scared forest were excluded from the Kwa National Park and in some areas the proposed boundary was pushed to give more space to the local host communities and to fall behind some rivers, such as the Dubge River, Gwen Creek and Siani Creek.
- ix) **Customary Land Formalization:** Considering the Liberia Land Rights Act (2018), communities around KBPPA are entitled to go through the Customary Land Formalization (CLF) process and to obtain the deed for their land. The FDA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with USAID which requires for the USAID-funded project Conservation Works activity to support the CLF process for the communities in and around KBPPA. The MoU requires for the CLF to be done during the lifetime of the Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP). WCF, the entity contracted for the preparation of this GP, has had no influence on the CLF process, but it is anticipated that the process will start prior to the completion of the gazettelement process.

**Based on all the data collected and information provided in the GP, it is evident that the establishment of the Kwa National Park, located within the boundaries of the Krahn-Bassa National Forest/Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area is feasible, suitable and justified and it will help the Government of Liberia in achieving its objective of protecting 30% of the forests cover of Liberia and to significantly contribute to the mitigation of climate change by protecting this unique and highly diverse forest habitat. The Draft Act for the Establishment of the Kwa National Park can be found in Annex 18 for your consideration. It is fully recommended that the draft Act be presented to the National Legislature for enactment based on the justifications described in the GP.**

## **II. Introduction**

The importance of Liberian forests for biodiversity, sustainable long-term benefits and development for local communities, and the mitigation of climate change through reduced greenhouse gas emissions has been proven beyond doubt. This importance reaches from the local to national level, over the regional to global level, with Liberia holding 43% of the remaining Upper Guinea Forest block, one of the most important biodiversity hotspots in the world.

The commitment of the Liberian government to protect 30% of the remaining forest cover has been manifested in the National Forestry Reform Law (2006), while the Proposed Protected Area network had already been established before this time. Currently, there are five fully protected areas in Liberia: Sapo National Park (established in 1983), East Nimba Nature Reserve (established in 2003), Lake Piso Sustainable Multiple Use Reserve (established in 2011), Gola Forest National Park (established in 2016) and Grebo-Krahn National Park (established in 2017). At least eight additional protected areas are currently proposed and pre-gazette activities have been completed to various levels (Wonnegizi, Wologizi, Foya, Kpo Mountains, Krahn-Bassa, Cestos-Senkwehn, Grand Kru-River Gee and Marshall Wetlands Proposed Protected Areas).

Under the Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP), with funds from the Government of Norway and management support of the World Bank, the Liberian Forestry Development Authority (FDA) is working relentlessly towards the establishment of new protected areas and their sustainable management, in order to ensure sustainable long term benefits for biodiversity and people.

Since September 2016, the FDA and the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF) have been working closely together to conduct demographic, socio-economic, biodiversity and threat surveys at Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area (KBPPA). LFSP funding largely contributed to these feasibility studies, which indeed confirmed the extremely high level of biodiversity and the urgent need and suitability for the establishment of a protected area, in the case of KBPPA a national park that shall be called Kwa National Park. Since early 2020, FDA and WCF have been working towards the gazette of KBPPA, in line with FDA guidelines for the establishment of protected areas in Liberia. After the feasibility study, key steps are the community consultation and awareness, participatory land use mapping, the consultation on the consent for the establishment of the protected area and for the harmonized boundary, and the participatory flagging.

The preparation of the gazette package (GP) for Kwa National Park and its successful gazette will significantly contribute to the aim of the Liberian government to protect 30% of the remaining forests and to be a global key nation for mitigating climate change. Furthermore, it will protect one of Liberia's most diverse and unique forest areas, with an outstandingly high potential for research and ecotourism and thus unique opportunities for the local population that will actively be part of all activities through an innovative, fair and robust co-management and benefit-sharing mechanism. Finally, there is also a high potential that Kwa National Park will be (one of) the first protected area(s) in Liberia securing sustainable funding through the sale of carbon credits.

### **III. Background and description of policies, laws and instruments guiding the establishment and development of Protected Areas in Liberia**

#### ***3.1 History and background of Liberia's forest and conservation management initiatives***

The first scientific collection of specimens from Liberia was done by Schweitzer, a German Naturalist, from 1875-1877, shortly followed by a Swiss Biologist, Johann Buttikofer, who collected specimens between 1879 and 1890. Much later, in the 1920s, Harvey S. Firestone sponsored the shipment of 500 plant specimens from Harbel (Firestone plantation) to the United States of America for museum collections, and soon after, Harvard zoologists (led by Glover Allen) conducted the first field studies on an array of insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. It was not until 1951 that a first estimate of forest cover of Liberia was determined. A U.S. Army officer, Karl Meyr, interpreted aerial photographs and made some ground-truthing expeditions, from which he deduced that there was 3.6 million hectares of forest in Liberia. Following the global interest in Liberia's conservation and a new national interest in managing the exploitation of Liberia's forest, the Government of Liberia (GoL) took ownership of the governance of its forests by creating the Bureau of Forest Conservation and Wildlife in 1953 under the Act for the Conservation of Forests of the Republic of Liberia. This Act provided the authority to establish National Parks and other reserves.

From 1964 to 1968, the German Government provided a technical assistance to the GoL to conduct an inventory of 1.6 million hectares of Liberia's forest. The inventory confirmed the importance of Liberia's forests and documented many endemic and threatened fauna and flora species known today. Based on the results of the inventory, 11 National Forests (NF) were identified, all in need of conservation and sustainable forest management. The highest priorities were Sapo NF, Gola NF, Grebo NF and Krahn-Bassa NF, for which portion the latter is now to be designated as a national park.

The interest in protected and managed forest areas led to the establishment of the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) in 1976 and given the responsibility for conservation, recreational and wildlife resources, with the mandate to "sustainably manage and conserve all forest resources for the benefit of present and future generations". A Department of Wildlife and National Parks was created within the FDA to take on that main task. The World Wide Fund for Nature and African Wildlife Fund provided many capacity building programs for the FDA to ensure they achieve their mandate. Then, in 1981, Liberia became a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural resources (IUCN) and also ratified the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES). This led to Liberia receiving a technical assistant, Jacques Verschuren, who conducted a nationwide tropical forest and wildlife survey, from which he identified seven critical habitats for future conservation initiatives and protection, and to be established as national parks. This was the beginning of the creation of Liberia's first National Park – Sapo National Park - established in 1983, initially protecting 130,800 hectares of primary forest. An original management plan for the Sapo NP was sponsored by the IUCN and WWF. Such momentum also saw the enactment of the Wildlife and National Parks Act (1988) which relates to the conservation of forests, reserves, national parks and wildlife. Later on, additional laws and instruments were added to ensure the sustainable management and conservation of Liberian forests and its unique biodiversity and resources.

### **3.2 International Instruments**

The Article 34(f) of the 1986 Constitution of Liberia gives the Legislature the power to approve treaties, conventions and such other international agreements negotiated or signed on behalf of the Republic of Liberia, and as such they become nationally binding.

Liberia is a signatory to many international agreements, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES, 1982), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 1992), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement (2015), the International Timber Trade Agreement (2006) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, July 17, 1984). These treaties have resulted in several law reforms aiming to improve the management of forests while contributing to wider land-use planning and sustainable use of resources in Liberia.

Liberia has signed and ratified many international instruments related to protected areas and conservation, mainly in the form of conventions and treaties. The most important ones in the regional and global context are briefly described below:

- The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- The United Nations Convention Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, July 17, 1984)
- International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA)
- Abidjan Convention
- Nagoya Accord
- The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)
- RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands Management
- IUCN-Guidelines for Applying Protected Areas Management Category
- Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI)
- Voluntary Partnership Agreement and European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade "VPA-FLEGT")

#### **i) International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN):**

As a member of the IUCN, Liberia must adhere to the standards and criteria set by the IUCN in creating and managing protected areas. The different categories of a protected area can be national park, strict nature reserve, multiple use reserve, nature reserve and international heritage reserve. Under IUCN, a protected area is defined as "An area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means." One category of protected areas is National Parks (IUCN Category II) which are further defined as "Large natural or near natural areas set aside to protect large-scale ecological processes, along with the complement of species and ecosystems characteristic of the area, which also provide

a foundation for environmentally and culturally compatible spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities”, with the objective to “protect natural biodiversity along with its underlying ecological structure and supporting environmental processes, and to promote education and recreation.” National Parks are therefore one of the highest protection levels for a designated protected area. Following these criteria, GoL has established the Sapo National Park, the East Nimba Nature Reserve, the Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and the Gola Forest National Park. The IUCN criteria are respected for the designation of the Kwa National Park.

**ii) Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):**

Liberia ratified this convention in 2006, which sets the performance standards by which member states must follow when transforming their biodiversity conservation areas into protected areas, following the IUCN guidelines. This prompted Liberia to pledge to set aside 30% of its forest cover as protected areas. However, as it stands today, less than 6% is under protection. The establishment of the Grebo-Krahn National Park will help Liberia in achieving this target.

**iii) The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC):**

Ratified by Liberia in 2002, this convention guides the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. The treaty is not legally binding but does set the framework for countries to negotiate protocols to set limits on greenhouse gases. Programs such UN REDD and REDD+ fall under this approach, for which the funding from the Government of Norway will be provided to push Liberia forward in this direction. Protected area management could thus be supported through such initiatives.

**iv) International Timber Trade Agreement (2006)**

The objective of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006 ( is to promote the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests and to promote the sustainable management of tropical timber-producing forests.

**v) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1984)**

CEDAW is a United Nations Treaty that focuses on women's rights and women's issues worldwide. It is both an international bill of rights for women and an agenda of action. Originally adopted by the U.N. in 1979, Liberia ratified the CEDAW Treaty in 1984.

Liberia has taken steps towards upholding its obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and towards reducing discrimination against women, but much work remains to be done. The Liberian Government in 2009, amended its Inheritance Law to remove the dual legal systems for women in urban and rural areas. The Liberian Government represents that, as a result of these changes, both urban and rural women have rights to land ownership and equal rights as husband and wife inclusive of the rights to acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment, and disposition of properties. Women are free to acquire and own property exclusive of their husbands, regardless of whether it was acquired before or during the marriage, and women may also conduct lawful business in their own names.

**vi) African Convention for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (1968)**

Liberia was part of African States, assembled at Algiers, Algeria on 15th September 1968 to sign this Convention.

The Convention aims to encourage the conservation, utilization, and development of soil, water, flora, and fauna for the present and future welfare of mankind, from an economic, nutritional, scientific, educational, cultural, and aesthetic point of view.

The Contracting States committed to adopt the measures necessary to implement it in accordance with scientific principles and with due regard to the best interests of the people.

There is no known domestic legislation(s) or policy supporting the implementation of this convention.

The African Convention for the Conservation of Nature is rarely mention in reference to the reform taking place in the conservation sector in Liberia, so it is unclear whether the reforms taking place is at the result of this convention or other international convention like CITES.

**vii) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Treaty (1975)**

The Community aims to promote co-operation and integration, leading to the establishment of an economic union in West Africa to raise the living standards of its peoples and to maintain and enhance economic stability, foster relations among the Member States and contribute to the progress and development of the African Continent.

To achieve the aims set out in the paragraph above, and following the relevant provisions of this Treaty, the Community shall, by stages, ensure; the harmonization and co-ordination of national policies and the promotion of integration programs, projects, and activities, particularly in food, agriculture and natural resources, industry, transport, and communications, energy, trade, money and finance, taxation, economic reform policies, human resources, education, information, culture, science, technology, services, health, tourism, legal matters; b) the harmonization and co-ordination of policies for the protection of the environment.

Liberia adopted its Forest Convergence Plan and is part of the collaborative Management of the Zياما-Wonegizi Wologizi Transboundary Forest Landscape between Liberia and Guinea. The Governments of Liberia and Sierra Leone signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committing the two countries to protecting the Gola Transboundary Forest Landscape. The management of the Tai-Grebo-Krahn Sapo Transboundary Forest Landscape between Liberia and Côte D'Ivoire aims to implement the ECOWAS regional forest policies and plans for sustainable wood fuel production and consumption.

**viii) ECOWAS Forest convergence plan (2013)**

The Convergence Plan will strengthen inter and sub-regional cooperation in the area of forestry and wildlife while mobilizing political, institutional, financial and technical support and help to address key issues of common interest and/or transboundary nature such as: Harmonization of forest policies, laws and regulations taking into account agro-ecological peculiarities and the different institutional settings; Participation in the efforts to address desertification and soil degradation through rehabilitation of fragile and degraded ecosystems (mangroves, humid and arid zones), control of bush fires and the anarchical exploitation of shared and/or transboundary pastoral resources; Facilitating the role of local/sub-national players (regional and local administrations, farmer and other stakeholder organizations, technical departments) in the decentralized management of forest and wildlife resources and improving governance approaches while involving also women and youth; Enhancing vital services generated by different forest ecosystems, including their contribution to food security and peoples' means of subsistence and optimize the use of current opportunities related to adaptation, mitigation



and vulnerability to climate change and the way they impact forest ecosystems in the sub-region. In Liberia, there are no local policies, programs and regulations developed to support the ECOWAS Forest Convergence plan.

**ix) Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa (2015)**

The overall objective of the strategy is to prevent and reduce with the view of eliminating the illegal exploitation and illegal trade in wild fauna and flora in Africa through the domestication and implementation of an Africa-wide strategic framework. It has been formulated to guide a common, coordinated response by countries in Africa to combat the illegal exploitation and illegal trade in wild fauna and flora.

**x) West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime (2020)**

The Strategy is designed to help the ECOWAS Member States meet their obligations under multilateral environmental agreements, as well as national legal and policy commitments to biodiversity conservation. The WASCWC provides a framework for strengthening, coordinating, and operationalizing national and regional policies to combat wildlife trafficking. Mobilizing financial and technical resources to more effectively combat wildlife crime. Maximizing platforms for collaboration and information sharing at the regional level. 4. Fostering strategic partnership.

Liberia lacks capacity in critical areas of enforcement and prosecution that are needed to effectively deter wildlife crime. However, the adoption of a new wildlife law could provide stronger tools to combat illegal activities that exploit the country's wildlife and ecosystems.

### ***3.3 National Instruments:***

There are series of national instruments that have been created that guide the establishment of protected areas. A list and summary of the instruments is provided below.

- The 1986 Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, particularly Article Seven
- Forests Act, 1953
- Act Creating the Forestry Development Authority (FDA Act 1976)
- The Act Establishing Protected Forest Areas Network (2003)
- The National Environmental Policy (2002)
- Environmental Protection and Management Law (2002)
- The National Forestry Reform Law (2006)
- Community Rights Law of (2009)
- Regulation – 2017 – Forestry Development Authority Regulations to the Community Rights Law with Respect to Forest Lands
- The Land Rights Act (2018)
- An Act adopting the National Wildlife Conservation and Protect Area Management (The Wildlife Law of 2010)
- Freedom of Information Act of 2010
- The Act creating the Sapo National Park
- The Act Establishing the East Nimba Nature Reserve
- An Act Establishing the Gola Forest National Park
- An Act Establishing Grebo-Krahn National Park
- Voluntary Partnership Agreement with the European Union
- Guidelines for the Gazettement of Protected Areas in Liberia (2022)

**i) Constitution of Liberia (1986)**

The 1986 Constitution recognizes the full participation and respect for the rights of all in the sustainable management of its natural resources; and has made several efforts in this direction. Liberian constitution mandates that the management of the natural resources of Liberia shall ensure the maximum realistic participation of Liberians under conditions of equality as to advance the general welfare of the population, and the economic development of the country. Additionally, this Constitutional mandate sets the basis for many national legislations outlining the inclusive and extensive participation and respect for the rights of all including the communities in sustainable natural resources management.

The Constitution sets the foundation through which the legislature can enact laws to address prevailing challenges confronting climate change and how to sustainably manage the nature resources of Liberia.

**ii) Forests Act, 1953**

The first forest law was enacted in 1953, the Forestry Act, creating a Bureau of Forest Conservation in the new Department of Agriculture and Commerce (1948). Its core policy was to establish a permanent forest estate and it was empowered to create Government Forest Reserves, Native Authority Forest Reserves, Communal Forests and National Parks (s.iv and v). The law took care not to claim all forests (or forestland) as public property. Instead, it acknowledged that the lands where it would wish to establish Government Forest Reserves were owned and that those rights would have to be adjudicated and settled prior to their proclamation and the vesting of all rights, title and interest in them in government (Forest Act 1953 s.vi).

In laying out the reserves, which would in due course become government land, the Forest Act 1953 did not entirely forget the people. A gesture bespeaking the trend at the time ('little forests for little people') provided for communities to bring little forests under protection as Communal Forests. These were to comprise: "...small described forest areas immediately adjacent to one or more native villages, and use of these forests will be confined to the local population...as a source of forest products for (their) use..." (1953, s.viii).

**iii) Act Creating the Forestry Development Authority (FDA Act 1976)**

The FDA was created by an Act of the Legislature in 1976, which was subsequently amended in 2006 with the adoption of the Forestry Reform Law. The FDA provides forestry planning, develops forestry policy, administers and enforces the forestry laws, administers concession agreements, calculates forestry fees, carries out reforestation and forest research and training, monitors the activities of timber companies, and sets up and administers national parks.

**iv) Act for the Establishment of a Protected Forest Area Network (2003)**

This Act sets the legal framework for establishing Protected Areas and adds definitions in Chapter 2 of the National Forest Act and completely rewrites Chapter 9 so as to provide anew for establishment and management of protected areas in Liberia. In Chapter 2 various definitions regarding protected areas are revised or added. Under Chapter 9 a Protected Forest Areas Network and Conservation Corridors shall be established. These protected areas shall incorporate National Forests and at least 30 percent of the existing forest area of Liberia. The Forestry Development Authority shall propose in the Protected Forest Areas Network the appropriate protected Forest Area Category for each area to be protected. A management plan shall be established for various types of protected areas, such as a National Park and a Nature Reserve.

The Act further describes the procedure for the establishment of a protected forest area and conservation corridor.

**v) The National Environmental Policy (2002)**

Approved in 2002, this policy promotes “sustainable development and conservation of the environment on a long-term basis for the betterment of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.” The policy also states that Liberia should develop comprehensive policies, strategies and actions for the conservation of biodiversity; establish more protected areas and set up a protected area network.

**vi) Environmental Protection and Management Law (2002)**

This Act establishes a legal framework for the sustainable development, management and protection of the environment by the Environment Protection Agency in partnership with regulated Ministries and organizations. It also refers to the need to provide high quality information, advancing on the state of the environment and for related matters. Section 77 on the protection of forest sets that guidelines issued by the Agency shall take into account the fact that forest land acts as sink for greenhouse gases. Part VII, section 83, 1.g) charges the Agency to measure the value of unexploited natural resources in terms of watershed protection and influences on climate and other potential genetic value. Section 89 insists on the role of rain forests as a sink for greenhouse gases. In addition, Section 78 contains provisions on re-forestation and afforestation.

The Act has a strong alignment with the Rio Conventions, and gives the EPA regulatory, coordinating, collaborating and supervisory functions.

It ensures public participation, upholds human rights, and seeks environmental quality standards, authority to issue environmental restoration order, protecting the right to a clean and healthy environment and has the authority for pollution control and licensing.

**vii) National Forestry Reform Law (2006)**

The National Forestry Reform Law (NRFL) is the current legal instrument that guides the management of forest resources in Liberia. It is based on the “3Cs” approach: Commercial, Community and Conservation forestry. The NFRL aims at assuring the sustainable management, conservation, protection and sustainable development of Liberia forest land. It provides for rules on the ownership and use of forest resources, policy and planning in relation to forests, the commercial and other use of forest resources, contractual aspects of forest resources licenses, relations between neighboring forest areas, environmental protection, protected areas network and wildlife conservation, community rights and forests management, rights of land owners and occupants, public use of holder infrastructure, trade in forest resources, fiscal provisions, measures for the promotion of forestry and wildlife activities, dispute resolution, miscellaneous, offenses and penalties, regional and international forestry initiatives and conventions.

**viii) Community Rights Law (2006)**

This Act seeks to empower communities to fully engage in sustainable management and conservation of forests of Liberia by creating a legal framework that defines and supports community rights in the management and use of forest resources.<sup>2</sup> It provides the legal framework that empowers local communities located in or near forest lands to access, manage,

use and benefit from forest resources on those lands for sustenance and livelihood improvements as well as for community development.

**ix) Forestry Development Authority Regulations to the Community Rights Law with Respect to Forest Lands (2017)**

The Regulation was published on May 17, 2017. It reflects and expands on the legal framework provided in the Community Rights Law of 2009, which is intended to empower communities located in or around forests to access, manage, use and benefit from forest resources to sustain their livelihoods and pursue economic development. By establishing rules and procedures, the Amended CRL Regulation has the objective of (i) facilitating implementation of the CRL, (ii) clarifying rights, roles and duties of the FDA and communities engaged in community forestry programs, (iii) establishing rules and procedures to enable communities to exercise ownership of community forests, and to access, manage, use and benefit from the forest resources, and (iv) ensuring sustainable management of forest resources within community forests.

The Amended CRL Regulation requires conformity of all forestry programs managed by communities to the NFRL, CRL, statutes of Liberia, international conventions and treaties ratified by Liberia and Regulations and policies adopted by the FDA. It provides procedures for approval of an Authorized Forest Community and for executing and terminating Community Forest Management Agreements. It further sets up the governance structures of Authorized Community Forests, including roles, responsibilities, elections, tenures, meetings, etc. of the Community Assembly (the highest decision-making body of the Authorized Forest Community) and the Community Forest Management Body (the manager of the day-to-day activities pertaining to the community forest).

**x) The Land Rights Act (2018)**

The Land Rights Act ensures, for the first time, that the land rights of rural Liberians are recognized, protected, and guaranteed by law – an essential ingredient for these communities to achieve secure land rights.<sup>3</sup> Under the previous land tenure system, as much as 80 percent of Liberians lived without legally recognized rights to land.

The Act includes stronger protections for women’s land rights, including provisions for women’s participation on local land management committees.

The Land Rights Act recognizes community rights to benefit from all non-mineral natural resources. “A community’s ownership of Customary Land includes ownership and right to use and alienate, by any means, all non-mineral natural resources on the land.

**xi) An Act adopting the National Wildlife Conservation and Protect Area Management (The Wildlife Law of 2010)**

The Act was Approved and signed into Hand Bill on the 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2016. The purpose of this Act is to expand chapter 9 of the 2006 National Forest Reform Law to achieve the objective of establishing conservation areas and management of wildlife; protection of wildlife and wildlife management; provide for cooperative governance in the establishment of conservation and management of wildlife; effect a national system of conservation areas; provide for representation network of conservation areas on state land, private land and community land; promote sustainable utilization of conservation area for the benefit of people; promote participation of local communities in the management of conservation areas and wildlife and facilitate and integrated management of conservation and wildlife.

**xii) Freedom of Information Act (2010)**

This Act defines the right of the public to request, receive, review, reproduce and retain records and documents held by public bodies and private entities performing public functions or receiving public funding. The Act sets out the principles underlying access to information. The Act: Promotes effective, equitable and inexpensive exercise of the right of access to information; Establishes clear and concise procedures for requesting and providing of information held by (i) public bodies and (ii) private bodies receiving public benefits or performing public functions or providing public service; Establishes appeal procedures in relation to exercise of the right to information; Provides appropriate penalties and other sanctions for wrongful failure to keep and or provide information.

**xiii) The Act creating the Sapo National Park (1983)**

Located in the southeast, in the counties of Sinoe, River Gee and Grand Gedeh, Sapo National Park was the first fully protected area established after the creation of national forests. In 1983, the park was gazetted comprising >130,000 hectares and subsequently extended to 180,400 hectares in 2003. This first National Park of Liberia is an example of how legislation can work to protect conservation areas.

**xiv) The Act Establishing the East Nimba Nature Reserve (2011)**

In light of the international importance of Mount Nimba and the Mount Nimba UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, the East Nimba Nature reserve was gazetted in 2003. The creation of this protected area is essential in protecting the integrity of the unique Nimba highlands ecosystem and its endemic species of global conservation concern. This is the second protected area created in Liberia.

**xv) An Act Establishing the Gola Forest National Park (2017)**

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2017, the Gola Forest National Park was enacted (handbill). It has been internationally recognized as an important conservation area, most notably due to its transboundary nature with the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone. This new national park in the northwest sets objectives to achieve similar conservation targets in the southeast. The key longer-term aim of the Gola Forest is the conservation of unique wildlife and biodiversity and eco-system services while ensuring the livelihood of the forest edge communities who depend on the forest resources for their survival and economic development within the greater Gola landscape.

**xvi) An Act Establishing the Grebo-Krahn National Park (2017)**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, the Grebo-Krahn National Park was enacted (handbill). It has been internationally recognized as an area of outstanding conservation value, most notably due to its location on center of the TGKS forest landscape connecting the Ivorian forests (Taï National Park and Cavally Classified Forest) with the Liberian forests (FMC F and Sapo National Park). The key longer-term aim of the Grebo-Krahn National Par is the conservation of unique wildlife and biodiversity and eco-system services while ensuring the livelihood of the forest edge communities who depend on the forest resources for their survival and economic development within the greater TGKS forest landscape. It also should serve to ensure the peace and monitor and control cross-border activities between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

**xvii) Voluntary Partner Agreements with the EU (single countries)**

The Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between Liberia and the EU is a bi-lateral trade agreement ensuring that all timber and timber products from Liberia entering the EU market

are verified legal. The objective of the agreement is to provide a strong legal framework so that only legally produced goods leave Liberia and are imported into the EU, and, in doing so, also promote trade in timber products. In addition, the VPA provides a basis for discussion and cooperation between the Parties, helping facilitate the implementation of the Agreement thereby enhancing Liberian forest law enforcement and governance. The VPA negotiations started in 2009 and it was signed in 2011. On December 2, 2013, the Liberia-EU VPA was entered into force, and marked by Liberian officials signing project funds over to civil society organizations.

**xviii) Guidelines for the Gazettement of Protected Areas in Liberia (2022)**

In order to ensure a standardized process for the gazettelement of protected areas in Liberia, in line with existing laws, in 2021 and 2022, the guidelines for this process were developed and approved by the FDA Board in 2022.

## IV) Summary of pre-gazettelement activities and baseline studies: Justifying the designation of Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area as a National Park

### 4.1 Background of the Protected Area Network

Through funding received from the World Bank and other partners (CI, GIZ, FFI, WCF, etc.), the FDA has been working on expanding and consolidating its Protected Area Network (PAN) to enable active conservation and sustainable management of Liberia's forests and biodiversity, with the local communities. The establishment of the PAN is based on a three-phase approach. Phase 1 consisted of creating and ensuring the management of Sapo National Park, Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve and the East Nimba Nature Reserve. Phase 2 consisted of establishing the Grebo-Krahn National Park, Wonnegizi Nature Reserve and Gola Forest National Park. The Gola Forest and Grebo-Krahn National Park gazettelement was completed in 2017, while the gazettelement of Wonnegizi is still pending. Phase 3 consists of creating the remaining Proposed Protected Areas, with significant progress being made for Krahn-Bassa, Foya, Kpo Mountains and Marshall Wetlands. The existing protected areas and proposed protected areas in the network are presented in the map below (Figure 1).

### Protected Area Network Liberia

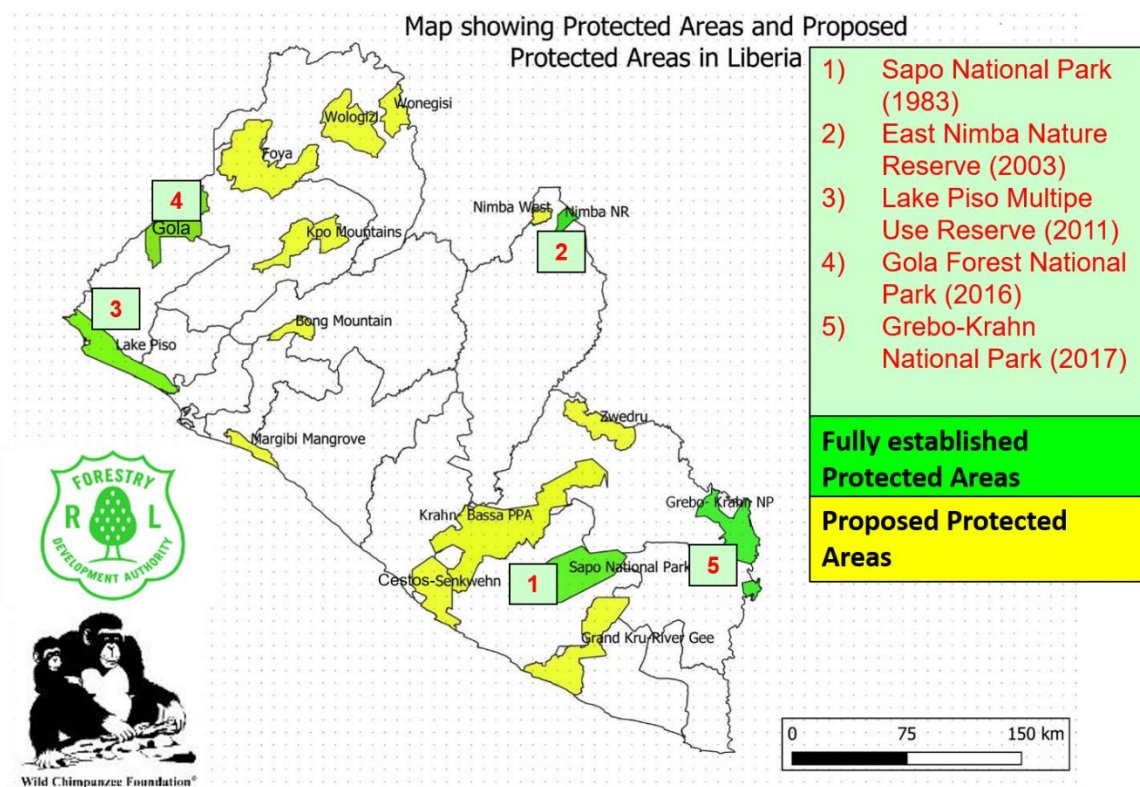
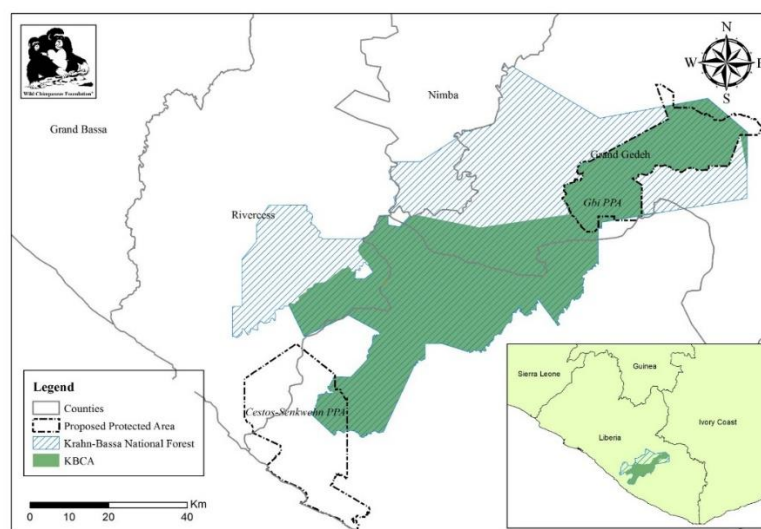


Figure 1: Map of protected and proposed protected areas in Liberia.

## 4.2 History of Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area

In late 2016, the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF) launched a new project in southeastern Liberia - “Assessing the Conservation Potential of the Krahn-Bassa National Forest” (KBNF). Previous research showed the KBNF to be Liberia’s top Conservation Priority Area (CPA), based on forest cover, human settlements, presence/absence of large mammals, endemism and elevation (Junker et al. 2015). Moreover, within the KBNF lies the Gbi Proposed Protected Area and the edges of Cestos-Senkwehn PPA, two PPAs within FDA’s current Proposed Protected Area Network (PAN), designed in 2007 following the National Forestry Reform Law (NFRL) of 2006 (An Act Adopting The National Forestry Reform Law Of 2006, 2006). It became apparent that a large portion of the Gbi PPA had been removed by the awarding of the Neezonie Community Forest. As such, FDA requested WCF to explore any remaining unallocated land with the KBNF, including the aforementioned areas, and using an evidence-based approach, an area within the Krahn-Bassa National Forest was selected. This led to the official extension of Gbi to Krahn-Bassa PPA, which henceforth was the area targeted for surveys and future protection.

After FDA requested WCF to explore a larger area within KBNF, a desktop review of spatial data looking into the allocated land-use in and around the KBPPA and KBNF was performed. The land uses discovered were four allocated logging concession (FMCs: B, C, I and K), one unallocated logging concession (FMC H) and three Commercial Community Forests (Boe Quilla, Doru and Neezonie). WCF was informed by the responsible FDA senior management in 2016 that under the terms of the Norway agreement that FMC H would never be allocated and that any unallocated land within KBNF could be included within the potential boundary line. Based on this advice an area of 290,167 ha was created and named the Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area (KBPPA, Figure 2), where the feasibility studies were performed to ascertain the benefit of creating a protected area within KBNF. Later on, the consultations at all level showed that there was a serious concern about the name Krahn-Bassa, as it does not include all relevant tribes. This is how the name “Kwa” was suggested for the future national park by many stakeholders.

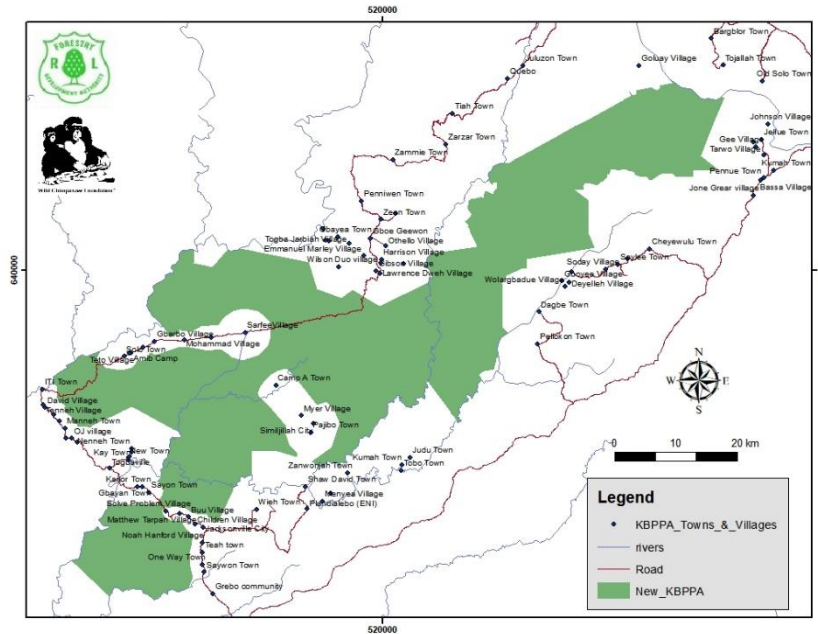


**Figure 2:** Map showing the Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area (in green) inside the Krahn-Bassa National Forest (in stripes) where baseline surveys and the feasibility study took place, covering an area of 290,167 ha.



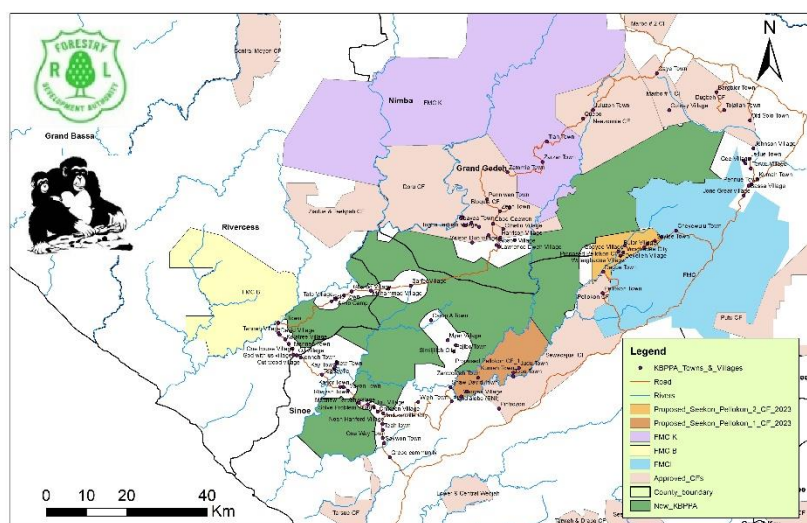
### 4.3 Location, size and boundaries of the Kwa National Park

The Kwa National Park (KNP) is located across three counties in southeastern Liberia – Sinoe, Grand Gedeh and River Cess. In Sinoe County, it is located in Sanquin, Tarjuowon, and Seekon Districts, in Grand Gedeh County in Gbarzon, Cavalla, and Tchien Districts., and in Rivercess County in Yarnee District (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Map showing the location and the adjusted boundaries of Kwa National Park, now covering 236,246 hectares.

KNP is entirely located inside the Krahn-Bassa National Forest, and is surrounded by eight operational community forests focusing on logging activities (Zaidue & Teekpah, Doru, Bloquia, Neezonie, Marbo 1, Dugbe, Pellokon, and Sewacajua). The new Seekon Community Forest is expected to be added shortly. Furthermore, KNP is surrounded by three Forest Management Contracts (FMC B, K and I) (Figure 4). In the South, KNP connects to Cestos-Senkwehn Proposed Protected Area.



**Figure 4:** Kwa National Park with surrounding community forests and Forest Management Contracts/logging concessions.

The total size of Kwa National Park is 236,246 hectares (583,776.58 acres), with 126,401 hectares being located in Sinoe County, 89,126 hectares in Grand Gedeh County, and 20,719 hectares in Rivercess County (Figure 5).

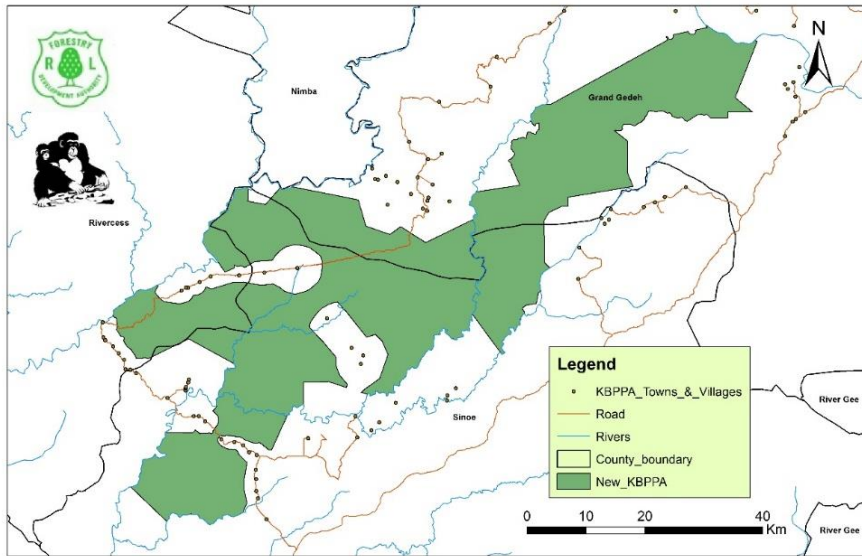


Figure 5: Map showing the location of Kwa National Park with county boundaries.

Several major rivers are passing across and aside KNP. On the western side, the Cestos River and the Gwen Creek are marking the boundary of the national Park. The Senkwehn River, Siani Creek, Juboe Creek, and Bankui Creek are passing through the western part of the park, the Kulu Shaw Boe (also called Joboe or Jumbo River) through the central part. On the north-eastern side, the Dugbe River is marking a short portion of the park's boundary (Figure 5).

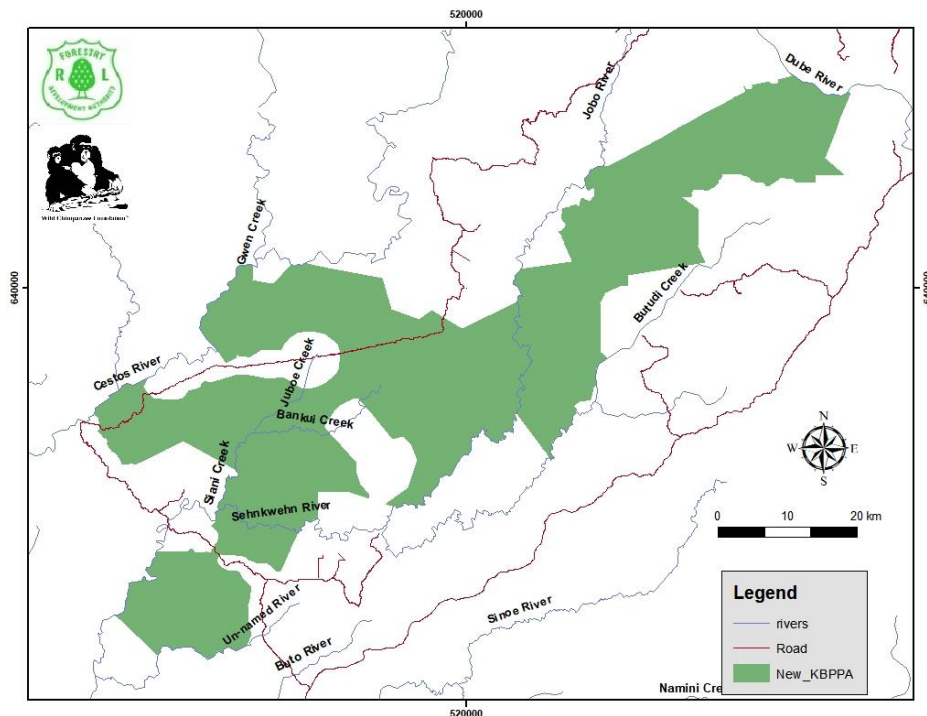


Figure 6: Map showing the major rivers found in and around Kwa National Park.

#### 4.4 Metes and Bounds

The coordinate system used for the metes and bounds is UTM Zone 29N. Table 1 shows the coordinated of the bounds.

**Table 1: Coordinates of the bounds for Kwa National Park.**

Point name	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Longitude (X)	539610	537003	538578	538554	537955	533874	533380
Latitude (Y)	657526	654612	654415	653283	652507	651167	647992
Point name	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
Longitude (X)	534013	533856	535311	527875	527351	519347	515094
Latitude (Y)	647257	647192	643846	642745	638046	634138	636850
Point name	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Longitude (X)	513226	509178	507864	496636	494656	492122	489147
Latitude (Y)	635508	636936	641384	643609	643432	640600	641155
Point name	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB
Longitude (X)	489197	484056	485280	487952	488639	490336	493276
Latitude (Y)	643261	630884	629119	630210	629915	630932	631124
Point name	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI
Longitude (X)	495561	497030	501741	499525	501466	501475	499528
Latitude (Y)	633427	633784	630091	633341	631857	628256	626151
Point name	AJ	AK	AL	AM	AN	AO	AP
Longitude (X)	497173	495363	493437	491430	486600	482962	477951
Latitude (Y)	625384	625882	610545	626895	627386	626285	623822
Point name	AQ	AR	AS	AT	AU	AV	AW
Longitude (X)	474872	473388	473978	466242	466884	466805	467629
Latitude (Y)	624147	625785	626980	621820	621163	619376	618197
Point name	AX	AY	AZ	BA	BB	BC	BD
Longitude (X)	527236	532008	536059	536122	536074	535704	536742
Latitude (Y)	622021	615534	622121	622159	622159	622891	623566
Point name	BE	BF	BG	BH	BI	BJ	BK
Longitude (X)	538109	538443	538411	538635	538838	540426	539503
Latitude (Y)	623817	625548	625613	625731	626046	630732	630732
Point name	BL	BM	BN	BO	BP	BR	BS

Longitude (X)	542514	543510	543464	554520	553553	551319	552903
Latitude (Y)	640320	640276	641812	643660	645999	653109	654165
Point name	BT	BU	BV	BW	BX	BY	BZ
Longitude (X)	557103	559287	562767	567016	567664	570633	570637
Latitude (Y)	557103	656493	655365	655869	655221	655290	656261
Point name	CA	CB	CC	CD	CE	CF	CG
Longitude (X)	574788	571850	575558	575181	574233	572429	566795
Latitude (Y)	656259	658714	668202	668422	667802	667861	671078
Point name	CH	CI	CJ	CK	CL	CM	
Longitude (X)	566843	567152	564670	560362	540461	539632	
Latitude (Y)	670970	670621	669400	668451	657532	657534	

*The metes and bounds are as follows:*

- a) The Kwa National Park (NP) is located in southern Liberia in Sinoe, Grand Gedeh and River Cee Counties. It lies within latitudes  $5^{\circ}18'0''N$  and  $6^{\circ}6'0''N$  and longitudes  $9^{\circ}19'0''W$  and  $8^{\circ}17'0''W$ .
- b) The Kwa National Park commencing at the point A on the Kulu Jobo River, thence  $221.47^{\circ}$  SW and follows the Kulu Jobo River to the point B at the confluence between the Kulu Jobo River and its affluent; thence from B,  $96.8^{\circ}$  SE and follows the affluent of the Kulu Jobo River to the point C; thence from C,  $181.2^{\circ}$  SW on 1.14 km and chains to the point D; thence from D,  $217.66^{\circ}$  SW on 0.98 km and chains to the point D1, on the Unnamed road; thence from D1,  $282.68^{\circ}$  NW and follows the Unnamed road to the point D11; thence from D11,  $172.28^{\circ}$  SE and follows the Unnamed road to the point E, at the junction of the Unnamed road; thence from E,  $139.26^{\circ}$  SE on 0.97 km and chains to the point F; thence from F,  $241.63^{\circ}$  SW on 0.17 km and chains to the point G; thence from G,  $156.5^{\circ}$  SE on 3.63 km and chains to the point H; thence from H,  $261.58^{\circ}$  SW on 7.52 km and chains to the point H1, on the Kulu Jobo River; thence from H1,  $219.57^{\circ}$  SW and follows the Kulu Jobo River to the point H2; thence from H2,  $243.97^{\circ}$  SW on 8.91 km and chains to the point H3; thence from H3,  $302.53^{\circ}$  NW on 5.04 km and chains to the point H4; thence from H4,  $234.31^{\circ}$  SW on 2.3 km and chains to the point H5; thence from H5,  $289.44^{\circ}$  NW on 4.29 km and chains to the point H6; thence from H6,  $343.55^{\circ}$  NW on 4.64 km and chains to the point H7; thence from H7,  $281.21^{\circ}$  NW on 11.55 km and chains to the point J; thence from J,  $249.57^{\circ}$  SW and follows the Cestos River to the point K; thence from K,  $221.82^{\circ}$  SW on 3.92 km and chains to the point L; thence from L,  $280.57^{\circ}$  NW on 3.03 km and chains to the point M; thence from M,  $1.36^{\circ}$  NE on 2.11 km and chains to the point N, on the River Cess; thence from N,  $308.48^{\circ}$  NW and follows the River Cess to the point O; thence from O,  $146.82^{\circ}$  SE on 2.05 km and chains to the point O1; thence from O1,  $67.77^{\circ}$  NE on 2.89 km and chains to the point O2; thence from O2,  $113.24^{\circ}$  SE on 0.75 km and chains to the point O3; thence from O3,  $59.06^{\circ}$  NE on 1.98 km and chains to the point O4; thence from O4,  $86.26^{\circ}$  NE on 2.95 km and chains to the point O5; thence from O5,  $44.78^{\circ}$  NE on 3.24 km and chains to the point O6; thence from O6,  $76.33^{\circ}$  NE on 1.51 km and chains to the point O7; thence from O7,  $100.07^{\circ}$  SE on 2.53 km and chains to the point O10;

thence from O10, 188.27° SW on 1.85 km and chains to the point O8; thence from O8, 127.42° SE on 2.44 km and chains to the point O9; thence from O9, 171.14° SE on 1.79 km and chains to the point O11; thence from O11, 222.77° SW on 2.87 km and chains to the point O12; thence from O12, 251.95° SW on 2.48 km and chains to the point O13; thence from O13, 285.37° NW on 1.88 km and chains to the point O14; thence from O14, 302.74° NW on 2.29 km and chains to the point O15; thence from O15, 263.6° SW on 2.02 km and chains to the point O16; thence from O16, 275.81° NW on 4.86 km and chains to the point O17; thence from O17, 253.16° SW on 3.8 km and chains to the point O18; thence from O18, 243.82° SW on 5.58 km and chains to the point O19; thence from O19, 276.03° NW on 3.1 km and chains to the point O20; thence from O20, 317.81° NW on 2.21 km and chains to the point O21; thence from O21, 330.42° NW on 0.79 km and chains to the point O22, on the River Cess; thence from O22, 250.3° SW on and chains to the point S1; thence from S1, 130.95° SE on 0.7 km and chains to the point S2; thence from S2, 182.53° SW on 1.79 km and chains to the point S3; thence from S3, 145.03° SE on 1.44 km and chains to the point S4; thence from S4, 84.17° NE on 0.36 km and chains to the point S5; thence from S5, 155.16° SE on 0.44 km and chains to the point S6; thence from S6, 201.28° SW on 0.33 km and chains to the point S7; thence from S7, 147.39° SE on 1.26 km and chains to the point S8; thence from S8, 137.66° SE on 1.97 km and chains to the point S9; thence from S9, 116.22° SE on 1.19 km and chains to the point S10; thence from S10, 87.47° NE on 1.29 km and chains to the point S11; thence from S11, 63.88° NE on 7.44 km and chains to the point Y; thence from Y, 118.58° SE on 8.86 km and chains to the point Z, on the affluent of the Senkwehn River; thence from Z, 153° SE and follows the affluent of the Senkwehn River to the point AA; thence from AA, 252.57° SW and follows the affluent of the Senkwehn River to the point AB, at the confluence of two affluents of the Senkwehn River; thence from AB, 222.53° SW on 1.08 km and chains to the point AB1; thence from AB1, 144.12° SE on 1.75 km and chains to the point AB2; thence from AB2, 204.01° SW on 2.55 km and chains to the point AB3; thence from AB3, 267.37° SW on 2.21 km and chains to the point AB4; thence from AB4, 310.58° NW on 0.96 km and chains to the point AB5; thence from AB5, 222.48° SW on 0.7 km and chains to the point AC; thence from AC, 271.23° NW on 4.44 km and chains to the point AD, on the Senkwehn River; thence from AD, 182.05° SW and follows the Senkwehn River to the point AE; thence from AE, 133.45° SE on 8.53 km and chains to the point AF, on the affluent of the Senkwehn River; thence from AF, 45.9° NE and follows the affluent of the Senkwehn River to the point AG; thence from AG, 23.59° NE on 2.62 km and chains to the point AG1, on the ; thence from AG1, 353.06° NW on 4.05 km and chains to the point AG2; thence from AG2, 9.67° NE on 2.86 km and chains to the point AG3; thence from AG3, 317.94° NW on 2.99 km and chains to the point AG4; thence from AG4, 274.45° NW on 1.43 km and chains to the point AG6; thence from AG6, 308.99° NW on 1.91 km and chains to the point AG7; thence from AG7, 28.67° NE on 1.18 km and chains to the point AG8; thence from AG8, 96.53° SE on 3.6 km and chains to the point AG9; thence from AG9, 105.3° SE on 3.1 km and chains to the point AG10; thence from AG10, 123.13° SE on 2.32 km and chains to the point AG11; thence from AG11, 24.7° NE on 6.42 km and chains to the point AH; thence from AH, 68.41° NE and follows the Senkwehn River to the point AI; thence from AI, 0°/360° N on 3.88 km and chains to the point AJ; thence from AJ, 89.22° NE on 4.27 km and chains to the point AK; thence from AK, 108° SE on 3.15 km and chains to the point AK1, on the ; thence from AK1, 334.65° NW on 4.04 km and chains to the point AK2; thence from AK2, 1.14° NE on 1.43 km and chains to the point AK3; thence from AK3, 318.15° NW on 6.74 km and chains to the point AK4; thence from

AK4, 27.18° NE on 2.97 km and chains to the point AK5; thence from AK5, 62.92° NE on 3.76 km and chains to the point AK6; thence from AK6, 140.32° SE on 7.68 km and chains to the point AK7; thence from AK7, 74.3° NE on 1.56 km and chains to the point AK8; thence from AK8, 133.28° SE on 1.56 km and chains to the point AK9; thence from AK9, 156.53° SE on 2.53 km and chains to the point AK10; thence from AK10, 199° SW on 4.27 km and chains to the point AK11; thence from AK11, 217.4° SW on 3.42 km and chains to the point AL; thence from AL, 58.81° NE and follows the Kulu Jobo River to the point AM; thence from AM, 143.93° SE on 8.13 km and chains to the point AN, on the affluent of the Senkwehn River; thence from AN, 137.67° SE and follows the affluent of the Senkwehn River to the point AN1; thence from AN1, 332.2° NW on 0.79 km and chains to the point AN2; thence from AN2, 56.97° NE on 1.24 km and chains to the point AN3; thence from AN3, 79.6° NE on 1.39 km and chains to the point AN4; thence from AN4, 10.94° NE on 1.76 km and chains to the point AN5; thence from AN5, 6.55° NE on 1.74 km and chains to the point AN6; thence from AN6, 20.31° NE on 2 km and chains to the point AN7; thence from AN7, 6.02° NE on 1.59 km and chains to the point AN8; thence from AN8, 359.24° NW on 7.1 km and chains to the point AN9; thence from AN9, 51.34° NE on 3.98 km and chains to the point AQ; thence from AQ, 92.53° SE on 1 km and chains to the point AR; thence from AR, 358.28° NW on 1.54 km and chains to the point AS; thence from AS, 80.51° NE on 11.21 km and chains to the point AT; thence from AT, 337.55° NW on 2.53 km and chains to the point AW; thence from AW, 0.49° NE on 5.36 km and chains to the point AX; thence from AX, 307.54° NW on 2.88 km and chains to the point AY; thence from AY, 56.31° NE on 1.9 km and chains to the point AZ; thence from AZ, 62.01° NE on 4.76 km and chains to the point BA; thence from BA, 87.48° NE on 2.19 km and chains to the point BB; thence from BB, 107.96° SE on 3.66 km and chains to the point BC; thence from BC, 83.24° NE on 4.28 km and chains to the point BD; thence from BD, 135° SE on 0.92 km and chains to the point BE; thence from BE, 88.67° NE on 2.97 km and chains to the point BF; thence from BF, 0.24° NE on 0.97 km and chains to the point BG; thence from BG, 90.02° SE on 4.15 km and chains to the point BG1; thence from BG1, 309.88° NW on 3.83 km and chains to the point BG2; thence from BG2, 21.35° NE on 10.19 km and chains to the point BG3; thence from BG3, 300.23° NW on 0.44 km and chains to the point BG4; thence from BG4, 236.82° SW on 1.13 km and chains to the point BG5; thence from BG5, 271.85° NW on 1.81 km and chains to the point BG6; thence from BG6, 297.62° NW on 5.95 km and chains to the point BG7; thence from BG7, 243.8° SW on 2.77 km and chains to the point BG8; thence from BG8, 257.58° SW on 4.41 km and chains to the point BO; thence from BO, 241.25° SW on 22.7 km and chains to the point BP; thence from BP, 270.46° NW on 0.87 km and chains back to the point A, on the Kulu Jobo River; thence from BP to BQ, 91.22° SE at 4.4km and chains 219.79 to the point BQ; thence from BQ to BR at 0.18km and 116.60°SE, and chains 9.15 to the point BR to BS, and follows Senkwehn River NW at 212.49°; thence from BS to BT at 8.4km with a bearing of 313° NW and chains 421.12 to the point BT; thence from BT to BU and follows an Wion River at 83.73°; thence from BU to BV, 203° SW at 1.8km and chains 90.33; thence from BV to BW, 346° NW at 4.06km and chains 202.03; thence from BW to BX 20° at 2.86km and chains 142.17 to the point BX; thence from BX to BY, 263° NW at 0.276km and chains 13.73.

- c) The Kwa NP covers an area of 236,246 hectares (583,776.58 acres).

#### ***4.5 Summary of Fauna and Flora Assessment***

Results from nationwide surveys and ecological modeling have identified KNP as the most diverse area for biodiversity in the whole of Liberia (Junker et al. 2015) and that it is a biodiversity hotspot within a hotspot. Specific KNP biodiversity surveys conducted between 2016 and 2019 (WCF 2017, 2019), as well as results from community ecoguard patrols from 2020 to 2023 have shown that KNP is home to the second largest populations of the critically endangered West African chimpanzee, as well as a very large population of critically endangered forest elephant, the endangered pygmy hippopotamus, vulnerable leopards, and various threatened monkey and duiker species, to name a few. Furthermore, the results from biological rapid assessments in various taxonomic groups, such as plants, birds, amphibians and reptiles, butterflies and beetles, have identified several new species to science of trees (4 species, Jongkind 2019), and frogs (2 species, Rödel et al. 2019). The beetle survey has identified a large number of first country records, and the total number of species found during the surveys is not yet known. In total, the various surveys showed that KNP hosts more than 411 species of fauna of different kinds of taxonomic groups, excluding the beetles (39 species of mammals, 110 species of birds, 15 species of reptiles, 36 species of amphibians, 209 species of butterflies). These species include 30 species of conservation concern, which are species listed as threatened (critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable) on the IUCN Red list (IUCN 2023) and many of which are endemic to the Upper Guinea forest ecosystem. For the floral aspect, the surveys confirmed the presence of 344 species of plants. A full list of faunal and floral species so far observed at KNP is presented in Annex 17, while full biodiversity baseline reports can be found in annexes 2c, 3b and 4.

Given the potentially outstanding high conservation value of the Krahn-Bassa National Forest (KBNF), its strategic location connecting to the Tai-Grebo-Krahn-Sapo (TGKS) Transboundary Forest Landscape and Cestos-Senkwehn PPA and considering the commitment of the Liberian government to protect 30% of its forest cover through the creation of a Protected Area Network (PAN), FDA and WCF were successful in gaining funds in 2016 for initial demographic, socio-economic and biodiversity/anthropogenic surveys of KBNF. Funding was acquired through the Great Ape Conservation Fund (GACF) of the US Fish and Wildlife Service as well as the German-based Rainforest Rescue initiative. The project started in September 2016. Data collection for the socio-economic survey was completed in March 2017, the data collection for the biodiversity survey, focusing on chimpanzees, other large mammals and anthropogenic threats, was finalized in August 2017.

Furthermore, from December 2017 to September 2019, WCF was contracted by the FDA to conduct the feasibility studies for Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area, including the biodiversity and threat assessment, which allowed to conduct additional surveys, such as biodiversity rapid assessment with national and international experts for various taxonomic groups (birds, amphibians, reptiles, butterflies, beetles, plants) and camera trap surveys.

The detailed surveys are presented in Annexes 2c, 3b and 4.

The baseline data collection focusing more on mammal diversity and density as well as threats with an extensive line transect survey, took place between the December 2016 and June 2017 and was performed by four teams. Data was collected on all direct observations of large mammals and indirect observations for target species. Indirect observations included vocalizations, dung, tracks and nests (as explained above for chimpanzees). Perpendicular distance measurements were taken for elephant dung, chimpanzee nests and nut-cracking sites,



direct observations of monkeys and duikers. Details of the methodology used can be found in the guidebook (WCF 2016). Overall, the teams walked a total of 238 km of transects within KBPPA, representing 98.35% of the theoretical survey effort (L = 242 km) (see Figure 7 for transect layout).

Results showed the presence of 58 species including mammals, birds and reptiles. Included within the mammal observations were four species of duiker, ten primate species and the presence of forest elephants and pygmy hippopotamuses. Encounter rates for selected large mammal species can be found in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Table showing encounter rates of selected species.

Species/Groups of species	Encounter Rate (Signs/km)
Monkeys	0.37
Chimpanzees	0.95
Bovids	4.21
Elephant	1.07
Pygmy hippopotamus	0.05

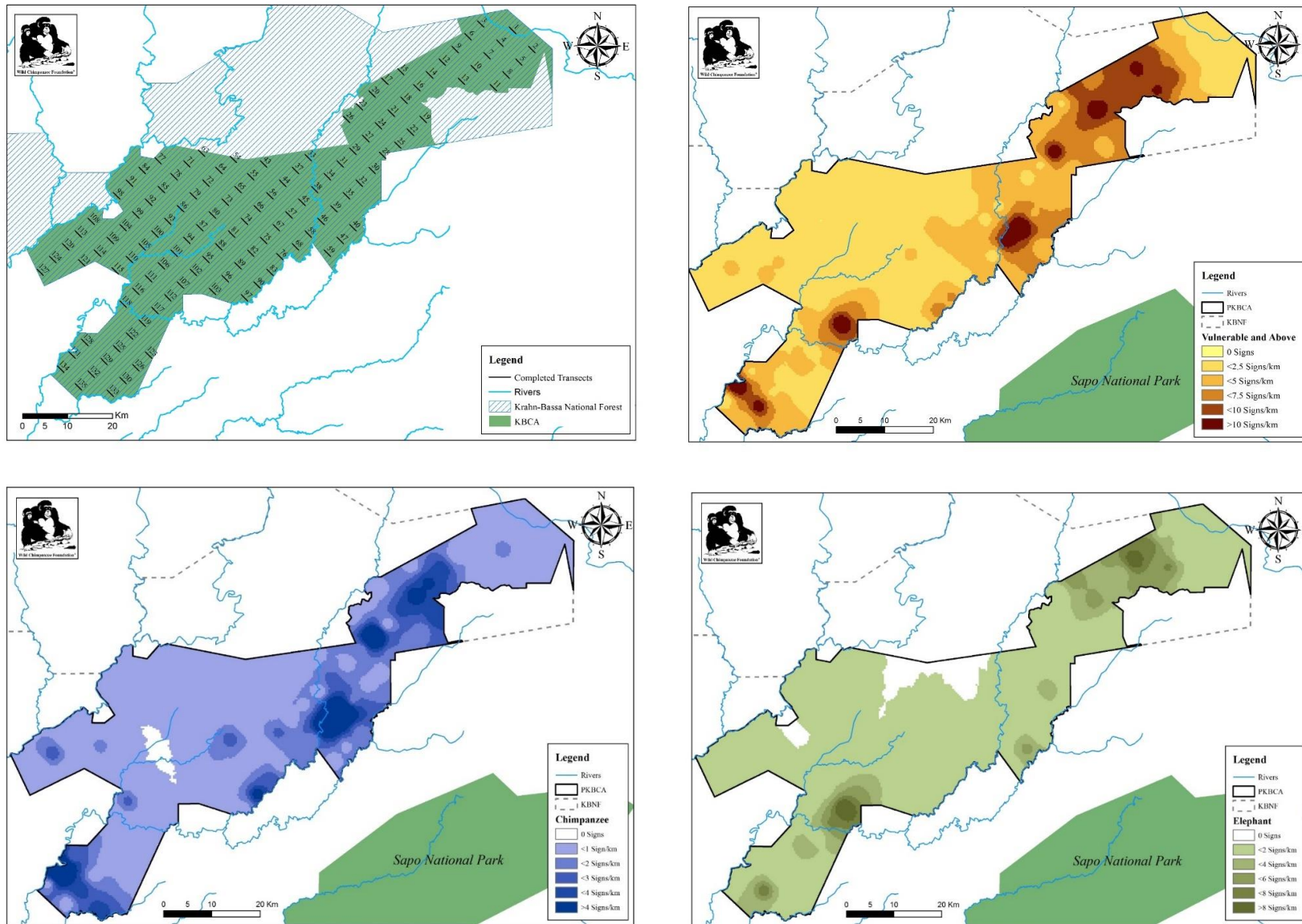
Alongside the selected mammals mentioned above, the presence of 13 species which are listed as critically endangered, endangered and vulnerable (by the IUCN Red List) were also located within the KBPPA. The encounter rate for mammals listed as vulnerable or a higher threat status is 2.75 signs/km. Areas of high abundance of signs are found in Grand Gedeh County (part of the original Gbi PPA) and along the southern border of KBPPA. A large area of seemingly low abundance of signs can be found in the central and western areas, including all of River Cess County within KBPPA and areas in Grand Gedeh and Sinoe Counties.

Signs of chimpanzees were found throughout the Proposed Krahn-Bassa Conservation Area. The eastern side of KBPPA (South, Central and North) show high abundance of signs of chimpanzees (Figure ). In River Cess and in the western centre of KBPPA, there is an area of low abundance of signs of chimpanzees (Figure ). In order for a reliable population density estimate of chimpanzees to be performed, any wildlife survey must have a minimum number of 60 observations of chimpanzee nests. During the wildlife survey in KBPPA 172 nest observations were made, allowing for a population estimate to be made using Distance 7.1 software. The density of chimpanzees was calculated to be 0.151 weaned chimpanzees per km<sup>2</sup>. Consequently, their population size was 438 weaned individuals and a total population of 515 including juveniles/infants.

Signs of elephants were found almost throughout KBPPA, although in the centre of the survey area and in the survey area located in Rivercess County, there were seemingly few or no signs (Figure ). In Sinoe County and Grand Gedeh County areas of high numbers of signs of elephant presence were detected. Additionally, off transect a further 208 signs were seen (73 dung, 43 tracks and 92 paths) suggesting that there could be a relatively large elephant population in KBPPA. Unfortunately, of the 68 dung observed on-transect, only 12 were in the decay stages



of 1-3 and therefore the only dung that could have been used to calculate the population estimate, which is way below the 60 needed.

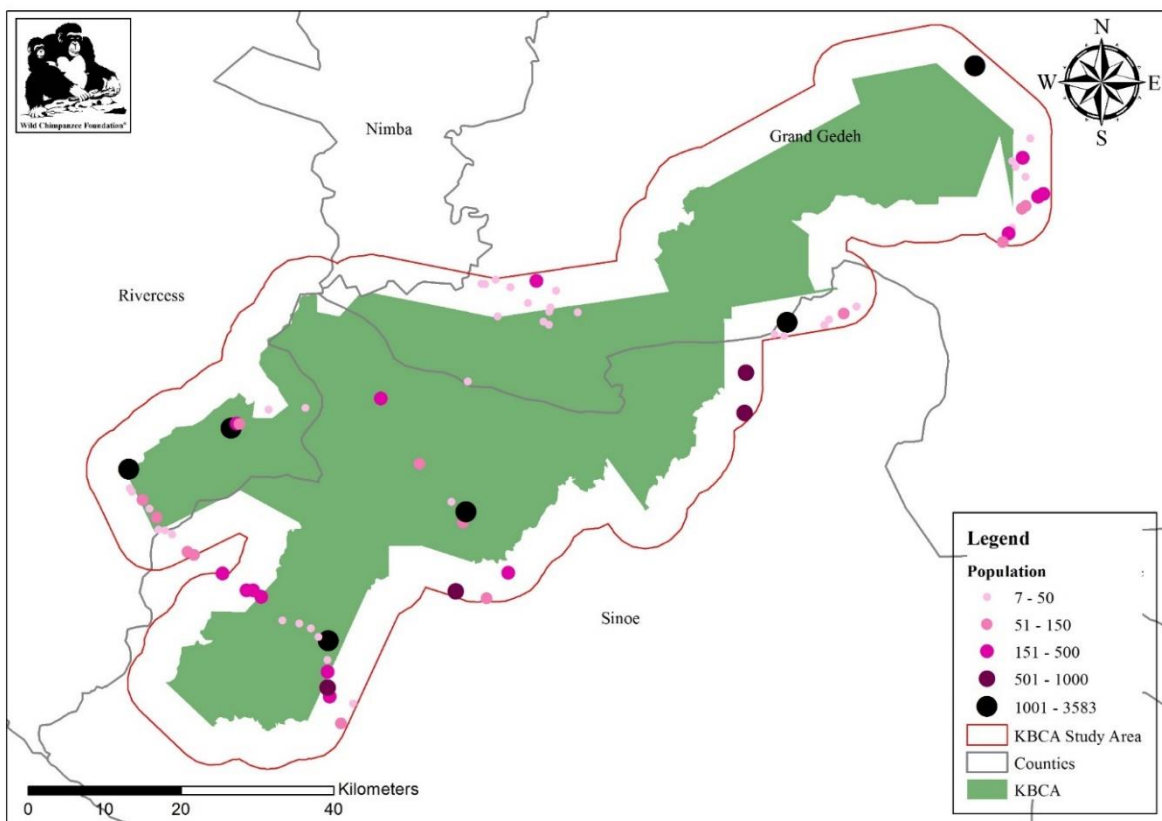


**Figure 7.** Map showing transect layout for the baseline wildlife survey (top left). Spatial distribution maps of species listed vulnerable and above (top right), chimpanzees (bottom left) and elephants (bottom right).

### **Summary of demographic surveys and anthropogenic activities assessment**

The detailed reports for the demographic and socio-economic surveys, as well as the livelihood assessment can be found in Annexes 2a,b, 3b, 4, and 15a.

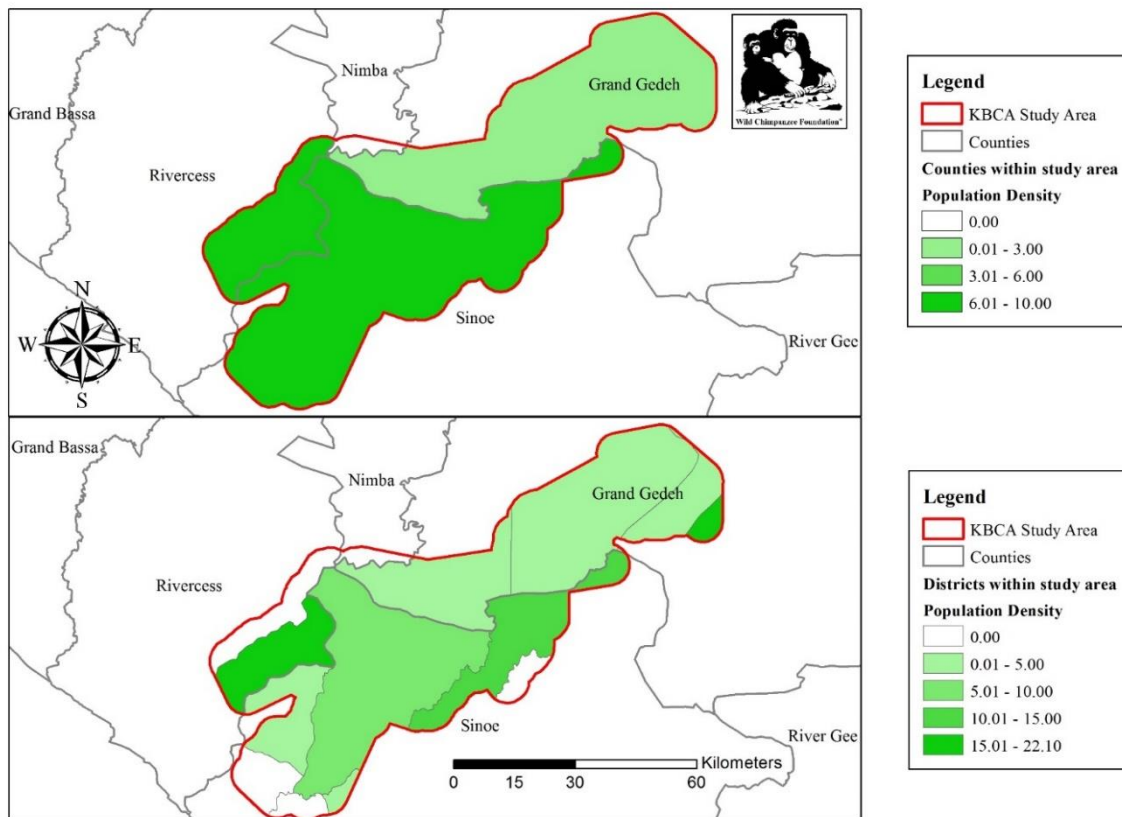
Due to the size of KBPPA (290,167 ha), it was decided to limit detailed initial data collection on settlements to a 5 km zone directly surrounding KBPPA and settlements situated within KBPPA, in a total of 3 counties and 14 districts. During data collection, 228 settlements were visited, with 75 of these falling within the study area (28 in KBPPA with a population of 13,328 inhabitants and 47 within the 5 km buffer zone with a population of 13,370 inhabitants). In these 75 towns/villages, population estimates show that there are 26,698 people currently living there (Figure 8).



**Figure 8:** Map showing villages within the KBPPA study area with point size a function of population size.

Population densities were calculated within the study area per county and per district (Figure 9). In Grand Gedeh County, the population density is 2.71 individuals/km<sup>2</sup>, while Sinoe County has a population density of 6.40 individuals/km<sup>2</sup> and River Cess County 10.08 individuals/km<sup>2</sup>. Sinoe County, representing the largest county by area in the survey area (2,449km<sup>2</sup>), contains three of the largest towns/cities and also the highest number of settlements in the survey area. However, even though River Cess County has a relatively small surface area (573km<sup>2</sup>), it has two very large towns/cities (ITI Town and Solo Town).

Five districts within the KBPPA study area have a population density of 0 individuals/km<sup>2</sup>: Pynes Town, Sanquin District #2 and Sanquin District #3 (Sinoe County); Central River Cess County (River Cess County). Tchien District in Grand Gedeh County, located in the buffer zone, has the highest population density (22.12 individuals/km<sup>2</sup>), while Yarnee District in River Cess County has the second highest population density of 16.54 individuals/km<sup>2</sup>, mainly due to the presence of both ITI Town and Solo Town, combined with a smaller surface area (349 km<sup>2</sup>), both of which are located within KBPPA.



**Figure 9:** Population densities within the KBPPA study zone per County (top) and District (bottom).

All roads that the team used during the survey were recorded using the tracklog of the GPS. In total, the team traversed 1,128 km during the scoping mission, 797 km of these were car roads, while 106 km were motorbike roads and 225 km were human paths. There are four main car roads which surround and go through KBPPA. Northwest of KBPPA is the Zwedru-Ganta Highway, the Sinoe Road runs along the southeastern edge of KBPPA, the Greenville Road passes through KBPPA in the southwestern region and the ITI Highway is a logging road which passes from ITI Town to Gboe-Geewon through KBPPA.

Socio-economic were collected between January and March 2017, as well as in February and march 2018. Overall, 820 households were interviewed in the three counties in which KBPPA is located (Grand Gedeh, River Cess and Sinoe Counties). The main results demonstrate that there are three main ethnic groups living in and around the KBPPA: Krahn, Kru and Bassa, and that

96.62% are Christian. Only 30.11% had lived in these towns/villages their whole lives, suggesting a trend towards inward migration. Literacy levels were slightly above the national average, though women tended to be less literate than men (22.86% compared to 51.43% respectively).

The majority of persons are farmers with hunting as a secondary economic activity. Overall, nearly two thirds of people interviewed took part in some form of hunting, on average 10.32 days a month. The majority (76.80%) of the hunting is done inside the KBPPA, mostly using traps (79.18%). The main reason for people to hunt was financial gain, while farming activities seemed to be for personal and family consumption, though a more in-depth study on this aspect should be done in the future. In relation to their diet, fish was the protein eaten most regularly, with 85.93% declaring to consume it on a daily basis, followed by duiker meat (42.20% consume it on a daily basis). Chimpanzee was the species most likely to never have been consumed by the respondents (84.62%).

As to the participants' perception on conservation issues, 46.37% said that hunting and the sale of bushmeat does have an effect on the decrease of wildlife in the forest, 79.65% stated that they thought forest conservation was good, mostly in relation to future generations, and 74.95% stated that it is important to protect chimpanzees. Lastly, when asked which projects communities would like to benefit from, agricultural support (42.42%) and loan/micro-credit programs (35.16%) were the most wanted.

Overall, the study provided baseline socio-economic data on the human population of the KBPPA providing a first understanding on the conservation issues at hand in relation to the communities there. Little conservation action has been led there in recent years and, as a priority, it is recommended that FDA increases its presence to liaise with communities to improve the latter's understanding towards current conservation issues and the protection of KBPPA and local wildlife. Moreover, prior to the creation of a future protected area, and seeing that the majority of community members believe the forest should be protected, we suggest that much awareness raising should be done, focusing on the effect of forest degradation, the over-hunting of wildlife, the dangers for humans of consuming bushmeat, the pet trade, etc. Engaging communities at the outset of a conservation project might prove important for the future protection of the KPPPA.

### ***Summary of the community, regional and national consultations***

Since early 2020, FDA and WCF have been working towards the gazettelement of KBPPA alongside the county representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, (MIA), since 2021 also with very strong involvement of the Liberia Land Authority (LLA), and since December 2022 with full support of the central staff of MIA. The pre-gazettelement activities have put high emphasis on the full participation and involvement of local community dwellers, strictly following the principles of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Annexes 6 to 14, as well as 16a, b and c include detailed information on all community, regional and national consultations and awareness meetings held, including the respective documentation for the meetings, i.e. the attendance sheets, pictures and maps, and meeting minutes or reports, as appropriate.

The consultations and awareness were part of all the pre-gazettelement activities and were done from May 2020 to May 2023. Meetings and workshops were held at the community, regional and national level, involving all relevant stakeholders.

All communities have been engaged for the past three years in creating the Kwa National Park, through a series of consultations and awareness raising programs led by FDA, Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Liberia Land Authority (LLA), and WCF. Besides the 75 communities located within 5 km around Kwa National Park, additional 24 towns were included in the engagement activities, considering their importance as towns leading community clusters. In total, 78 towns gave their Free Informed Prior Consent (FPIC) and approval for the creation of the national park (Annex 13). This is proven through signed community consent forms, which also show consent to the harmonized boundaries, as identified through the participatory land use mapping with local communities. County and district authorities, as well as representatives from other key government institutions, such as MIA, LLA and Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and observers from national Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) witnessed the consultation meetings and also signed the consent forms. The scans of these consent forms are available in Annex 13. At the regional level, an initial awareness tour was conducted in May 2020, and final consultation is pending in June 2023, which will be described in the final gazettelement package. The regional consultation was led by FDA targeted the County and District authorities, including representatives from other key ministries, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and Ministry of Public Works. The national consultation targeted key stakeholders from other government institutions, legislature, national and international NGOs, CSOs, and academia. An initial multi-stakeholder information-sharing meeting was held in December 2020 (Annex 7). Other major national consultation meeting were held through a legislative forest in November 2022 (Annex 10) and a final national consultation will be held in June 2023, which will be considered for the final version of the gazettelement package..

The detailed report on all community, regional, and national consultation is available in Annex 11a.

The list of the 99 towns and villages involved during the community engagement and consultations is shown below (Table 3). Out of the 99 towns, 78 towns were on board with the process, while there were 21 towns that were engaged between 2020 and 2023, but who after repeatedly agreeing for the participatory land use mapping process to move forward changed their position and in the end preferred not to be involved in the gazettelement and activities of the future national park.

**Table 3:** List of towns and villages around Kwa National Park that were part of the various pre-gazettelement activities.

No.	Town	District	County	Participatory land-use mapping completed	Community Consultation - Consent form signed	Flagging	Co-management input
1	Solo Town	Yarnee	Rivercess	yes	yes	Completed	yes
2	Teto Village	Yarnee	Rivercess	yes	yes	Completed	yes
3	Amib Camp	Yarnee	Rivercess	yes	yes	Completed	yes
4	George Village	Yarnee	Rivercess	yes	yes	Completed	yes
5	Gbarbo Village	Yarnee	Rivercess	yes	yes	Completed	yes
6	Mohamed Village	Yarnee	Rivercess	yes	yes	Completed	yes
7	ITI	Yarnee	Rivercess	yes	yes	Completed	yes
8	Kolatree Village	Yarnee	Rivercess	yes	yes	Completed	yes
9	One House Village	Yarnee	Rivercess	yes	yes	Completed	yes
10	Sarfee Village	Tarjuowon	Rivercess or Sinoe	decided not to be part, consultation still ongoing though			yes
11	New Sarfee Village	Yarnee or Tarjuowon	Rivercess or Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
12	Camp A Town	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
13	Simijillah City	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	decided not to be part, consultation still ongoing though			Did not attend co-management workshop
14	Myer Village	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	
15	Pajibo Town	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	decided not to be part, consultation still ongoing though			
16	Shaw David	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
17	Wieh Town	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	no, was not invited
18	Manneh Town	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
19	Jacksonville	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
20	Buu Village	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
21	Grebo Community	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
22	Matthew Tarpeh	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
23	Noah Handford Village	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
24	One Way Town	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
25	Saywon Town	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
26	Teah Town	Tarjuowon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes

No.	Town	District	County	Participatory land-use mapping completed	Community Consultation - Consent form signed	Flagging	Co-management input
27	David Village	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
28	Tenneh Village	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
29	Children Village	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
30	Gbayan Town	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
31	God With Us Village	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
32	Karlor Town	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
33	New Town	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
34	Nenneh Town	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
35	Sayon Town	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
36	Kay Town	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
37	Solve Problem Village	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
38	Togbaville	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
39	Teahn Town	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
40	Wiah Town	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
41	OJ Village	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
42	Cut Wood Village	Sanquin	Sinoe	yes	yes	Completed	yes
43	Cheyewulu	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
44	Dagbe Town	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
45	Judu Town	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
46	Pellokon	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
47	Plandialebo/ENI	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
48	Voogbadee	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
49	Saylee Town	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
50	Gboyee Village	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
51	David Village	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
52	Soday Village	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
53	Wologbaduo	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
54	Daniel Village	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes



No.	Town	District	County	Participatory land-use mapping completed	Community Consultation - Consent form signed	Flagging	Co-management input
55	Deyelle Village	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
56	Slon Bridge Way	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
57	Zanwonjah	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
58	Kumah Town	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
59	Tobo Town	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
60	Menyea Village	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
61	Daniel Village	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
62	Pintrozon	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	yes
63	Bolu Village	Seekon	Sinoe	yes	yes	Ongoing	no, was not invited
64	Bargblor Town	Cavalla	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
65	Old Solo Town	Cavalla	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
66	Tojallah Town	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
67	Quebo	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
68	Juluzon	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
69	Zarzar Town	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
70	Goluay	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
71	Tiah Town	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
72	Jellue Town	Cavalla	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	Did not attend co-management workshop
73	Johnson Village	Cavalla	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	
74	Gee Village	Cavalla	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	
75	Dugbarwulue Village	Cavalla	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	
76	Tarwo Village	Cavalla	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	
77	Kumah Town	Tchien	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
78	Goluay	Tchien	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
79	Pennue Town	Tchien	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
80	Bassa (Deh) Village	Tchien	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes
81	Jones Grear Village	Tchien	Grand Gedeh	yes	yes	Completed	yes

No.	Town	District	County	Participatory land-use mapping completed	Community Consultation - Consent form signed	Flagging	Co-management input
82	Gboe Geewon	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh	Decided not to be part			Did not attend co-management workshop
83	Lawrence Dweh Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
84	Gibson Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
85	Morris Kommon Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
86	Road Seven Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
87	Harrison Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
88	Wilson Duo Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
89	Emmanuel Marley Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
90	Othello Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
91	Togba Jarbiah Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
92	Alfred Dragar Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
93	Peter Zeagbah Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
94	Gbayea Town	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
95	Arthur Zeepair Village	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
96	Panniwen	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
97	Zamie Town	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
98	Zean Town	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				
99	Zeagbah Town	Gbarzon	Grand Gedeh				

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Since September 2016, the Forestry Development Authority (FDA), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), the Liberia Land Authority (LLA), other relevant government institutions, the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF) and the local communities around Krahn-Bassa Proposed Protected Area (KBPPA), have been working closely together to complete all steps towards the gazettelement of Kwa National Park, as required by Liberian national and international frameworks.

The feasibility studies conducted between 2016 and 2019 confirmed the unique level of biodiversity of KBPPA, with high population sizes of threatened and endemic key species, paired with a low human population density. KBPPA therefore was identified as a high priority area for conservation and the demographic and socio-economic characteristics, as well as the general support of the population for conservation activities, led to the suggestion to protect the area as a national park, which was endorsed by the local population that was sensitized about the various protected area categories.

From the start of the activities, the local population was fully involved in all activities, with some benefits received through the community ecoguard program that started in 2020, livelihood activities, such as beekeeping, village saving and loan schemes, vegetable farming, seed gardens, capacity building and targeted awareness activities, as well as infrastructure development, such as hand pump water well construction and school rehabilitation. The gazettelement of Kwa National Park will increase the opportunities, not only for direct employment and capacity building, but also an extensive program for sustainable livelihoods, the establishment of conservation enterprises infrastructure development, ecotourism and research.

The local communities, as well as lawmakers, government, civil society, academia and the private sector have supported the idea and the development of a robust and sustainable co-management framework, including a draft benefit-sharing framework and a draft grievance mechanism. The management of Kwa National Park shall be fully participatory, with an active role of local communities in taking and executing decisions. Women and youth shall play a particular role in the management of Kwa National Park.

The successful gazettelement of Kwa National Park, with a size of 236,246 ha, will significantly contribute to the aim of the Liberian government to protect 30% of the remaining forests, or 1.5 million hectares.

Considering the provision of Article 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, the Forestry Development Authority has complied with the requirements of Chapter 9, section 9.3 of the 2006 National Forestry Reform Law by completing the preparation of this Gazettement package for the Kwa National Park. All standards and procedures required by international laws, conventions and treaties in establishing protected areas have been taken into account. In keeping with Section 9.4 of the NFRL, the President of the Republic will endorse this package and forward it the National Legislature for action according to Section 9.5.

The Authority has made an accurate description of boundaries; assessed the wildlife, cultural, and other resources, as well as existing state of human disturbances and resource utilization in the Kwa

National Park. A summary of numerous consultations on local, regional, and national levels involving government agencies and persons confirms Free Prior Informed Consent of all.

Within the framework of its mandate the Forestry Development Authority therefore recommends to the President and the legislature the attached proposed Gazettement Act of the Kwa National Park for enactment into law.