



**STATUS REPORT
OF THE
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY
SIERRA LEONE**



Submitted on Tuesday 10th April, 2018

1 Brief Background

Environmental and natural resources management has been plagued with a checkered history in Sierra Leone. Prior to 1986, environmental matters were not given serious consideration. In order to mainstream environmental considerations, an Environment Section was established in the then Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning which was later transferred to the Ministry of Transport and Aviation in 1996. In that same year, the Environment Section was upgraded to an Environment Division in the Ministry of Transport and Aviation and then transferred to the Ministry of Lands. In 1997, the Environment Division was transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security. In 2000, the Government of Sierra Leone established a Department of the Environment by virtue of the Environment Protection Act, 2000, in the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment. In 2005, the Environment Protection Department and the Forestry Division were hived off from their respective ministries to establish the National Commission on the Environment and Forestry (NaCEF), which was under the supervision of the Office of the President. It is important to note that NaCEF was created by cabinet decision and had no statutory mandate. In 2007, the function of the environment was transferred to the Ministry of Lands whilst the Forestry Division returned to the Ministry of Agriculture.

With the growing global environmental awareness and the imperative of countries to adopt and integrate sustainable environmental management in their development trajectory, GoSL felt the need to create an institution that would be solely responsible for the protection and management of the environment, and to act as the focal point for national and international environmental issues. In view of this, the Environment Protection Agency Sierra Leone (EPA-SL) was established by an Act of Parliament (EPA Act 2008) in September 2008 as a corporate body to provide for the effective protection and management of the environment and other related matters after repealing the Environment Protection Act of 2000.

Recognizing that environmental management and development are inextricably linked, Government was galvanized into demonstrating strong commitment to environmental matters. This was coupled with the global drive to integrate environment, social and health impact. Furthermore, at the Earth Summit of 1992, developing countries noted that the implementation of Agenda 21 would entail huge sums of money. Thus, in the spirit of international partnership for development, the international community acquiesced on the need for increase of financial support. It was against this background that the EPA Act, 2008 was amended by Parliament in July 2010 to place the Agency under the Office of the President in line with the United States of America, Liberia and Tanzania. This is designed to enable the Agency to effectively and efficiently carry out its broader mandate of coordination and monitoring the implementation of all national environmental policies, plans and programmes as well as projects in ensuring environmentally sound and sustainable development countrywide.

The EPA-SL Board as the governing body of the Agency provides direction and makes decisions to enhance the overall performance of the Agency. The Executive Chairperson oversees the operations of the Agency and the Office of the President has oversight responsibility of the Agency. It is important to note that the first constituted Board of the Agency performed their duties without receiving entitlements due to lack of funds.

After its establishment in 2008, the Agency kicked off its operations with a staff strength of five, no office equipment and vehicles and no adequate office space.

In a bid to deliver its mandate in line with the Agenda for Prosperity (AfP), sustainable development goals (SDGs) and country policy and institutional assessment (CPIA) on managing the environment and natural resources, EPA-SL designed its first five year Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the period 2012 to 2016. At the end of the implementation year, the Agency had a thorough review and assessing of its activities and analyzed the context of the present state of the country's socio-economic and political dimension in relation to the environment, which has informed the 2017-2021 strategic action plan, with the main focus on environmental protection and management as well as addressing emerging issues and challenges related to the environment and climate change.

2.1 Vision and Mission Statements

The vision statement of the Environment Protection Agency Sierra Leone (EPA-SL) is to ensure sustainable use of our natural resources and contribute to poverty reduction through effective protection and sound environmental management.

The mission statement is to effectively protect, sustainably manage the environment and its natural resources to ensure a quality of environment adequate for human health and well being for all Sierra Leoneans.

2.2 Mandate

The Agency has the overall mandate to oversee, coordinate, monitor and regulate all environmental issues in Sierra Leone to ensure a quality of environment adequate for human health and wellbeing of Sierra Leoneans. It also has the responsibility to advise Government on all environmental matters and serves as focal point for all national and international environmental issues.

2.3 Departments and Staff Strength

The Environment Protection Agency has the following six main departments:

1. Policy, Planning and Research
2. Field Operations and Extensions
3. Finance and Administration
4. Natural Resources Management
5. Compliance and Enforcement and
6. Climate Change Secretariat.
7. Chemical Control and Management
8. Information, Education and Communications.

Through hard work and support from government and its development partners, EPA-SL can now boast of one hundred and two(102) staff strengthened, comprising sixty-four (64) core staff. The core staff comprises of thirty two (32) technical personnel, eight (8) administration staff and twenty-five (25) junior administration support staff.

3.1 Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

3.1.1 Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives of the Agency are:

1. To ensure that Sierra Leone has adequate and sustained capacity for effective environmental governance and decentralized service delivery and
2. To ensure that environmental sustainability principles are effectively mainstreamed into all national development policies, programmes and plans.

3.1.2 Strategic Outcomes

The strategic objective outcomes are listed below:

1. EPA-SL capacity to provide effective and efficient environmental protection and management services enhanced
2. National Environmental Protection and Management Coordination and Mainstreaming Strengthened
3. Compliance and enforcement of environmental policy and legislative framework enhanced
4. Education, and public awareness on environmental protection and management broadened
5. Participation and mainstreaming of regional and global environmental governance strengthened
6. Sustainable Financial mechanisms for EPA-SL strengthened and
7. Cross-cutting issues mainstreamed in environmental protection and management.

4.0 Update on Policies and Major Activities undertaken, indicating achievements

In pursuit of environmentally sound and sustainable development in Sierra Leone to contribute towards achieving Pillar One of the Agenda for Prosperity, the Africa Union (AU) Agenda 2063, Sustainable Development Goals and Country Policy and Institutional Assessment, the Agency in collaboration with MDAs, Local Councils, civil society and Non-governmental organizations as well as the University and Research Institutions undertook the following programmes of policies and activities, indicating the achievements under the period of 2012 – 2017.

4.1 Environmental and natural resource management

4.1.2 Coastal and Marine oil spill sensitivity maps and Sierra Leone State of the Marine Environment developed

The Agency developed and launched the first ever coastal and marine oil spill sensitivity mapping (CMOSM) and the State of the Marine Environment (SME) Report in 2013 and 2015 respectively.

Sierra Leone may in the near future be an oil producing country as there is prospect that oil will be discovered in commercial quantity according to some of the findings of the explorations undertaken in the offshore waters of Sierra Leone. Furthermore, the potential of an oil spill from the transportation of petroleum products on our seas necessitated a strategy to address problems of oil spill. The Environment Protection Agency developed the (CMOSM) with the main aim to facilitate national capacity building and strengthening of oil spill preparedness and response in Sierra Leone and to serve as tool for the development of the national oil spill contingency plan and

determination of the vulnerability of the diverse ecosystems along the coast to oil spills.

Coastal oil spill Sensitivity mapping is a key component of conservation mechanism and strategy that can contribute to meeting some of the targets under SDG 14 (Life below water: Conservation and sustainable use of the ocean) by preventing and significantly reducing risks of marine pollution of all kinds including from land based sources and activities

The State of the Marine Environment (SME) Report serves as a baseline for introducing an effective coastal management regime that will support most sector strategic plans for improved coastal resources management. The report further highlights the pressures and impacts of anthropogenic activities that directly affect the quality of the coastal and marine environment, such as fishing, shipping, ports and harbor development, submarine cable and pipelines, off shore hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation, other marine based energy industries and offshore mining industries. It looks at other uses of ocean space such as waste disposal/ discharge, marine debris, tourism and recreation, and the potential impacts of climate change and sea level rise. It also provides a qualitative assessment of the state of the coastal and marine habitats as well as the current and future risks to the marine environment.

The assessment of the State of the Marine Environment Report was undertaken in the framework of the Abidjan Convention, whilst adopting the approach used in the World Ocean Assessment. This is key contributor to managing and protecting coastal and marine ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts as required under target 2 of the SDG 14. By knowing the status of the marine environment, this may aid in developing an effective management regime which does not only contribute to international benchmarks but also Pillar 2 of the Agenda for Prosperity.

4.1.3 Produced a State of the Environment Report (SOER) of Sierra Leone

The EPA-SL with financial support from the European Union and the UNDP produced and launched the State of the Sierra Leone Environment Report (SOER) in 2015. Given the greater recognition of the resources dynamics in Sierra Leone, the framework for the SOE was designed to systematically assess and identify key sector dynamics and institutional arrangements with regard to natural resource management in Sierra Leone.

The SOE report provides information on the current status of the environment and threats facing the environment and measures put in place to meet the challenges. With this report, short-term actions can be initiated to deal with pressing issues such as air and water contaminations, and hazardous waste disposal in urban centers, where health problems remain a major concern.

Being a public document, it helps policy and decision makers as well as Policy implementing institutions and natural resource users to improve environmental management and governance in Sierra Leone. The report also looks at emerging issues such as the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) to show the inter-linkages between the environment, health and development, which calls for an integrated and holistic approach to sustainable development. The Report also provides an outlook and

outline how implementation can be strengthened by adapting measures proposed to address problems to be achieved sustainably.

Thus, the State of the Environment (SoE) reports is designed to communicate credible, timely and accessible information about the condition of the environment to decision makers and the other stakeholders and was done in alignment of Goal 15 of the SDG focusing on the environmental objectives and the economic developments policies of the country; non-the-least of which is the Agenda for Prosperity designed to take this nation across the threshold of poverty

4.1.4 Developed an integrated coastal zone management plan for Sierra Leone

The EPA-SL in collaboration with stakeholders developed the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZMP) for the effective protection and management of our coastal environment pursuant to the recommendations of the State of the marine Environment Report as a major tool to achieving SDG 14. It is the first ICZM Plan for Sierra Leone and has identified key priority themes and activities that will be implemented between the period 2016 - 2020 to address the numerous issues and resource management challenges facing the coastal and marine environment with a view to realizing sustainable development of Sierra Leone's coastal zone.

In general, it provides a broad framework for sound management of the coastal zone through inter- sectoral coordination and integration of environmental considerations into socio- economic planning and implementation at all levels. By this plan, Sierra Leone also contributes to regional and international efforts in the protection of important fragile ecosystems and maintaining their integrity for sustainable development in line with the Agenda for Prosperity.

4.1.5 Developed a Regional Strategy on Sargassum, Alien and Invasive Species

In response to the *Sargassum* Seaweed environmental challenges and to contribute towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals 13 (combating climate change) and 14 (sustainably use of marine resources), and in the framework of the United Nations negotiations of a new global agreement for biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Abidjan Convention Secretariat in partnership with USAID/West Africa Biodiversity and Change Programme, and UNEP Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, upon request by the Environment Protection Agency – Sierra Leone, convened the first Regional Expert Group meeting in Freetown that brought together experts from mostly affected countries in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Liberia, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire and international organizations working on marine and coastal biodiversity management region from 10-12 November, 2015.

As an outcome of this Regional Expert Group Meeting hosted by the EPA-SL, a Regional Strategy on the management of Coastal and Marine Invasive Species including Sargassum was developed. The Regional Strategy goes beyond the management of Sargassum seaweed alone, but a comprehensive strategic framework

for the management of other invasive Species including Sargassum, Nympha Plant, and Lion Fish.

The Regional Strategy proposed environmental friendly approaches in the management of invasive species and mechanism for social inclusion of coastal communities in alternative green-jobs; map-out research proven value-addition and economic potential use of Sargassum and also proposed the formulation of a policy for the elaboration of an additional Protocol to the Abidjan Convention on the management of invasion species. In view of this, the Regional strategy on the management of alien and invasive marine and coastal species in the West Central and Southern Africa Region was adopted by the Twelfth Conference of Parties to the Abidjan Convention in March, 2017.

4.1.6 Conducted a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Artisanal mining sector in Sierra Leone

The environmental degradation caused by artisanal mining is currently a major problem in Sierra Leone with no efforts to rehabilitate the land which is left exposed and unsuitable for farming or any other activity.

To address this problem, the Environment Protection Agency – Sierra Leone in collaboration with the National Minerals Agency, the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources and other partners conducted a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the artisanal mining sector to ascertain the extent of environmental degradation caused by artisanal mining in a bid to transform the sector into a more viable and sustainable one, that contributes to economic growth and development consistent with Pillar 2 of the Agenda for Prosperity.

The SEA which was conducted in 2016 evaluated the environmental, social and health effects as well as the economic implication of artisanal mining on other viable sectors and proposed about twenty-two main recommendations aimed at addressing all the issues. The Agency is implementing the recommendations to ensure rehabilitation of mined out areas and that the National Minerals Agency regulate artisanal miners through the development and enactment of artisanal mining regulations.

4.1.7 Strategic Environmental Assessment for potential hydrocarbons in Sierra Leone

In 2012, the Agency conducted the Strategic Environmental Assessment of potential hydrocarbons development in Sierra Leone. These goals have been explored through use of ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment’ (SEA) which is a participatory process that aims to integrate environmental and social concerns alongside economic and political issues in policies, plans and programmes.

The SEA of Potential Hydrocarbon Development has been undertaken in order to provide Government, the Oil and Gas Industry, Civil Society, concerned stakeholders and the public at large with a clear understanding of what the implications of discoveries of oil and gas might be for Sierra Leone. The report sets out advice on the development and regulation of the oil and gas industry to ensure that:

- Any development of oil and gas (if it is found in commercial quantities) will be undertaken to support the national wellbeing and long term economic prosperity of Sierra Leone; providing benefits for the Nation and responsible investors,

- All development is conducted in ways that improve socio-economic conditions for those communities that might otherwise be adversely affected (for example, fishing and tourism), and,
- All operations are conducted in ways which avoid or minimise any adverse effects on the environment.

This assessment is consistent with targets under Pillar 2 of the Agenda for Prosperity for Sierra Leone.

4.1.8 Promoted sustainable land management practices

The EPA-SL implemented a UNDP project on sustainable land management and promoted sustainable land management practices such as reforestation, agro-forestry and constructed fire belts at the sustainable land management project sites of Makari, Makoth and Gbendembu.

4.1.9 Ecological Restoration of the Aberdeen Creek

Aberdeen Creek Management Plan was developed and one hundred pillars along the creek erected to prevent illegal encroachment mainly for housing construction and 250 hectares of land revegetated with mangroves to ensure ecological restoration of the creek.

A reconnaissance survey on the Aberdeen Creek was also undertaken in partnership with the Ministries of Tourism and Culture, Lands, Country Planning and Works, Housing and Maintenance to chart the way forward to prevent further unauthorized developments and illegal settlements within the creek. Residents very close to the Aberdeen creek were advised to relocate away from the prohibited areas of the creek.

4.1.10 Environmental Management Information System (EMIS) established

An Environmental Management Information System (EMIS) for Natural Resources in Sierra Leone has been developed to provide empirical evidence of the state of natural resources and guidance in preventing over-exploitation and would serve as a tool to determine the extent the region has already been desecrated.

4.1.11 Developing Land cover/ land use map for sierra Leone

The Agency has developed a land cover/land use map for Sierra Leone, which will be validated and in April, 2018. The Land Cover/Land Use Mapping for Sierra Leone is an initiative of the Environment Protection Agency to facilitate the establishment of an environmental data infrastructure for environmental management in Sierra Leone and land cover/ land use map is a key data needed for a proper environmental monitoring and appraisal.

This activity supports SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation and A4P, Pillar 2: Managing natural resources.

4.1.12 The Environmental Cadastral Administrative System (ECAS) has been developed and made functional within the Agency operations.

This will contribute to a more comprehensive presentation of mining sector compliance to stakeholders and the public, as well as supporting the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). This activity seeks to Provide a robust and high quality geographic information system that empowers users to efficiently manage and maintain accurate, reliable, and consistent geographic data, and to easily and quickly obtain information in various formats on demand. Using integrated systems, EPA will publish its licenses on the GoSL online Repository, together with all mining licenses already published by the Mining Administrative Cadastral System (MCAS) developed by the National Mineral Agency.

This activity supports SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation and A4P, Pillar 2: Managing natural resources.

4.1.13 Fifth Country Report on the Implementation of the CBD developed and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan updated

As the National Focal Point of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to meet our national obligations to the convention, the Agency in collaboration with relevant MDAs, NGOs and CBOs developed and submitted the Fifth Country Report on the Implementation of the CBD to the Secretariat of the Convention. The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), which is the blue print for the implementation of the CBD through series of consultations and national validation has been revised and updated to reflect the twenty Aichi Targets on biodiversity conservation. The NBSAP has also been submitted to the CBD Secretariat.

4.1.14 Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation enhanced

The Climate Change Secretariat under the Environment Protection Agency has successfully implemented the following activities that support the sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action:

4.1.14.1 National Standing Committee established that comprises of key stakeholders and meet quarterly to discuss operational plans and implementation modalities of the National Climate Change Secretariat. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.2 National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (NCCS& AP) developed with key priority actions for donor resource mobilization, which is now under implementation by the Ministries of Energy, Water Resources; Meteorological Department and the Agency. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.3 Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the Paris Agreement on climate change developed and submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention Climate Change (UNFCCC) in October 2015. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.4 Road Map developed for the implementation of the country INDC to help support the global drive of reducing emission levels of green house gases (GHGs). The National Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement is under

implementation by various MDAs, NGOs and CBOs. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.5 Developed Guidelines for mainstreaming climate change into sectors of the economy to move towards climate resilience and low emission development trajectory and circulated among MDAs and local councils for use. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.6 The Paris Agreement on Climate Change was ratified by the Government of Sierra Leone on 1st November 2016. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.8 Green House Gas Inventory systems enhanced through the implementation of the National Communications funded by the Global Environment Facility identifying implementation gaps, building synergies and road map data management. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.9 Domestic Measurement Reporting and Verification (MRV) on Emission Reduction Project developed and implementation to enhance verification of quantifiable reduction in our targets set in the nationally determined contribution (NDC) of Sierra Leone to the Paris Agreement on climate change. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.20 Database developed on non-governmental and community based organizations undertaking climate change programs. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.21 Coordinate the affairs of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) to support development of different sector projects and funding for key MDA's implementation at national level. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.22 Country work programme and projects for Green Climate Fund (GCF) has been developed. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.23 Accreditation support provided to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) to be accredited as the National Implementing Entity (NIE) for the Climate Change Adaptation Fund to ensure the accessibility of the fund by government institutions and the private sector. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.24 The accreditation support process through capacity building enhanced. The Climate Change Secretariat of the Environment Protection Agency engaged on robust regional sensitization of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Adaptation Funds to build capacities of different stakeholders, MDA's, CSO's Private Sector on access modalities and how different categories of institution can be endorsed to assess the Fund. Accreditation workshop held for the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has been identified as the potential national entity for accreditation. Gathering of relevant information is at the

advance stage. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.25 A National Private Sector Forum on Climate Financing conducted to increase awareness amongst the private sector to improve on the concept of the Public Private Partnership (PPP) in addressing climate change challenges. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.25 Demonstration climate change related projects established in various schools of the country to help increase awareness of positive climate initiatives that can be replicated at community level on a larger scale in the long term. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.26 The Agency has integrated climate change issues into the local council's management plans and established a clear road map for councils to implement climate response initiatives. The Agency has also provided training to better capacitate councils to be able to source climate finance resources for implementation of programme and project with climate change focus. The integration process has involved the active participation of women and youth, civil society organization, private sector and other development partners to create a cohesive network for robust measures to address climate change actions in Sierra Leone. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.27 The Secretariat has strengthened the Mechanism for Climate Financing in adaptation and mitigation programmes through the development of roadmaps and pipeline projects. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.27 Climate Change demonstration initiative strengthened through effective monitoring of 6 existing projects and enhanced the implementation of nine new projects in the following schools (Koidu Secondary School, Holy Trinity in Kenema, Ahmadiyya Masiaka, Binkolo Secondary School, Yoni Bana Secondary School, and Kabala Secondary School). This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.27 Climate Change Secretariat has identified Ministries, Departments and Agencies to collaborate with in the implementation of the National Climate Change Strategic and Action Plan Response Programme. Key sectors such as water, energy, tourism, fisheries and marine resources priority response programme within the National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan have also been identified and possible funding opportunities such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) have also been identified. Proposals already submitted to GEF, GCF and NAMA support for approval and Funding. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

4.1.14.28 Country work programme and projects for Green Climate Fund (GCF) have been developed. The Agency has engaged MDA's, CSOs and private sectors to develop initiatives or project ideas for funding. Priority pipeline projects in the form of work programmes have been identified in the energy, agriculture, water, transport

with close linked to the environment developed into a concept and submitted to the Fund for support. Bilateral discussions initiated with the GCF for the identification of delivery partner to support the development of the full proposal. Readiness fiduciary has been re-launched and we hope to complete the process this January 2017. Effective utilization of such funds will contribute to achieving sustainable development goals 1, 2, 5, 10, 13, 14, 15.

4.1.14.29 Effective utilization of Global Environment Facility (GEF) resources enhanced through the alignment of development programmes with the Agenda for Prosperity. The Agency is the GEF focal institution for Sierra Leone with the GEF political and operational focal points to support the implementation of GEF policies and procedures in accordance with project management and fiduciary. The Agency has instituted a GEF coordinating arrangement that meet quarterly to undertake stocktaking and peer review of GEF portfolio and report available. Also stocktaking for GEF Small Grant conducted for OP5 and OP6 in 2016. This will help to build synergies between GEF small grant and the medium and full size projects endorsed for Sierra Leone.

4.1.14.30 Mechanism for Climate Financing in adaptation and mitigation programmes strengthened through the development of roadmaps and pipeline projects.

4.1.14.31 The Climate Change Secretariat has undertaken trainings for different categories of participants on climate change issues for instance; media practitioners, teachers' coordinators, MDAs.

4.1.14.32 The Agency enhanced Capacity building on accessing GEF fund for the private sector enhanced through identifying Investment priorities under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the private sector.

4.1.14.33 In 2017, the Agency finalized the Biennial Update Report document and submitted it to UN Environment (UNE) for funding. The objective was for Sierra Leone to prepare and report its First Biennial Update Report (BUR1) to the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) according to decision 17/CP8.

The BUR of Sierra Leone is a country report that covers the description of national circumstances and institutional arrangements, our national inventory of anthropogenic (human factor) greenhouse gases (GHG), information on mitigation actions and their effects, constraints and gaps on finance, domestic measurement reporting and capacity building.

The BUR will enhance public awareness and knowledge on climate change related issues in Sierra Leone and strengthen the ability of Sierra Leone to participate in different financing mechanisms, programs and projects directed to abate the GHG emissions from its territory and to fulfill other commitments to the UNFCCC.

The BUR document will assist the country in leveraging resources from various climate change financing windows through various mitigation programmes to promote responsible care in terms of climate action that result in reduced emissions in certain industrial activities with high global warming potential as part of the government action SDGs: Goal 8 (Decent work and Economic Growth) Goal 13 (Climate Action).

4.1.15 Environmental and climate policies, regulations, guidelines and standards developed and implemented

4.1.15.1 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) guidelines on agriculture, tourism, communication towers and manufacturing industries have been developed to ensure mainstreaming of environmental considerations into these sectors. This activity is in line with the Agenda for Prosperity (AfP) pillars 1, 2, 4, & 5, Sustainable Development Goals 12 and Country Policy Institutional Assessment (CPIA): strengthening capacities for environmental sustainability.

4.1.15.2 Draft environmental regulations on sand mining, tourism, manufacturing, agriculture, communication towers, chemical and pesticides Act and hazardous and toxic Substance have been developed and now with the Attorney General's Office for review and drafting for enactment to ensure sustainable environmental practices that will enhance the achievement of the sustainable development goals geared towards combating pollution, the impact of climate change, support life under water, ensure economic diversification and provide sustained labour.

The enactment and implementation of these regulations will contribute to Agenda for Prosperity Pillars 1,2,3,4, and 5 on diversified economy, managing natural resources, and accelerating human development through sustainable agricultural practices, improving international competitiveness through value addition and increase labour and employment for Sierra Leoneans. Furthermore, it will also contribute to the SDGs, specifically to SDGs 1, 2, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 14 in ensuring responsible consumption and production of natural resources and regulate emerging environmental issues and climate change in the field of agriculture in adherence to international best practice and to achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes throughout their life cycle, and will significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil. Enactment and implementation of these regulations will also contribute to strengthening policies and institutional capacities for environmental sustainability.

4.1.15.3 National Climate Change Policy developed in 2015 with the involvement of all sector stakeholders and adopted by cabinet in 2016.

4.1.15.4 The Agency in collaboration with the Sierra Leone Standards Bureau developed and gazette national environmental standards on effluent.

4.1.15.5 EPA has established a chemical register and now developing chemical regulations on toxic and hazardous substances to protect human health and the environment.

4.1.15.6 Operational procedures and guidelines developed on environmental audit and environmental inspection. This is aligned with SDGs 2, 5, 6, 13, 14, 15 and A4P Pillars 2, 5, 6 & 8.

4.1.15.7 Drafted policies on Electronic Waste and Noise are available. Electronic waste (E-waste) has been identified as a major source of environmental pollution. Components of electronics contain heavy metals such as mercury, cadmium etc., improper disposal of which pose a significant risk to public health and the environment. Public knowledge about their effects is extremely limited.

This activity is in line with SDG 12.4, to achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with multi-lateral environmental agreements to which Sierra Leone is a party and in line with international best practices. In addition, the activity also supports SDG 3.9, ‘the need to substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals’. In the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment, Criteria C which addresses policies for social inclusion/equity is also enhanced by this activity. This activity will provide support to policies, institutional strengthening and legislative frameworks for environmental sustainability, social protection and labor

4.1.15.8 EPA-SL has developed prosecution procedural guidelines and provided training on environmental governance for Law enforcement officers (Police Officers, Magistrates and judges) in environmental rule of law within the country and Kenya to ensure compliance and enforcement of our environmental legislation and regulations.

4.1.15.9 As partner in promoting sound environmental management, EPA-SL in collaboration with local authorities has developed environmental Management plans for eighteen local councils to ensure participation of rural communities in promoting sound environmental management countrywide. This activity is in line with the *AfP*: This activity supports pillars 2 & 3, through the sustainable management of natural resources and accelerating human development SDG 4, target 4.7-contribute to learners acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development.

4.1.15.10 In 2017 a draft amendment to the EPA Act of 2008 as amended in 2010 was submitted to the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice for review.

4.1.15.11 Regulations were drafted in 2017 for the Automotive Servicing and Repair Sector. This is aligned with SDG 2, 6, 11, 13, 14, 15 and A4P Pillars 2 & 6.

4.1.15.12 The Agency reviewed and updated 5 year strategic plan to cover the period of 2017 – 2021 in 2017.

4.1.15.13 The Agency has developed baseline information on existing environmental policies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on the disposal of expired food stuff, chemicals, clinical waste and hazardous material for disposal.

4.1.15.14 The Agency has established the mandatory certification scheme for refrigeration and air conditioning technicians in the country as stipulated in the National Ozone Depleting Substances regulation of 2010.

4.1.15.15 In meeting its obligations of article 7 of the Montreal Protocol Sierra Leone has been reporting its article 7 data on consumption and production of ozone depleting substances to both the Ozone Secretariat and the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol.

4.1.15.16 The Agency has also developed draft environmental guidelines, assessment checklist, national implementation plan and regulations for the vehicle servicing (garage) sector and conducted five (5) stakeholders (SLMVMA, SLRSA, FCC, SLSB & PRA) consultative meetings.

5.1 Environmental Education and Awareness Raising broadened

In a bid to promote sound environmental management and enhance public knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities for the protection and management of the environment, the Environment Protection Agency undertook the following activities: These activities were undertaken to enhance the fulfillment to the AfP: This activity supports pillars 2 & 3, through the sustainable management of natural resources and accelerating human development SDG12: target12.2 which talks about sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources SDG 13: Target 13.3-improved education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation , impact reduction and early warning; SDG 14, Target 4, 1-prevents and significantly reduces marine pollution of all kinds in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.

5.1.1 National environmental awareness campaigns, beginning with, Mayors, Chairpersons, Chief Administrators and Environmental Desk officers of all nineteen (19) local councils on one hand, and then Paramount Chiefs of the Koinadugu, Tonkolili, Kono, Bo, Kenema and Kailahun districts on the other hand were carried out during the period under review.

5.1.2 A village- to -village community sensitization campaign was held with Thirty one (31) Chiefdom communities of Kisi Kama, Kisi Tongi, Kisi Teng, Luawa, Lower Bambara, Jawi, Njaluahun, Sando, Nimiyama, Nimikoro, Tankoro, Gbense, Kamara and Gbaneh Chiefdoms in the Eastern Province; Kagboro, Fakunia, Kori and Sorogbema, Bumpeh Gao, Kaiyamba Chiefdoms in the Southern Province; Gbendembu Ngowahun, Sanda Tendaren, Kalansogoia, Sanda Loko, Buya Romende, Koninke Barineh, Gbonkolenken, Burek-Kasseh-Makondeh, Maforki, Marampa, Kafu Bullam Chiefdoms in the Northern Province. Similar exercise was also conducted in the chiefdom headquarter towns of eighteen chiefdoms in Bombali, Moyamba, Kono and Portloko districts. 2,335 stakeholders were in attendance (Bombali district -735 Moyamba 397, Kono – 578, Port Loko- 625).

Village-to-village sensitization essentially serves as an educational tool, helping people in their communities understand the economic, aesthetic and biological importance of preserving resources and reducing or eliminating the harmful impacts of man-made alterations. This activity has helped to increase the level of awareness and knowledge of the people on sound environmental practices to address the issues of climate change, poverty reduction, land degradation, biodiversity loss. A number of community reforestation programmes have emerged out of these sensitizations.

5.1.3 Annual sensitization meetings were also held to sensitize communities residing in disaster prone areas in the Western Area. These include Kroo Bay, Oloshoro, Susan's Bay, Hamilton, Sugar Land, Sugar loaf, Old Warf, Colvert, Mabella, Congo Town Creek, Congo Cross Valley, Dwazark, Motem, Mongegba, and Tombo, Sussex.

5.1.4 Awareness and training programmes conducted on the use of Mercury and the dangers associated with it in various sectors such as Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM), Dentistry, body creams and lotions, etc.

5.1.5 The Agency undertook sensitization programmes and meetings on the rehabilitation and ecological restoration of the Aberdeen Creek, which is a Ramsar Site, which were organized in 2013.

5.1.6 The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer has been hailed as the world's most successful environmental convention. It has not only led to the regeneration of the ozone layer and thus the protection of human health, but also resulted in significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, industry innovation, job creation, and more-efficient use of energy, among many other positive outcomes.

With financial and technical assistance from the the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Agency has implemented the phase-out management plan for hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC'S) through radio and television discussion and training workshops to raise the awareness level of the general public, law enforcement officers(custom officers) and refrigeration and air conditioning technicians.

The phase-out of ozone depleting substances (ODS) is an important component of Sierra Leone effort s to achieve sustainable, inclusive and resilient human development and the SDGs, 2(End hunger, achieve food security) 3 (ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all) 13(take urgent actions to combat climate change and its impacts) 14 (protecting lives under water) and 15 (protecting lives on land) which were adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015.

5.1.7 Several Jingles were developed in five local languages (Themne, Mende, Creole, Limba and Fula) and aired on the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service, local radios operating in Freetown and the Provinces. These jingles focused on the “me en me environment”, plastic waste and EPA-SL Service charter to make people understand the importance of protecting and managing their environment.

5.1.8 Erected Bill Boards in Freetown and Lungi International airport and other parts of the country to sensitize the public and consumers on services provided by the Agency, and also carrying messages of environmental protection and management.

5.1.9 Environmental awareness improved by establishing 150 nature clubs in educational institutions country wide which include among others, Tower Hill Municipal, FAWE, International Primary School, Trinity Primary School, Buxton Primary School, New Era High School Looking Town, Baitulla Mosque Primary School Wellington, Lebanese Primary and Secondary, Vine memorial Congo Cross, College of Medicine, N'jala University, IAMTECH and major Secondary Schools.

5.1.10 The Climate Change Secretariat in collaboration with the Information, Education and Communication Unit held many radio discussions and Television programmes on climate change and environment related issues. The Agency also organized inter school quiz competitions on climate change , climate change talks and film shows held in over fifty schools and one hundred local communities , Ninety teacher coordinators trained on climate change issues and environmental information dissemination. This support Goal 13 of the SDGs (Climate Action).

To facilitate public dissemination of environmental information, the Agency established the “Mi en mi environment” weekly radio talk show. The programme also sought to measure public perception on the status of environmental governance in Sierra Leone.

The Agency has also commemorated environmental days on an annual basis. These include World Environment Day (June 5), World Ozone Day (September 16) and World GIS Day November 16). Various activities like float parades, quiz competitions among schools nature clubs, radio and TV talk shows have been organized across the country to enhance public education as well as public participation on environmental governance in Sierra Leone.

The activities mentioned under this heading (i.e. 5.1) are designed to contribute to the attainment of Goal 4 (Quality Education) of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

5.1.11 The Agency conducted three (3) awareness raising programmes on the use of Mercury in the Artisanal and Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) sector at Matotoka and 2 in Baomahun.

5.1.12 The Agency also conducted twenty-five (25) awareness raising programmes on Best Available Technology (BAT) and Best Environmental Practices (BEP) for the informal sector (garages, pesticides peddlers, fish curing, etc.) in collaboration with Attitudinal and Behavioral Change (ABC) Secretariat.

6.1 Monitoring, Enforcement and Compliance enhanced

6.1.1 EPA-SL has developed prosecution procedural guidelines and provided training on environmental governance for Law enforcement officers (Police Officers, Magistrates and judges) in environmental rule of law within the country and Kenya to ensure compliance and enforcement of our national environmental legislation and regulations.

6.1.2 The Agency has established a state of the art Environment, Social Health Impact Assessment (ESIA) Management Information System. This system increases efficiency, enhances transparency and more effective monitoring to ensure compliance.

6.1.3 The Agency has developed a sound EIA web based management information system which will be functionally effective and efficient and accessible to the public after full automation of the Agency’s operations.

6.1.4 More than one hundred and fifty development projects were monitored nationwide for compliance. Environmental violations were identified and referred to proponent for redress. Investigated environmental violations at Kangari Hills and Lake Sonfor were carried out.

6.1.5 In 2010 the Agency issued seven EIA Licences to proponents whose operations are required by the EPA Act 2008 to acquire an EIA Licence. This has grown over the years to One Hundred and Fifty six (156) EIA Licences issued. Over One thousand five hundred and sixty (1560) monitoring exercises have been conducted on

development projects nationwide to ensure environmental compliance. Environmental violations were identified and referred to proponents for redress. Investigated environmental violations at Kangari Hills and Lake Sonfon were carried out.

6.1.6 The Agency received one hundred and forty seven (147) environmental pollution related complaints from the general public, One hundred and forty one of which were resolved, one (1) still being resolved, two (2) never resolved as complainants cannot be traced- their contact details (addresses and telephone numbers) were not included in their letters of complaint and three (3) were outside the Agency's mandate and referred to the relevant institutions of the Ministries of Land Country Planning, and Works, Housing and Infrastructure.

6.1.7 The Agency supervised the clean-up of almost ninety-three (93) barrels containing 12,000 litres (19 metric tons) of tetra-ethyl lead (TEL) in five separate locations at the derelict Oil Refinery site, Kissy in 2012.

6.1.8 Under the auspices of the Agency, Sierra Rutile Limited and the management of the Freetown City Council undertook a clean-up operation of two toxic waste dumping sites.

6.1.9 Monthly waste water effluent analysis of six manufacturing companies namely; Sierra Leone Brewery Limited, Sierra Leone Bottling Company, KADCO Enterprise, Victory Enterprise, Kings Production, Rainbow Paint and Chemicals in Freetown were monitored. The annual summary indicates 30 percent compliance level with serious challenges on compliance to Turbidity, Conductivity, Ammonia, Ammonium, Free Chlorine, Nitrate and Nitrite.

6.1.10 The Agency undertook monitoring of industrial effluents and mapped environmental monitoring points for water, air, and noise.

6.1.12 The Agency also monitored environmental quality parameters from designated sampling points for air, water and noise.

6.1.13 The Agency conducted eight (8) investigations on pollution complaints, two (2) noise pollution, one (1) exhaust emission, two(2) water contamination, one (1) waterway encroachment and two (2) land contamination.

7.1 Capacity Building and Training enhanced

7.1.1 Regional Offices were established in Makeni, Bo and Kono for the North, South and Eastern regions respectively. They are established to ensure that best environmental practices are enhanced at regional and community level through effective collaboration with government institutions, community stakeholders and Community Based Organizations.

7.1.2 Capacity building on accessing GEF fund for the private sector enhanced through identifying Investment priorities under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the private sector. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action.

7.1.3 Three hundred (300) Customs Officers and other law enforcement officers trained on the Montreal Protocol, identification of banned ozone depleting substances and combating illegal trade on ODS as well as good refrigeration practices.

7.1.4 Refrigerant identifiers - distributed to the Standards Bureau, Customs and Exercise Department, the Sierra Leone Ports Authority and Refrigerant Engineer Technicians Association to monitor the prohibition of ozone depleting substances (ODS) and to ensure compliance. The Agency also trained thirty three (33) Refrigeration and Air Conditioning technicians in collaboration with Government Technical Institute Kissy Dockyard.

7.1.5 Trainings and awareness raising activities conducted to investigate the dumping of toxic waste in Granville Brook and Kingtom Cemetery.

7.1.6 The Climate Change Secretariat undertook trainings for different categories of participants (media practitioners, teachers' coordinators, Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies) on climate change issues. This contributes to the achievement of sustainable development goal 13 on Climate Action:

7.1.7 The Agency continues to build the skills and capacity of all staff to meet the increasing environments threats and challenges, by providing training both in country and abroad. Staff of the Agency have been trained in environmental modules, laboratory management, biosafety, environmental laws, investigation and prosecution to increase their knowledge and skills in practical environmental management best practices and implementation of legal instruments relating to the environment, and improve knowledge on environmental monitoring requirements; audit requirement and compliance notifications; conduct comparative environmental scientific analysis and to ensure quality reporting, interpretation and documentation of laboratory results. Staff also participated in oversea trainings to equip them with practical knowledge on environment, community, health and safety issues pertaining to exploration, mining, processing and decommission of neglected development minerals (NDM).

7.1.8 Police Officers countrywide received training on Environmental laws, investigation and prosecution with the main objective to improve their knowledge on environmental compliance and on investigation and prosecution of environmental crimes, and have a better understanding of environmental issues.

7.1.9 Eleven members of the Law Officers Department and members of the Sierra Leone Bar Association were trained on the guidelines on environmental compliance, enforcement and prosecution. The training was basically on principles of Investigation and Prosecution of Environmental Crimes and their role in environmental protection.

7.1.10 Teacher coordinators of school nature clubs were trained on effective communication on environmental management with the primary objective to enhance their knowledge and skills in order to be more effective in teaching their pupils about environmental protection and management the need to protect the environment and

various related concepts on environmental issues, climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, and waste management.

7.1.11 Media Practitioners received training on Effective Communication in Environmental management. The purpose of the training workshops was to equip journalists from the print and electronic media with the relevant scientific knowledge and journalistic skills to cover natural resources management, climate change and sustainable development issues, and to also provide education on the mandate, functions and operations of the Agency. Members of selected NGOs and CSO's also trained on Environmental laws, investigation and prosecution with the main objective to improving knowledge of the selected groups on environmental compliance and on investigation and their role in environmental protection.

7.1.12 Seventeen local council environment officers trained on the guidelines on environmental compliance, enforcement and prosecution to augment their knowledge and skills on compliance, enforcement and prosecution of environmental crimes.

7.1.13 Three Legal Practitioners attended an international training workshop on three multilateral environmental agreements (MEA's) namely: Stockholm Convention, Basel Convention and Rotterdam Convention. The main objective of this training was to build the capacity of judges and legal practitioners in creating better understanding of the legal standards applicable to persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and other hazardous chemicals, and to identify the best alternatives when faced with different options for the application of these legal conventions on POPS and other chemicals in the process of implementing or enforcing applicable laws.

7.1.14 The Agency has also organized a training and sensitization workshop for thirty five potential national implementing entities (NIEs) on the guidelines and procedures and processes involved for the acquisition and effective utilization of the Climate Adaptation Fund, Green Climate Fund (GCF) and other financing windows to implement bankable projects on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Effective utilization of such funds will contribute to achieving sustainable development goals 1, 2, 5, 10, 13, 14, 15; Pillars 2, 5, 6 and 8 of the Sierra Leone's Agenda for Prosperity and environmental sustainability of the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA).

7.1.15 Thirty members of Parliament trained on international Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) and environmental management. The purpose was to strengthen the capacity of the Sierra Leone Parliament in environmental law, sharing of expertise and legal guidance as law makers in the ratification of multilateral environmental agreements.

7.1.16 Fifty (50) University students trained on international Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and environmental management to create awareness amongst university students on the importance of MEAs in protecting the environment and the need to domesticate them through national laws and enforcement.

7.1.17 Thirty media practitioners and 40 Teacher coordinators were supported with environmental educational materials on Ozone protection and Sustainable Waste Management. They were also trained on communication skills and environmental management in the three Regional Headquarter towns.

7.1.18 The Agency and its partners conducted an inventory training program for national experts on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) for stock taking and have completed the exercise. This purpose of the training was to enable the national experts review and update the national implementation plan to ensure that Sierra Leone can meet its international obligations and prepare itself for the management of POPs in Sierra Leone.

7.1.19 The EPA-SL is currently engaged in the construction of a nine-story building to house the Headquarters Office of the Agency, which is almost about 67% completed to date to ensure that staff, customers, and the general public have a more conducive environment within which to operate.

The AfP: Pillars 1,2,3,4, & 5 on diversified economy, managing natural resources, accelerating human development through sustainable agricultural, tourism, manufacturing and sand mining practices, improving international competitiveness through value addition and increase labour and employment for Sierra Leoneans could be achieved through the afore-mentioned. Goals 12 & 13 of the SDGs which are aimed at ensuring responsible consumption and production of natural resources and regulate emerging environmental issues and climate change in the diverse sectors such as agriculture, tourism, sand mining etc. can be achieved through these interventions.

Furthermore, they can lead to strengthening capacities for environmental sustainability as stated by the CPIA Policy Objective.

7.1.20 Eight (8) MDAs namely (MWI, SLP, NRA, MFAIC, EPA-SL, SLBC, HOP and MoFED) were supported with three (3) giant dust bins (300L) each and janitors trained on Sustainable Waste Management practices. This activity supports SDG 11.6 on Clean Cities.

7.1.21 Eight (8) local consultants trained on Mercury Initial Assessment (MIA) and inventory of Mercury in products and six (6) on the use of Mercury in the ASGM sector.

7.1.22 Three (3) international trainings were attended on Obsolete Pesticides Management, Laboratory Equipment Management and Green Customs Initiative on ODS by staff of EPA and judiciary and supported three staff from the Law Reform Commission, Judiciary and EPA-SL Legal department to participate in the training.

7.1.23 A national training and inventory on Obsolete Pesticides and Associated Waste in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security and Ministry of Health and Sanitation was conducted.

7.1.24 Training of Customs, Finance and the Judiciary on the Stockholm Convention and Enforcement was also conducted by the Agency.

8.1 Collaboration and Cooperation Strengthened

8.1.1 In fostering collaboration and cooperation with the Sierra Leone Police, the Agency has established an Environmental Crime Unit and supplied them with equipment. To further strengthen this unit, the Agency has conducted several environmental trainings for the Sierra Leone police on sound environment

enforcement and compliance. Also, the Sierra Leone Police force have been part of joint monitoring exercises conducted by the Agency to protect ecologically sensitive sites and to ensure that environmental concerns are taken into consideration and environmental management plans are implemented to mitigate negative impacts on the environment.

8.1.2 Cooperation with local authorities will be a major determining factor in realizing a sustainable environmental future. Environmental challenges such as deforestation, improper waste disposal, water and air pollution and wild bushfires occur at the local community level. It is but expedient that the EPA-SL work in close partnership with local councils to address these environmental challenges. On this note the Agency has established nineteen (19) Local council environmental committees. This activity is directly linked to AfP: Pillars 2, 3 &5 to support the managing of natural resources, accelerates human development for the youth groups that will be selected and at the same time provide employment for these youths.

8.1.3 As partners in promoting sound environmental management, the Agency in collaboration with local authorities has developed environmental management plans for eighteen local councils to ensure participation of rural communities in promoting sound environmental management countrywide. The implementation of these plans will also improve inter agency coordination by streamlining environmental and natural resources management and strengthening coordination mechanism across the local council structure in the western area, north, south and eastern regions. However, due to paucity of resource allocation environmental departments of the local councils are faced with the difficulty to meet their responsibilities.

8.1.4 Improved collaboration with Women's Groups on environmental issues: The functions of the Agency include the initiation and pursuit of formal and non-formal educational programs for the creation of public awareness of the environment and its importance to the economic and social life of Sierra Leoneans. In recognition of the importance of the role of women in Natural resource management, both as beneficiaries and participants in the exploitation of the resources, it is therefore crucial to actively engage women as part of the decision making process at all levels, for effective governance and the ultimate success of an environmentally conscious society. The Agency has supported 14 Women's groups across the country in this direction.

This activity is directly linked to AfP: this activity supports the realization of pillar eight (8) in empowering women to take crucial role in environmental management. Environment Performance Index (EPI): This activity will contribute to the performance objective of ecosystem restoration and vitality, and SDGs: 12 and 13 which ensure sustainable production and consumption of our natural resources and deals with climate action.

8.1.5 Having inherited a colossal debt of unpaid dues, the Agency has made payment of all financial subscriptions and membership dues to Multilateral Environmental Agreements ratified by Sierra Leone to meet our international obligations and improve cooperation with regional, sub-regional and international environmental organizations to ensure sound environmental management in Sierra Leone.

8.1.6 Environmental issues and climate change are cross cutting and government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) undertake environmentally related activities that require environmental mainstreaming. In this regard, the Agency

established environment desks in MDAs to ensure mainstreaming of environment and climate change in their plans and programmes.

8.1.7 The Environment Protection Agency- Sierra Leone happens to be the National Designated Authority/Focal Point for both the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund for Sierra Leone. The Agency has been in constant touch with these institutions to see how best the country can leverage resources to implement initiatives that have global environmental benefits. In 2015, the Agency approached the Adaptation Fund for Accreditation support for the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) through the south-south programme to be facilitated by the *Centre de Suivi Ecologique* (CSE). The Accreditation of the Ministry as the National Implementing Entity (NIE) enables the country to receive resources directly from the fund through the submission of bankable projects.

The CSE is to provide the Designated Authority of Sierra Leone for the Adaptation Fund (AF) with technical assistance in its endeavor to have a national institution accredited as direct access Implementing Entity (IE). This technical assistance is part of a South-South Cooperation programme funded by its Climate Finance Readiness Programme, with the view to help NIEs provide peer support to countries seeking accreditation with the Fund. Under this activity, developing countries that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol but do not have an accredited NIE may receive support from an accredited NIE in one or more of the following areas:

- Identifying potential NIE candidates;
- Assisting NIE candidates in the preparation of its application to be submitted to the Fund;
- Providing support and advice during the application process.

As a result of a request made by the Environment Protection Agency to the Adaptation Fund, a small grant of 50,000 USD was provided to the *Centre de Suivi Ecologique* (CSE) in 2016 to support the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development for the Accreditation process in terms of assembling and preparing the relevant documents. A mission was received in December 2017 to finalize the application for the accreditation process and thankfully the Ministry was able to successfully complete the process.

In a similarly vein the NDA/EPA-SL received a mission from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to help support the country to complete a readiness support package that looks at the following broad proposed results.

1. Country capacity strengthened
2. Stakeholders engaged in consultative processes
3. Direct access realized
4. Access to finance facilitated
5. Private sector mobilization improved

The mission reviewed six project ideas received from the following Ministries: Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS), Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (MTCA), Ministry of Energy (MOE), Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC), Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and Ministry of Water Resources together with the sector representatives and

provided a road map for the next steps. The National Adaptation Programme funding support for Sierra Leone was also discussed with technical representatives from different sectors and support timelines agreed upon.

The Accreditation process for MOFED and EPA-SL was discussed further; looking at the possibility of a fast track for MOFED after the Adaptation Fund accreditation endorsement for small and medium size project (10- 250 Million) and the EPA-SL support for accreditation for micro level (0-10 million).

The significance of the above development is that both public and private sectors would benefit immensely in terms of project support and implementation. The public sector would benefit through the execution of projects while the private sector would benefit through calls for proposal under the Private Sector Financing programme.

8.1.8 The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has appointed the Executive Chairperson of the Environment Protection Agency – Sierra Leone (EPA-SL), Madam Haddijatou Jallow as Ambassador and Executive member of the Africa Women Energy Entrepreneurs Framework (AWEEF). The appointment of Madam Haddijatou Jallow is in recognition of her outstanding leadership role during her tenure as Chair of the African Ministers and Leaders on the environment, a position she still holds. AWEEF is a product of the sixteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) held in Gabon in June 2017. It aims to fulfill the AMCEN decision on Investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Agenda 2063. The framework was launched on the 3rd December 2017 under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

Sierra Leone has also served as a member of the Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) for two years from 2013 to 2014.

The Agency has succeeded in projecting Sierra Leone as a country that has made significant progress in environmental governance. In 2017, Sierra Leone has been designated as a center of excellence by the Abidjan Convention Secretariat. Furthermore, due to the government's unwavering commitment to environmental protection and management, Sierra Leone currently serves as the Vice President of the Abidjan Convention and is also Chairman of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the West African constituency.

In keeping with international best practice, the EPA-SL has put in place a regulatory procedure known as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure, which all individuals and business entities conducting any of the activities specified in the First Schedule of the EPA Act must follow. This procedure, which was endorsed by Parliament, enhances the regulation and monitoring of individuals/companies engaged in development/business activities that impact or has the propensity to impact negatively on the environment.

8.1.9 As focal point for both international and national environmental issues, the EPA-SL has established partnerships with various institutions such as the Columbia University to provide capacity building opportunities for its staff.

8.1.10 The Agency was subjected to two international audits. In 2017 the UNEP Compliance Assistance Regional Office for the Montreal Protocol in Kenya was in country to verify Sierra Leone's Hydro Chlorofluorocarbon's consumption target

from 2013-2016 and carried out a technical evaluation of the Montreal programs. This is routine to enhance sustainability in country programmes

Secondly, under the Stockholm convention, implemented activities on awareness raising, Pesticide inventory and the development of a chemicals controls Act were also audited at the local level.

8.1.11 In collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the EPA hosted the Special Rapporteur to the UN on human rights and toxics to undertake a baseline assessment of on human rights and toxics in Sierra Leone. This is in-line with our development strides to ensure the safety of our citizenry during the implementation of development projects.

On the invitation of the Agency, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Regional Coordinator for chemicals and waste also visited Sierra Leone to assess country capacity in accessing GEF funds towards the implementation of Chemical and Waste projects. Several meeting were undertaken with different stakeholders.

8.1.12 The Agency mainstreamed its chemical programmes in the health sector through the One Health Platform. The International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005 is an instrument signed by the government of Sierra Leone to harmonize and improve on local and international benchmarks of the health sector. Initial assessment scores the chapter of chemical incidents in the IHR 2005 as zero but with the inputs from the Agency, the score was elevated to 2 on a maximum of 4. This includes the increased membership to international chemical conventions and local activities undertaken by the Agency. We have also participated in the categorization of Zoonotic diseases and the development of anti-microbial resistance country action plans. We are currently participating in a public health program on disease surveillance.

8.1.13 The Agency is working in close collaboration with neighboring countries under the Basel Convention to facilitate the movement of hazardous substances such as used/waste oil, and Tetraethyl lead (TTL).

8.1.14 As emerging issues, discussions with key stakeholders on the following commenced:

- Use of pesticides in the fishing industry,
- Reduction of Sulphur content in petroleum products, and
- Issue of lead in paint.

8.1.15 One (1) consultative meeting held with cement manufacturers and importers on polypropylene (PP) packaging bags.

9.1 Youth Programmes on Environmental Protection and Management enhanced

9.1.1 Inclusion of youth in environmental protection has become a key element in mitigating environmental degradation as they have been identified as major drivers of environmental degradation through mining, inappropriate agricultural practices and charcoal burning. Eighteen (18) youth groups have been trained in environmental management and development of project proposals. We anticipate that, within few years, and once they start some environmental management programs, they could be assisted to expand on such projects.

9.1.2 The Agency supported youth employment by providing short term contracts for one hundred and twenty (120) youths within the Aberdeen Creek and Crab town areas in the Mangrove Restoration project of the Aberdeen creek. Support has also been extended to students from Njala University and Institute of Public Administration and Management on work-study programs and rehabilitation and beautification of student garden at Fourah Bay College.

9.1.3 A total of 105 giant dust bins were procured and distributed to 16 Schools and 8 MDAs in addition to training provided on sustainable solid waste management (recycling and reuse techniques).

9.1.4 Three reforestation projects established in partnership with local communities and authorities in Kamara Chiefdom Kono district, Magbema Chiefdom Kambia district and Bumpo Gao Chiefdom in Bo District to contribute to climate change mitigation and restoration of biodiversity. About twenty two thousand (22,000) seedlings transplanted in these districts.

AfP: Pillars 2, 3 &5. This activity supports managing natural resources, accelerates human development for the youth groups that will be selected and at the same time provide employment for these youth

Environment Performance Index (EPI): This activity will contribute to the performance objective of ecosystem restoration and vitality.

SDG: 12 which ensures sustainable production and consumption of our natural resources and SDG 13 which deals with climate action.

10.1 Research and Assessments Undertaken

10.1.1 Economic Loss and Damage Assessment for the 2016 & 2017 Flood Incidents were conducted by International Experts to look at the extent of impact within the affected communities in Freetown and the provinces that was affected last year due to flooding and in addition provides economic analysis in terms of cost and benefit for effective comparison. This assessment and quantified costs imposed by the Sierra Leone floods of September 2015 in Freetown is expected to guide government in putting mechanism in place to ensure that they effectively monitor the trend of things within the affected environment and it will be used as a baseline to design future interventions in other communities. When implemented will provide recommendations to the government in finding solution in addressing the impacts of climate change in the country that in turn will have a positive feedback on supporting the achievement of sustainable development goals 9 and 13, pillar 2 of the Agenda for Prosperity and the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA).

10.1.2 An assessment on the economic cost of environmental degradation for different sectors including agriculture, mining, health, waste management and transport was undertaken to contextualize the cost implication of degrading the environment and the impact in achieving sustainable development goals. The Agency assessed the economic implication of environmental degradation

10.1.3 EPA-SL conducted an assessment of contaminated sites. The Agency conducted an assessment on contaminated sites nationwide nationwide in order to have basic information on issues that could affect the health and wellbeing of the

environment. Approximately 540 contaminated sites identified including dumpsites in municipalities, Hospitals, illegal Used Oil Refineries and Garages were prominent.

10.1.4 A reconnaissance survey on the Aberdeen Creek was undertaken in partnership with the Ministries of Tourism and Culture, Lands, Country Planning and Works, Housing and Maintenance to chart the way forward to prevent further unauthorized developments and illegal settlements within the creek. Residents very close to the Aberdeen creek were advised to relocate away from the prohibited areas of the creek.

10.1.5 Research was conducted on threatened and rare forest fauna and flora in Sierra Leone to promote tourism through the publication of brochures with high resolutions. Two main compendiums of threatened and rare forest fauna and flora reports are available in the agency for public use. Further to this and in order to ensure that environmental research is accessible and not duplicated the Agency created a compendium of all environmental projects / research done by local institutions i.e. academic, MDAs and NGOs. This is aligned to SGD 15 & A4P Pillar 2.

10.1.6 Researches on water and air are in progress to include research on common air pollutant in Freetown and Sea Cucumbers. This is aligned to SGD 3, 13, 15 & A4P Pillar 2 & 6.

10.1.7 The Agency undertook research into the occurrence of massive beach cast of sargassum seaweeds in Sierra Leone and hosted the first regional expert group meeting that brought together experts from mostly affected countries in Sierra Leone, Ghana, Liberia, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire and international organizations working on marine and coastal biodiversity management region from 10-12 November, 2015.

Following this expert group meeting, the Abidjan Convention funded the development of a Regional Strategy for the Management of alien and invasive marine species in West Africa.

10.1.8 The Agency also undertook a survey on alternatives to ozone depleting substances directed towards promoting country's commitment to the protection of the ozone layer and the Montreal Protocol.

10.1.9 The Agency reviewed and updated the national implementation plan of the Stockholm Convention for Sierra Leone in order to meet with the provisions of convention.

10.1.10 Assessments on environmental load of waste waters and effluents from six pilot manufacturing companies Kings Production (SL) Limited, Kadco (SL) Limited, Sierra Leone Brewery Limited, Sierra Leone Bottling Company Limited, Victory Enterprise and Rainbow Paints and Chemicals (SL) Limited were conducted. These assessments will enable the agency to establish national baseline information for proper environmental planning and decision making to ensure environmental quality and poverty reduction. In 2017, the Agency also embarked on studies of wastewater effluents produced by twelve (12) EIA licensed companies/industrial facilities in Freetown to verify their compliance with environmental legislation and to propose corrective actions in the event of a lack of compliance. The studies primarily focused on physical and chemical analysis.

10.1.11 Monthly waste water effluent analysis of six manufacturing companies namely, Sierra Leone Brewery Limited, Sierra Leone Bottling Company, KADCO Enterprise, Victory Enterprise, Kings Production, Rainbow Paint and Chemicals in Freetown were monitored. The parameters considered were Turbidity, Conductivity, Ammonia, Ammonium, Nitrate, Nitrite, Free Chlorine, Flouride, pH and Temperature. The annual summary indicates 30 percent compliance level with serious challenges on compliance to Turbidity, Conductivity, Ammonia, Ammonium, Free Chlorine, Nitrate and Nitrite. This activity is in line with SDG 3.9: By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.

10.1.12 Nationwide inventory on Persistent organic Pollutants (POPs) was undertaken in collaboration with other MDAs.

10.1.13 Sustainable waste management assessment was conducted on twelve (12) schools nationwide and eight institutions of Government. Four (4) schools - Services Secondary School Juba, Albert Academy, Kelly's Agriculture and Vocational Secondary School Hastings and Kulafayah Rashideen Islamic Secondary School, Tokeh were supported with five (5) 300L giant waste bins each with training on Sustainable Waste Management. (SDG 11.6: Clean Cities);

10.1.14 Twenty (20) Ecologically sensitive sites were mapped countrywide Jui Mangrove, Aberdeen creek, No.2 river and Kent beach, Western Area Peninsula Forest reserve, Kambui hills, Dodo Forest reserve, Nimini Hills, Tama Forest reserve (East) Tiwai Island, Sulima beach, Gola Forest Reserve, Kangari Hills , Sigmii (South), Outamba Kilima National Park, Mamuta Moyorsor Wetland, Lake Sonfon, Konakrede, Mahera beach, Bemkeh beach (North).

10.1.15 National Environmental Quality Monitoring Committees on Air, Water and Noise were established and launched on the 4th May 2015. Terms of References were developed for each of the committees upon which they operate. Baseline data from quarterly environmental reports was also developed.

For effective implementation of any standards, baseline situations are very vital. Therefore, Global Positioning coordinates of monitoring sample points for Air, Water and Noise were collected early this year; reports available. Few equipment for monitoring have been secured.

10.1.16 The Agency conducted baseline studies on contaminated sites nationwide. Approximately 540 contaminated sites identified. Dumpsites in municipalities, Hospitals, illegal Used Oil Refineries and Garages were prominent. (SDG 11.6: Clean cities; 3.9: Pollution prevention);

10.1.17 A total of two hundred and fifty (250) environmental researches (published & unpublished) within the period 2005-2015 was summarized and compiled in the form of a compendium which will now help streamline and focus research within the Agency. This activity supports SDG: 9.5 (Enhancement of scientific research).

10.1.18 The Agency also conducted a national Inventory on the use of Ozone depleting substance in the Refrigeration sector and national survey on best environmental practices in plastic wastes.

11.1 Gender Mainstreaming enhanced

The functions of the Environment Protection Agency include the initiation and pursuit of formal and non-formal educational programs for the creation of public awareness of the environment and its importance to the economic and social life of Sierra Leone.

11.1.1 In recognition of the importance of the role of women in Natural resource management, both as beneficiaries and as participants in the exploitation of the resources, it is therefore crucial to actively engage women as part of the decision making process at all levels, for effective governance and the ultimate success of an environmentally conscious society.

It is against this background that the Agency from 2014 to present gave support to twenty Pilot Female Agricultural Groups country wide through training sessions to educate and create an awareness of improved practices to foster effective environmental management and combat climate change and safe pesticide management practices. To create fiscal responsibility, a session was also conducted on financial management for accountability and transparency and to promote economic empowerment, the development of project proposals to secure small grant funding through the UNDP Global Environment Fund (GEF). The provision of small farming tools, food during farming were also made available to the Agricultural groups and in 2017, cashew seedlings as a means of providing alternative livelihood options which is of immense benefit to the environment by promoting climate change mitigation, improving on air and soil quality in the immediate surroundings, discourages deforestation as a result of the economic benefit derived from the sales of the fruits, to name a few.

Eleven women groups were provided with assorted farm tools and first aid kits and monitored for implementation, (e.g. Garkorgeh Women's organization; Centre for Women Empowerment, Jojoima town, Malema Chiefdom, Kailahun district; Maborhanday Farmers Group, Koinadugu District; Kawalen Women's Farmers Association, Bombali District, Lanneh Kuru Farmers Association in Bombali District; Be merciful Women's group, Kenema District, Muloma Women's group. Kenema District; Mother's Club, Pujehun District; Ngboumumah Women's group, Pujehun; Quie Donn ya Agric Organization, Kono District; Women's Organization, Kono District; Shunamite women group, Kono District.

This will enhance AfP: this activity supports the realization of pillar eight (8) in empowering women to take crucial role in environmental management. Environment Performance Index (EPI): This activity will contribute to the performance objective of ecosystem restoration and vitality.

SDG: 12 which ensures sustainable production and consumption of our natural resources and SDG 13 which deals with climate action

11.1.2 The Agency revised its strategic plan to include Gender mainstreaming into environmental management and climate change issues. Trainings were conducted for Environment Officers in Local Councils to mainstream gender into policies of

environmental management and climate change issues at the local council level and for gender focal persons of MDA's.

11.1.3 In 2016, The Agency in its bid to promote literacy amongst women, sponsored four female participants, employed with the Agency as janitors, to undertake a Literacy program at various stages of educational level with a view to achieving literacy, increasing moral and confidence of the participants.

11.1.4 Also in the rehabilitation of the Aberdeen creek, the Agency also provided support to four women groups and employment of women was given priority.

11.1.5 In achieving Pillar 6 of the A4P and sustainable development goals 5, 8 and 10 on gender parity, decent work and reduced inequalities, in all advertisements for vacant positions, women are strongly encouraged to apply and in 2017 internship programs were offered to primarily female professional staff.

12.1 Sexual Harassment

The EPA has a zero tolerance towards sexual harassment. In its commitment to staff welfare, the Environment Protection Agency organized annual interactive training sessions on Sexual Harassment in the workplace, for the benefit of its members of staff to create a greater awareness of the concept of sexual harassment within the professional context and to educate all to recognize situation that could be construed as sexual harassment.

In addition a comprehensive sexual harassment policy has been developed to enhance social protection, decency and reduced inequalities among EPA staff. The Agency is monitoring the implementation of the developed policy on sexual harassment.

13.1 Ratification and Domestication of Multilateral Environmental Agreements improved

13.1.1 In order to join hands the world in addressing environmental challenges and climate change, the Agency provided technical support on the ratification of five (5) Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) by the Sierra Leone Parliament on 1st November 2016. These MEAs are the Paris Agreement on Climate Change; Basel Convention on the transboundary movement of Hazardous Substances; Minamata Convention on Mercury; Rotterdam Convention on the prior informed consent of hazardous chemicals; and Nagoya Protocol on access and benefits of genetic sharing. This has improved the Sierra Leone's international statutory platform in the management of chemicals and hazardous substances, Biodiversity and Climate Change.

13.1.2 Sierra Leone joined other member countries to adopt three additional Protocols to the Abidjan Convention. At the concluded meeting of the Twelfth Conference of Party to the Convention the Abidjan Convention, the following three additional protocols were adopted:

- I. Protocol concerning Cooperation in the protection, management and development of the marine and coastal environment from Land-Based Sources and Activities in the Western, Central and Southern African Region (LBSA). The objective of this Protocol is to prevent, reduce, mitigate and

control pollution from land-based sources and activities on their territories or emanating from any other land-based source, including through the atmosphere, to protect and sustain the marine and coastal environment of the Protocol area.

- II. Protocol on environmental norms and standards for offshore oil and gas activities. This Protocol aims to prevent, reduce or eliminate pollution or damage to the marine and coastal environment resulting from offshore oil and gas exploration and exploitation.
- III. Protocol on sustainable mangrove management. The objectives of this Protocol are to:
 - Harmonize the principles and set the modalities for managing the mangrove ecosystem by the States-Parties and the local bordering communities.
 - Establish the modalities for environmental protection and preservation of coastal resources, including mangroves.
 - Define the framework and modalities for stakeholder participation in decision making for managing the mangrove ecosystem.
 - Define the modalities for the review and approval of projects and programmes, and other initiatives for the use of the mangrove ecosystems.

13.1. Sierra Leone is a signatory to several Multilateral Environmental Agreements. However, many are yet to be ratified. In October 2016, the Sierra Leone Parliament ratified the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Minamata Convention on Mercury, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources; the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal.

14.1 Finance and Procurement

The Finance and Administrative Department of the Agency continues to provide a supportive role pursuant its fiduciary responsibility to the Agency by way of ensuring quality and timely period financial reports and reconciliation statements prepared for the attention of management. This Department also interfaces with other relevant government ministries, agencies and financial institutions such as the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Accountant General Department, Bank of Sierra Leone and other commercial banks to enhance effective and efficient collaboration and coordination.

The following were key achievements made by the Finance Department among others:

- Strictly complies with government regulations, policies and directives to ensure sound financial management and controls. In line with this objective, the Agency has drafted and implemented Accounting and Financial Procedures Manual which was reviewed in 2016 and subsequently revised in December 2017 to take into consideration International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSS) and best practices. A draft of this revised financial manual is now available and will be operational by end of May, 2018.
- Additional policy and procedures manuals have also been developed and put into practice the Agency such as Assets Management policy manual, the Standard Operational Procedures for each department and the Human Resources Policy among others.

- To enhance stringent internal control processes, the Agency retained the services of an experienced independent internal audit consultancy firm, FAL Consultancy. The Internal Audit provides routine checks and balances on our daily operations with requisite recommendations made directly to the Board for necessary action.
- The Agency ensures that statutory accounts are prepared and submitted to Audit Service Sierra Leone. These annual accounts from 2014-2016 are subsequently audited and deemed as an unqualified audit opinion expressed by the external auditors. The 2017 annual statutory accounts have been prepared and submitted to Audit Service Sierra Leone for the forthcoming external audit and
- Reconciliation of all Agency's bank accounts up to 28th February 2018 completed with March 2018 underway.

The Agency has maintained high standards, transparency, accountability and propriety in all procurement transactions and strictly complies with the NPPA Procurement Act. Furthermore, every EPA file and financial document are now automated and in soft copies with requisite backups available.

15.1 National Projects and Enabling Activities undertaken

As the National Political and operational Focal Points of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Agency has been very supportive to ensure that MDAs have access to GEF Funds for the development and implementation of the following projects during the period 2012-2017:

A. Climate Change Sector

1. Integrating Adaptation to Climate Change into Agricultural Production and Food Security in Sierra Leone which is in line with Goal 2 (Zero Hunger: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture) and Goal 13 (Climate Action) of the SDGs: Project complemented and the executing entity is the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security.
2. [Preparation of a National Programme of Action for Adaptation to Climate Change](#) and this is in line with Goal 13 of SDGs (Climate Action) : Project complemented and executing entities are Meteorological Department in the Ministry of Transport and Aviation and the EPA-SL
3. SPWA-CC: Promoting Mini Grids Based on Small Hydropower for Productive Uses in Sierra Leone and this help to address Goal 7 of the SDGs (Affordable and Clean Energy): On-going Project and executing entity is the Ministry of Energy
4. Adapting to Climate Change Induced Coastal Risks Management in Sierra Leone and this project support goal 13 (Climate Action) and Goal 14 (Life below water) of the SDGs: The project proposal has been approved and the executing entities are EPA-SL, Disaster Management Department, Sierra Leone Maritime Administration, Institute of Marine Biology and Oceanography Research Institute at Fourah Bay College.
5. Building Resilience to Climate Change in the Water and Sanitation Sector which is in line with Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) of the SDGs: On-

going project and executing entities are Local Government, Ministry of Finance and Economic Department, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs, EPA-SL and Meteorological Department.

6. Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Africa for Climate Resilient Development and Adaptation to Climate Change and this support Goal 13 of the SDGs (Climate Action): On-going project and executing entities are Meteorological Department, EPA-SL, Disaster Management Department and Local Government
7. Energy Efficient Production and Utilization of Charcoal through Innovative Technologies and Private Sector Involvement and this help to address Goal 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) of the SDGs: Project completed and executing entities are the Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Food Security, EPA-SL and Private Sector.
8. Building Adaptive Capacity to Catalyze Active Public and Private Sector Participation to Manage the Exposure and Sensitivity of Water Supply Services to Climate Change in Sierra Leone this also support Goal 13 (Climate Action) and Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation): On-going project and executing entities are the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment and EPA-SL.

B. Biodiversity Sector

1. [National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and Country Report to the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity: Project completed and executing entity is the EPA-SL.](#)
2. SPWA-BD: Wetlands Conservation Project: Project completed and executing entities are the National Protected Area Authority, Forestry Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security and EPA-SL.
3. Biodiversity Conservation Project: Project completed and executing entities are the National Protected Area Authority, Forestry Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security.

C. Chemicals Sector

1. [Enabling Activities to Facilitate Early Action on the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants \(POPs\) in Sierra Leone:](#) On-going project and executing entity is the EPA-SL.
2. Development of Minamata Initial Assessment and National Action Plan for Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining in Sierra Leone: On-going project and the executing entities are UNITAR and EPA-SL.
3. Undertook Ozone depleting substances alternative survey in 2016 at national level and submitted to the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol through the United Nations Environment Programme.
4. Implementing the Institutional Strengthening project on Ozone for the country.

5. Implementing the Hydrofluorocarbon phase-out management plan (HPMP) this particulate project is linked with SDG 13(climate Actions) , 14 (protecting life under water and 15 (protecting life on land).

In 2012 and 2013, within just seven years of its existence, the EPA-SL won the Presidential Gold Award for outstanding performance.

Notwithstanding the achievements and positive gains made by the EPA-SL, environmental protection in Sierra Leone is threatened by certain individuals/business entities that conduct their activities with little or no regard for the laws of this country. One way we can start to demonstrate our love for this country is by adhering to the tenets of the law. The future of Sierra Leone is dependent on how well we manage our environment and our willingness to embrace positive change and comply with national environmental laws.

16.1 Anti- Corruption Measure Undertaken

Noting that corruption as a bane of development and source of socio-economic disintegration and recognizing that accountability, transparency, integrity and respect for the rule of law are important tenets, particularly in a regulatory body, the Environment Protection Agency Sierra Leone developed a zero tolerance policy on corruption in line with the National Anti-corruption Strategy (NACS). The policy outlines systems, processes and procedures that staff of the Agency should adopt and follow strictly in their daily execution of their official duties

The Agency established a Focal Person in the Compliance and Enforcement Department who liaise with the NACS Secretariat and produce quarterly reports on the implementation of the Strategy.

Two Independent Integrity Committees (IMCs) both internal and external have also been constituted to monitor the strict compliance with the laid down systems and processes that prevent corruption and promote the effective functioning of the Agency. The Internal IMC constitutes key members of the administration including the Executive Chairperson, Director, the Procurement Officer and the Internal Auditor. The external IMC constitutes eminent persons in the society that have demonstrated commitment to ensuring probity in public administration.

Practical steps have been taken by the internal IMC to prevent and eradicate corruption including, but not limited to, the following:

- Displaying information on each of the floor of the building indicating that corruption is a crime and no staff of the Agency should be giving bribe in the performance of their duties.
- Global Positioning Systems (GPS) have been installed in all vehicles of the Agency to monitor their movement and regulate the use of fuel.
- Compliant Boxes have been placed in the Headquarters and Regional Offices to report incidences of corruption, sexual harassment and other issues that affect the effective and efficient operations of the Agency and
- Fixed Asset Policy has also been developed to regulate the effective use of office property.

- The Agency has implemented joint media programmes with the National Anti-corruption Strategy Secretariat to show case best practices in the prevention and eradication.
- The Agency signed the Integrity Pledge which demonstrates its commitment to fighting corruption. The Executive Chairperson, Directors and Heads of Department signed individual integrity pledges to mainstream the fight against corruption.

17.1 Critical Challenges

It is also important to mention the following challenges the Agency faced in 2017 that needs concerted efforts to address them in 2018 and beyond:

- Disregard of the rule of law by MDAs to ensure compliance for sound environmental management practices. Therefore, weak enforcement of environmental policies and laws among MDAs remains a challenge.
- Reluctance to comply with the EPA Act of 2008 as amended in 2010 (Government- funded projects).
- Weak collaboration from line ministries in making sure that EIA Licence acquisition becomes a requirement for investments related to their ministries.
- Locating companies in remote areas is difficult due to incorrect addresses.
- Illegal construction of structures on environmentally sensitive areas.
- Connivance of local authorities with companies to flout compliance with environmental laws.
- Delay in the prosecution of environmental violations due to the non-existence of an environmental court.
- Poor cooperation from some Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA's) which sectors having something to do with environmental protection and climate change slow the progress in achieving planned targets of the Agency.
- Limited laboratory field test equipment for air and water qualities and noise levels and absence of a mobile environmental laboratory to support rapid response on reported pollution issues from the public.
- Adoption and Enactment of draft policies and regulations for the effective management of chemicals, Pollution and Hazardous substances.
- Non-timely payment of licensing and monitoring fees.
- Lack of national environmental protection and climate change resources to support implementation of climate change initiatives in MDA'S and local councils.
- Lack of a climate change enforcement regulation.
- The absence of legislation which can be used to prosecute infringements or non-compliance makes enforcement difficult.
- Lack of Data Sharing and Shared Metadata between MDAs and organisations.
- Poor Data Quality and Security among MDAs
- Interference by local authorities in the enforcement of environmental laws.
- Analytical integrity of results from third party service providers.
- Small scale miners masquerading as artisanal miners.
- Limited understanding by some MDAs of their environmental responsibilities in their planning and activities.

- Limited financial and logistics capacities to plan and implement environmental programmes by MDAs
- The Public Fiscal Management Act 2016 and the 2017 Fiscal Control Act that requires the Agency transfer its funds to the consolidated revenue fund impacts planning for 2018 projects implementation.
- Conflicts and overlaps of mandates and policies on the environment and climate change among MDAs and self-seeking behaviors of stakeholders is also a challenge
- Limited knowledge of judges on environmental law.
- Delays in reviewing draft policies and legislations by the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice.
- Limited understanding of the mandate of the EPA-SL by MDAs and the general public.
- Low capacity of national chemicals management practitioners, and
- Limited Civil Society capacity to enable participation on chemicals management issues.
- Lack of commitment in attending environmental and climate change meetings by MDAs and communication gaps still exist. Therefore, the poor cooperation from (MDA's) having something to do with environmental protection and climate change slow the progress in achieving planned targets of the Agency.
- Enforcement and implementation of cross cutting issues amongst MDAs still remain a challenge.
- Commitment amongst MDAs to prioritize environmental issues is minimal and so environmental issues are still not given their desired attention.
- Difficulty in increasing country resource mobilization drive from the GEF and Climate Financing Windows (e.g. Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund etc) due to the lack of sector technical expertise to develop bankable proposals to attract the donor funds.

18.1 Next Steps/Future Directions

In a bid to improve on the protection of the environment and its natural resources, the Agency has the following recommendations for a bright future direction:

1. MDAs need to comply with the environmental laws and recognize their responsibilities to implement international environmental bench marks. MDAs should work in partnerships to develop and mainstream environmental safeguards into their sector policies, plans and programs.
2. MDAs should enforce the acquisition of ESHIA licenses for investments related to their ministries. Government development projects should be examples in the acquisition of an EIA Licence.
3. The Agency should further engage government on the need to ensure compliance by government funded projects to undertake environmental impact assessments.
4. The Agency should develop sector-specific EIA fee regulations and ensure their enactment.
5. The Agency should develop more legislations/regulations to handle environmental violators/defaulters.
6. Punitive measures are put in place for connivance by local authorities.
7. The Ministry of Justice in collaboration with the Agency should expedite the establishment of an environmental court.

8. National Funds be provided by central government for the implementation of environmental and climate change initiatives by MDA's and local councils.
9. There is need to upscale the Climate Change Policy into a Climate Change Act.
10. Improvement on Data Sharing and Shared Metadata among MDAs is vital for effective protection and management of the environment.
11. Discourage interference in the enforcement of environmental laws through a policy statement indicating that such interference shall be reported to the Anti-Corruption Commission.
12. Enact drafted regulations on chemicals, Pollution standards and hazardous substances.
13. Improve on collaboration and information sharing and cooperation between the Agency, MDAs and local councils.
14. More training opportunities on emerging management issues to be supported by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.
15. Establishment of a state of the art laboratory and testing facilities for air and water qualities and noise levels to support rapid response on reported pollution issues from the public and determine environmental pollution.
16. Inclusion of environmental and climate change education in School Curricula at all levels of education for effective public participation and awareness raising on environmental and natural resources management issues and problems.
17. Harmonization of sector environmental policy and legislation for proper environmental protection and management.
18. The need for more sensitization and the development or review of legislations to handle defaulters that construct in environmentally sensitive areas is eminent.
19. Effective functioning of established environmental focal points in MDAs will surely enable institutions to interact, coordinate and synergies policies and mandate for effective protection and management of the environment to the benefit of the citizenry.
20. Promoting strategic partnership with the public and private sector, civil societies, environmental non-governmental organizations, the international community and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) as well as ECOWAS Commission in promoting effective environmental protection and management.
21. Domestication/mainstreaming environmental multilateral agreements into national policies, programmes and projects and
22. Provision of expertise in the fields of hydro-carbon and underground mining;

The EPA-SL is increasingly developing various subsidiary legislations to strengthen environmental governance. Currently, EPA-SL has noted critical gaps within the EPA-Act, of 2008 as amended in 2010, that impede the ability to effectively address emerging global and local environmental issues and climate change. The EPA Act, 2018 as amended in 2010 only addressed administrative issues, and failed to address emerging environmental challenges such as climate change, fees for violation and litigation, gender and natural management issues. With further amendment to the Act, the Agency would be more proactive in mainstreaming environment, gender and climate change.

EPA Planned Activities for 2018

| OUTCOME ONE: Policy Formulation, Support and Dissemination Enhanced |
|---|
| 1.1 National Adaptation Plan developed |
| 1.2 National Climate Change Bill drafted. |
| 1.3 Coastal Zone Protection Bill drafted |
| 1.4 Additional protocols to the Abidjan Convention ratified:1. Protocol on sustainable mangrove management 2. Protocol on ICZM 3. Protocol on Offshore Environmental Standards 4. Protocol on Marine Protection from Land Based Sources and Activities |
| 1.5 Draft guidelines on the disposal of expired Pharmaceuticals, and Clinical Waste validated and popularised |
| 1.6 Draft guidelines on the disposal of food not fit for purpose, Hazardous Chemicals and Substances, |
| 1.7 Studies on Minamata Initial Assessment (MIA), National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention (NIP) and the Artisanal Small Scale Gold mining in the Use of Mercury (ASGM) validated and popularised |
| 1.8 Cabinet paper on the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol; BAN Amendment, Bamako, Land Based Sources and Activities to the amended Nairobi Convention (LBSA Protocol), Cartagena Protocol submitted |
| 1.9 Draft Environmental Regulations on Environmental Standards and Electronic Waste (E-Waste) Developed |
| 1.10 Environmental Management Reporting checklist for guest houses, small Agricultural projects entertainment centres and petrol stations developed |
| 1.11 Internal Policy developed on the use of ECAS, website and the Internet |
| Outcome Two: Effective Contribution to the Implementation of the Agenda for Prosperity |
| 2.1 National Circumstance and BUR -Project Implementation Plan (PIP) implemented |
| 2.2 Paris Agreement and NDC Implemented through the establishment of Transparency of action and support |
| 2.3 Collaboration with eight (8) MDAs strengthened through joint awareness raising. |
| 2.4 Mine rehabilitation bond framework developed and Regulations drafted. |
| 2.5 Artisanal mine rehabilitation framework developed. |
| 2.6 Fifteen (15)Village to Village (V to V) sensitization on environmental issues in the Southern, Eastern, Western Area, Northern and Northern Western Regions conducted |
| 2.7 Nineteen (19) Environmental sustainability Committees in Local Councils strengthened and three (3) established. |
| 2.8 Fourteen (16) Chiefdom environmental Committees strengthened through logistical support and training in environmental management practices in Sandor, Nimiyama, Jaima, Nimikoro, Tankoro, Gbenseh, Bureh Kasseh Makonteh, Marampa, Kafu Bullum, Buya Romende, Tonko Limba, Kalasogioa, Bumpbe Gao, Gbonkolenken, Valunia, Malema Chiefdoms. |
| 2.9 Six (6) Reforestation sites established in Kenema, Port Loko, Kambia, Tonkolili, Karene and Pujehun Districts |

| |
|---|
| 2.10 One (1) Environment Protection Agency Community Wood Lot established in Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District. |
| 2.11 Integrated Solid waste management model for Freetown Urban and Rural established using GIS and Remote Sensing |
| 2.12 One hundred (100) existing school nature clubs strengthened through Environmental education programmes |
| 2.13 Assessment on the extent universities mainstream/integrate environmental and sustainability concerns through teaching, research, community engagement and campus management activities conducted. |
| 2.14 Three (3) Environmental days (World Environment Day, World Ozone Day & World GIS Day) and EPA-SL 10th Anniversary celebrated |
| Outcome Three: Improved Institutional Capacity |
| 3.1 One Hundred and Sixty (160) Customs and other Law Enforcement Officers trained in the identification and management of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS). |
| 3.2 Environmental compliance knowledge of 32 technical staff of EPA and 60 regional police officers improved |
| 3.3 Improved compliance of Environmental Impact Assessment Requirements (EIA) by 50% through litigation. |
| 3.4 Sixty (60) EPA-SL staff trained on the use of the Environmental Cadastre and Administrative system |
| 3.5 Technical and Administrative staff trained in fifteen (15) professional disciplines in Chemicals Management, Climate Change, Geographical Information System (GIS), Natural Resource Management, Finance and Administration, Environmental Management, etc. |
| 3.6 Six (6) short term contracts, six (6) staff recruited and a minimum of five consultants retained to strengthen the operations of the Agency. |
| 3.7 EPA-SL staff welfare Improved through the provision of conducive, healthy, safe and gender sensitive work environment. |
| Outcome Four: Improved Institutional Reforms and Functions. |
| 4.1 Climate Change mainstreaming guidelines for the MDA's, NGOs, and CSOs strengthened for proper operationalization. |
| 4.2 Environmental mainstreaming implementation in ten (10) MDAs assessed. |
| 4.3 Improved compliance on the implementation of the Staff Operating Procedures(SOPS) of the Departments of the Agency |
| 4.4 Improved compliance on the implementation of the Staff Operating Procedures(SOPS) of the Departments of the Agency |
| 4.5 Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) provided for all technical staff. |
| 4.6 Urban environmental profile for effective environmental management in Freetown, Makeni and Bo developed |
| Outcome Five: Cross-Cutting Issues: coordination, collaboration, corporate governance issues, social issues, climate, research, synergies, CSR etc |
| 5.1 Established a robust GHG inventory system for effective data capturing and analysis. |
| 5.2 Water retention capacity of the Guma Valley Dam catchment area increased |

| |
|---|
| through reforestation programme and Community Green Programme Implemented. |
| 5.3 Improved knowledge of sixteen (16) communities on prevention and management of bush fires in Tonkolili and Moyamba Districts. |
| 5.4 Annual Environmental Quality Report for air, water, noise, waste water and three contaminated sites in Freetown produced. |
| 5.5 Public understanding of environmental law, compliance procedures and enforcement practices improved |
| 5.6 The level of charcoal production in selected parts of Bombali and Port Loko districts determined. |
| 5.7 50 Acres of Farmland Acquired for two (2) women's Groups and cultivated in Tonkolili & Port Loko Districts. |
| 5.8 Degraded land from small & large scale mining activities in Kono and Tonkolili Districts mapped. |
| |
| Outcome Six: Effective Contribution to the Implementation of SDGs/AU 2063 Agenda for Improved Standards of Living |
| 6.1 Ten (10) existing women groups trained in nursery establishment and Climate-Smart Agriculture. |
| 6.2 Improve the capacity of six (6) youth groups in nursery establishment and Climate-Smart Agriculture. |
| 6.3 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) on Climate Change implementation enhanced through coordination and climate finance resources mobilization. |
| 6.4 Inventory and baseline of coastal resources use produced. |
| 6.5 Viable alternatives to charcoal identified and piloted in Freetown & Port Loko. |
| 6.6 Three (3) pilot ecovillage projects launched |
| 6.7 Enforcement of the Ozone Depleting Substances (ODSs) regulations improved |
| 6.8 Comparative studies and analysis of environmental quality of life in Freetown urban and rural conducted. |
| Outcome Seven: Improved Institutional Mandate and Functions |
| 7.1 Environmental compliance of One hundred and seventy (170) companies with EIA licences Terms and Conditions strengthened through monitoring and enforcement. |
| 7.2 Twenty (20) new companies identified and issued notification letters. Fifteen (15) ESIA's received and reviewed |
| 7.3 Database on environmental parameters for effective environmental management established. |
| Outcome Eight: Effective Implementation and Use of Donor Interventions and Resources |
| 8.1 Global Environment Facility (GEF) Coordination and Integration of programmes at national level improved. |
| 8.2 A National Portfolio Framework with emphasis on women developed to enhance effective utilization of GEF resources |
| 8.3 Green Climate Fund (GCF) engaged to enhance support to country programmes. |