



Liberia's Environmental  
Governance Framework,  
Mandates, and  
Institutional  
Arrangement  
(Challenges &  
Achievements)

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# Background of Liberia's Environmental Governance Framework

In 2002 as a commitment to the environment, the Liberian Government promulgated laws that dramatically reformed the country's natural resource management.

One of those laws was the formation of the National Environmental Policy for Liberia and its companion bill was the Environmental Protection Agency Act which established the EPA, and charged it with a clear remit of responsibilities.

- On November 26, 2002- An Act Adopting The Environment Protection And Management Law of the REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA was Approved and was subsequently PUBLISHED BY the AUTHORITY MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS On April 30, 2003

# Objective EPML/ Mandate

- It was established as a legal framework for the **sustainable development, management, and protection of the environment** by the Environment Protection Agency; which has to be in **partnership with Ministries and Agencies and in a close and responsive relationship with the people of Liberia**, and to provide high quality information and advice **on the state of the environment and for matters connected therewith.**

The EPA shall be the **principal authority** in Liberia, for the management of the environment and shall **co-ordinate, monitor, supervise and consult** with relevant stakeholders on **all activities** in the protection of the environment, and sustainable use of natural resources.

# Institutional Arrangements

## Section 79: Protection of Natural Environmental Areas

- The EPA may, **in consultation** with the relevant line Ministry, declare by published notice, any area of **land, river, lake, wetland or coastal zone as a protected natural environment for the purposes of promoting and preserving specific ecological processes**, natural environmental systems, natural beauty or places of indigenous wildlife or the **preservation of biological diversity in general**

## Section 80: Protection of Wild Animals and Birds

- All **wild animals** and birds and in particular, **rare, threatened and endangered species** and their **habitats** shall be **preserved and protected** in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations made by the Agency **after consultation with Line Ministry**

## Section 83 Conservation of Biological Diversity

The EPA shall, **in consultation with the relevant Line Ministry**, issue guidelines and prescribe measures necessary for the conservation of biological diversity and shall:

- Specify national strategies, plans and programs for the **conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity** as part of the National Environmental Action Plan process;
- Identify, **prepare** and **maintain** an inventory of biological diversity of Liberia;
- Determine which components of **biological resources are endangered, rare or threatened with extinction**;

## Section 81 Conservation of Energy and Use of Renewable Sources

The EPA shall, **in consultation with the relevant Line Ministry** promote the use of renewable sources of energy by:

- Promoting **research in appropriate renewable** sources of energy;
- Creating economic incentives for the use and promotion of renewable sources of energy;
- Promoting measures for the conservation of non-renewable sources of energy; and d) Promoting the **best practices** for **renewable energy** production

## Section 87 Land Use Planning

The EPA shall, **in consultation with the relevant Line Ministry**, issue environmental guidelines and environment protection measures for **land use planning** at all levels which shall include:

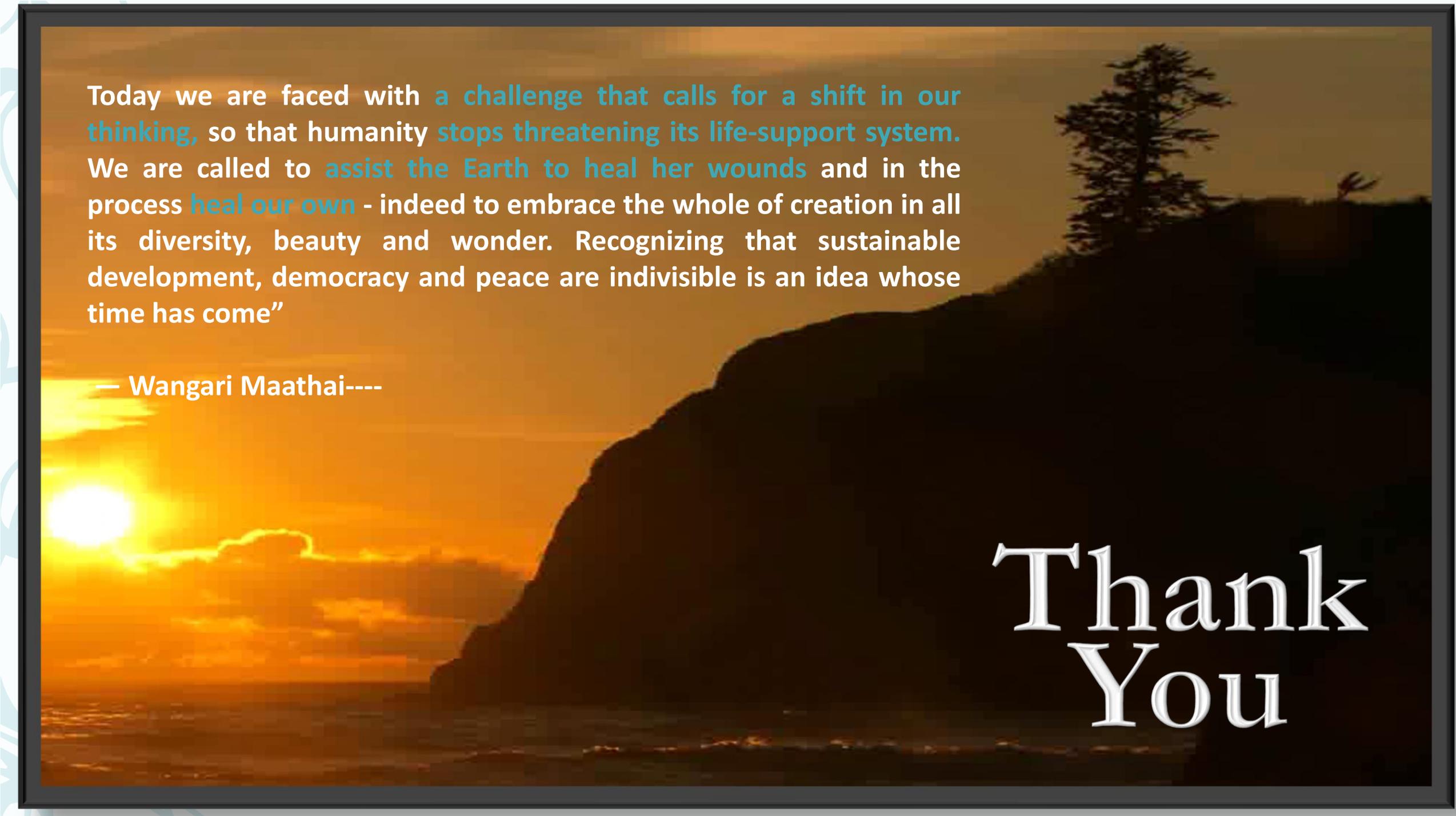
- Development and implementation of an **integrated land use policy based on scientific soil classification**
- **Rehabilitation of degraded land** through application of **appropriate technology**
- Adoption of **planning and management systems** that facilitate the **integration of environmental components** such as water forests, mountains and other natural resources
- Strengthening or **management systems for land and natural resources**

## Since 2003, significant and visible progress has been made in building Liberia's environmental governance framework. Key achievements include

- The Approval of the National Environmental Policy and adoption of two major environmental laws (Environment Protection and Management Law, and
  - The Establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2003, which became fully functional in 2006
  - The Publication of Liberia's first State of the Environment Report in June 2007, establishing a baseline for monitoring environmental conditions and trends
  - The Deployment of environmental inspectors in Ten counties by July 2007 and is underway in the other eight counties
- ESIA administrative procedures developed
  - The Certification of environmental consultants to conduct environmental impact assessments
  - The Development of a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
  - Active participation in multi-lateral environmental agreements, regional cooperation initiatives and implementation of projects supported by the Global Environment Facility
  - Preparation of a national action plan and strategy to address land based sources of marine pollution.

# Challenges

- **Low Budgetary constraints**
- **EPA's regulatory powers need to be strengthened to challenge failures of entities to act resulting to environmental degradation; to arrest violators of the EPA Law**
- **Establishment of the environmental court to deal with environmental issues.**
- **Following a Strategic Environmental Assessment, the EPA should be able to give directives to institutions of the sectors concerned to remedy or put policies in place for the resolution of the situations that are causing the environmental degradation with time limits and penalties in the event of failure to act; For example “the absence of money is not an excuse for the municipalities to fail to clean up the environment to prevent illnesses to the population**

A sunset scene with a bright sun on the left, casting a golden glow over a dark cliff on the right. A single tree silhouette is visible on the cliff's edge. The sky is filled with soft, orange clouds.

Today we are faced with a challenge that calls for a shift in our thinking, so that humanity stops threatening its life-support system. We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds and in the process heal our own - indeed to embrace the whole of creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder. Recognizing that sustainable development, democracy and peace are indivisible is an idea whose time has come”

— Wangari Maathai----

Thank  
You