



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY
SINKOR 4TH STREET, MONROVIA LIBERIA



WETLANDS MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS, 2024

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REGULATORY INSTRUMENT No. **RI/C&E/ERRS 002-12/24**

December 2024

REGULATORY INSTRUMENT

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by (Sections 74 & 75) of the Environmental Protection & Management Law of Liberia, the Environment Protection Agency promulgate the following Regulations:

Instrument : **Wetlands Management Regulations, 2024**

Instrument no : **RI/C&E/ERRS/002-12/24**

Prepared by : **EPA/IESIATRC**

Approved by : **Management Team/Executive Director, EPA**

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INTRODUCTION

Liberia contains wetlands that provide basic ecosystem services and offer a wide range of functions that benefit primary industries such as forestry, fisheries, agriculture and eco-tourism that are essential for the livelihood of human beings and sustenance of other living things.

The coming into being of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) created the opportunity to prepare a National Wetlands Policy in 2014 based on the National Environmental Policy of Liberia and the Environmental Management Act. The EPA Act promulgates a framework legislation, which provides the mandate of these standards, guidelines and procedures for wetland protection, based on the National Wetlands Policy to ensure sustainable management of wetland resources and the environment in Liberia.

The Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia is the custodian of quality assurance of Liberia's wetlands resources. Part of its responsibilities is to ensure that the quality of Liberia's wetland resources remains fit for sustainable use and that the livelihood of both human and the ecosystems are maintained and protected. These aspirations are achieved through effective management of wetland resources.

The establishment of a regulatory instrument is a first step towards a transformative progress in achieving the goals of improving access, management and sustainable use of wetlands in Liberia. This regulatory instrument is consistent with Part VI Sections 74 and 75 of the Environment Protection and Management Law of Liberia 2003.

Additionally, Liberia is a member of the RAMSAR Convention on Wetland Protection and acceded to the Convention on November 2, 2003. Since then the country has designated five RAMSAR sites of international importance (Lake Piso, Marshall Wetland, Mesurado wetland, Kpatawee and Gbedin wetland). This regulatory instrument seeks to provide the legal framework for the management and sustainable use of these protected areas and other wetlands across Liberia.

PART 1 – PRELIMINARY

SECTION 1: CITATION

These Regulations may be cited as the Wetlands Regulations of Liberia, 2024 and shall come into force when approved by the Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency, Republic of Liberia.

SECTION 2: INTERPRETATION

In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

*“**Abstraction**” means the removal of water from a wetland, either permanently or temporarily by pumping, excavation of channels, abstraction of water from a river entering a wetland or channeling;*

Act means the Act creating the Environment Protection Agency of Liberia, 2002;

*“**Agriculture**” means all farming activities including cultivation, agro-forestry, beekeeping, livestock management and aquaculture;*

*“**Alien species**” means any exotic non-indigenous life forms originating from outside a given ecological location, accidentally or deliberately introduced to the location by human activity or by natural means;*

*“**Aquifer**” means a geological formation, group of formations or part of a formation containing sufficient saturated permeable material to yield significant quantities of water to boreholes or springs.*

*“**Arbitration**” means to decide between parties in a dispute or conflict of water use, source or availability.*

*“**Artificial groundwater recharge**” means the intentional augmentation of groundwater resources by directly improving the infiltration of water to a target aquifer through the construction of suitable recharge structures.*

*“**Authorized Officer**” means any officer appointed under these Regulations to perform duties as may be required.*

*“**Beach**” means a geological landform of loose particles often composed of rock, sand, gravel, shingle, pebbles or cobble, found at the landward margin of a lake or coast line, the lower limits approximating to the position of the highest and lowest tidal water levels;*

*“**Buffer Zone**” means distinct or established areas that separate potentially antagonistic entries between competing users that serve to lessen the danger of potential conflicts base on local, national and international standards;*

*“**Canal**” means any surface drain, ditch, furrow, channel, flume or other conduit for conveying water, the surface of which is at atmospheric pressure;*

“Wetland Area” means an area designated under these Regulations;

“Wetland Management Plan” refers to a programme of measures that have been developed for the purposes of conserving and or improving the conditions of the Wetland.

“Wetland Management Strategy” refers to a document that has been prepared for the purpose of directing the sustainable management of the water, material, and genetic resources within the wetland area.

“Commercial irrigation” means irrigation primarily for commercial purposes.

“Community” means community of people living in a defined geographical area and identified by common history, common culture or common residence in an area, and may comprise of representative members of the organized institutions in the private sector or members of the civil society;

“Conservation” means the care and management of a resource so that the resource maintains its ability to fulfil its functions and provide goods and services for present and future generations;

“County Administration” refers to the public administration of a County in Liberia

“County Office” means an office of the Agency established in such for purposes under the Act;

“Designated Person” means any person authorized by the Agency to act on its behalf.

“Discharge” means volumetric flow rate.

“Drainage of Wetlands” means the removal or exclusion of water from a wetland by pumping, excavation of channels, planting of fast growing non-wetland trees or plants, abstraction of water from a river entering a wetland or channeling.,

“Duty of water” means the efficiency of water with respect to the irrigation of a given area of land, and is said to be high or low as the quantity of water required for such an area is small or large respectively

“Endangered species” means any species which is in danger of extinction of all or a significant portion of its range due to man-made or natural changes in the environment or as may be declared by the relevant wildlife management Agency (Forestry Development Authority).

“Emergency” refers to a disaster or hazard caused by climatic, hydrologic, tectonic, accidental, natural or manmade events which have or potentially can affect a large population and which require extra-ordinary measures to be undertaken to safeguard public interests.

“Environment” includes the physical factors of the surroundings of human beings including land, water, atmosphere, climate, sound, odour, taste, the biological factors of animals and plants and the social factor of aesthetics and includes both the natural and the built

environment; “;

"Environmentally friendly" includes any phenomenon or activity that does not cause harm or degradation to the environment;

"Environmental management" is a mechanism aimed at the protection, conservation and sustainable use of the various elements or components of the environment;

"Fish farming" is the breeding and or raising of fish for the purposes of commercial production;

"Flow" means a volume of water passing a cross section of a body of water, watercourse or works in a unit of time;

"Fresh water limit" means the place in water where at low tide and in a period of low fresh Water flow there is an appreciable increase in salinity due to the presence of sea water;

"Gazettement"

"Groundwater" means the water of underground streams, channels, artesian basins, reservoirs, lakes and other bodies of water in the ground, and includes water in interstices below the water table;

"Guidelines" means the description of the methodology for management of wet lands determination;

"High water mark" means the historical recorded point of the highest level of contact between the water and the shore or bank, as the case may be;

"Hunting" includes the doing of an act immediately directed at killing, wounding, injuring or capturing of any animal and the taking or willful interference with any nest, lair or other place where a dependent young animal is born, hatched, or reared;

"In-stream habitat" includes the physical structure of a water resource and the associated vegetation in relation to the bed and the banks of the watercourse;

"Irrigation" refers to the artificial application of water to a plant;

"Inspector" means an inspector designated as an environmental inspector under the Act;

"Interested parties" includes the community, the lead agency, the County Environment Committee and the District Environment Committee, and any other party having a discernible interest or a concern;

"Landholder" in relation to land, means the registered owner of the land or the person in whom the land is otherwise vested by law.

"Lead Agency" means any government Ministry department, Agency, state corporation or

local Authority, in which any law vests functions of control or management of any element of the environment or natural resources;

“Management plan” means a management plan for a wetland, riverbank, lakeshore or seashore, prepared under these regulations;

“Livestock” includes cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, camels and all other domesticated animals;

“Low water mark” means the historical recorded point of the lowest level of contact between the water and the shore or the bank as the case may be;

“Marine environment” means the maritime area extended in the case of water courses up to the freshwater limit and including inter-tidal zones and salt-water marshes;

“Protected wetlands” means an area declared as a protected wetland under these Regulations or any other written law;

“Natural water body” means groundwater and water contained in or flowing in a spring, stream, lake, pond, wetland, marsh or swamp, estuary, coastal or other water source in a natural water course;

“Operator” means any person authorized to construct works under these Regulations by authorization, or to divert, abstract, or use water by license

“Person” means an individual, corporation, company, association, government department, partnership or an Agency

“Point Source” means any discernible, confined and discrete conveyance, including but not limited to any pipe, ditch, channel, conduit, tunnel, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, concentrated animal feeding operation or vessel or other floating craft from which pollutants are or may be discharged;

“Polluter pays principle” means that the cost of cleaning up any element of the environment damaged by pollution, compensating victims of pollution, cost of beneficial uses lost as a result of an act of pollution and other costs that are connected with or incidental to the foregoing, is to be paid or borne by the person convicted of pollution under this Act or any other applicable law;

“Pollution”, in relation to a water resource, means any direct or indirect alteration of the physical, thermal, chemical and biological properties of the water resource so as to make it –

- a) less fit for any beneficial purpose for which it is or may reasonably be expected to be used; or
- b) harmful or potentially harmful to –
 - (i) the welfare, health or safety of human beings;
 - (ii) any aquatic or non-aquatic life or property; or
 - (iii) the environment;

“Pond” means a natural depression that contains water;

“Precautionary principle” is the principle that where there are threats of damage to the environment, whether serious or irreversible, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost effective measures to prevent environmental degradation;

“Protected species” means any plant or animal species declared as endangered or threatened species under the **Wildlife Conservation and Management (if any) Regulations**;

“Public information” is the process of notifying the public by means of publication in the Liberia Gazette, at least one announcement in a national newspaper in circulation in the locality, at least one announcement in the radio broadcasting in the locality or any other local means of communication.

“Public water supply” refers to a water supply that has been developed to supply water to cities, municipalities, townships, villages and communities and includes a variety of different water uses, excluding power generation and irrigation.

“Qualified water resource professional” means a person qualified under these Regulations to provide the services of a professional chemist, hydrologist, hydro geologist, engineer, surveyor or other professional service required to be performed under the Regulations.

“Rehabilitation” means any physical, mechanical or chemical process conducted in any water infrastructure which is undertaken to improve its operational status;

“Reserve” in relation to a water resource means that quantity and quality of water required: - to satisfy basic human needs for all people who are or may be supplied from the water resource; and to protect aquatic ecosystems in order to secure ecologically sustainable development and use of the water resource;

“Resource Quality” in relation to a water resource, means the quality of all the aspects of a water resource including:

- a) the character and condition of the in-stream and riparian habitat;
- b) the characteristics, condition and distribution of the aquatic biota;
- c) the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of the water;
- d) the quantity, pattern, timing, water level and assurance of in-stream flow; and
- e) the water quality stipulated for the reserve.

“Resource quality objectives” in relation to a water resource, means the level to be achieved and maintained in each aspect of resource quality for the water resource;

“Return flow” is that portion of the water abstracted that is returned to the water course.

“Riparian habitat” means the dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment adjacent to and associated with a watercourse;

“Riparian land” is land which by virtue of the proximity of the land to a water body, management obligations shall be imposed on the owner of the land by the Agency.

“Soil and Water Conservation Plan” refers to a set of activities that have to be done in order to reduce the likelihood of soil and water loss from the landscape.

“Spring” means water emerging from beneath the surface of the ground otherwise than as a result of drilling or excavation operations;

“Stakeholder” is a person or entity that has influence over or is affected by a certain activity on the resource.

“Standard” means the limits as established under these Regulations which are made pursuant to the Regulations or any other written law;

“Stream” means the water flowing in a watercourse, and includes a river;

“Swamp” means any shallow depression on which water collects either intermittently or permanently and where there is a small depth of surface water or a shallow depth of ground water and a slight range of fluctuation either in the surface level of the water or of the ground water level so as to license the growth of aquatic vegetation, and includes a marsh;

“Sustainable Multiple Use”

“Test yield” means the average discharge rate of the constant discharge pumping test conducted on a borehole.

“Threatened species” means any species of plant or animal is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout or in a significant portion of its range or as may be declared by the relevant national Agency;

“Use”, in relation to water contained in or forming part of a water resource, means:

- a) abstraction,
- b) obstruction or diversion of the water resource;
- c) discharge of materials or substances into the water resource; derivation of energy from the water
- d) resource derivation of chemicals from a water resource;
- e) any other activity of a kind prescribed by these Regulations, in relation to the water resource;

“Variation” means any authorized amendment made to a water licenses;

“Restoration” means regeneration or putting back a wetland, riverbank or lake shore or sea shore to the state it was in or near to what it was before it was modified;

“River bank” means the rising ground from the highest normal water mark, bordering or adjacent to a river in the form of rock, mud, gravel or sand and in cases of flood plains include the point where the water surface touches the land, that land not being the bed of the river;

“River” includes a permanent and seasonal river;

“Riverine wetlands” includes wetlands along rivers and streams;

“Soil” includes earth, sand, rock, shale, minerals, and the flora and fauna in the soil and the derivate thereof;

“Soil erosion” means, a general process whereby soil [articles are worn away or removed by natural agencies;

“Sustainable use” means present use of the environment or natural resources which does not compromise the ability to use the same by future generations or degrade the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems;

“Water” includes drinking water, river, stream water course, reservoir, well, dam, canal, channel, lake, swamp, open drain or underground water;

“Waste” includes any matter prescribed to be waste and any matter whether liquid, solid, gaseous, hot or radioactive substances, which is discharged, emitted or deposited in the environment in such volume composition or manner likely to cause an alteration of the environment;

“Wastewater” is water containing waste.

“Watercourse” means any natural channel or depression in which water flows regularly or intermittently;

“Water Resource” means any lake, pond, swamp, marsh, stream, estuary, aquifer, spring, artesian basin or other body of flowing or standing water, whether above or below ground;

“Water Service” means any service of or incidental to the supply of water or the provision of sewerage;

“Water Table” means: the upper surface of the zone of saturation. The zone of saturation is where the pores and fractures of the ground are saturated with water. It can also be simply explained as the depth below which the ground is saturated.

“Wetlands” means areas permanently or seasonally flooded by water where plants and animals have become adapted; and include swamps, areas of marsh, peat land, mountain bogs, bank of rivers, vegetation, areas of impeded drainage or brackish, salt or alkaline; including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed 6 meters. It also incorporates riparian and coastal zones adjacent to the wetlands;

“Wetland Products” includes fish, fibre, fruit, papyrus, grass, soil, stone, gravel, sand and such other things as the Agency may declare to be wetland produce:

“Wetland Resource Use Permit” means a permit granted to a person, community or organization to make extractive utilization of wetlands and other non-extractive as tourism and cultural activities in accordance with the grant under the law;

SECTION 3: OBJECTIVES

These Regulations are pursuant to the provisions of the Environment Protection & Management Law of Liberia (EPML) 2003 and the Wetland Policy (2014), the objective of the Wetland policy (2014) was enshrine into the regulations objective for clear define objective in line with the EPML and the wetland Policy.

- a) establish standards for the management of wetlands;
- b) issue guidelines and prescribe measures and restrictions to protect wetlands;
- c) regulate proper and efficient use, conservation measures for wetlands;
- d) prevent and control pollution of wetland resources;
- e) obtain, compile, store and disseminate data concerning the wetlands of Liberia;
- f) perform such other functions relating to the control and management of wetlands;
- g) maintain ecosystems and ecological processes essential for the functioning of all wetlands;
- h) ensure sound management of wetland resources and the environment to provide socio-economic services;
- i) protect human, flora and fauna as well as their biological communities and habitats against harmful impacts on wetlands;
- j) preserve wetlands biological diversities with high ecological values;
- k) integrate wetlands consideration in sector and socio-economic plannings at all levels;
- l) institute and promote participatory community-based wetland management system and
- m) seek common solutions to wetland problems at local community and national levels.
- n) establishment of management team for wetland management

SECTION 4: APPLICATION OF REGULATIONS

These regulations apply to all wetlands in Liberia whether occurring in private or public land. The Environmental Protection & Management Law 2003 protects wetlands established under national and international conventions and prohibits owners, without a permit from the Agency, from depositing/placing fill materials; dredging or removing soil or minerals; maintaining any use or development; or draining surface water or as may be prohibited by any section of these regulation.

PART II- MANAGEMENT OF WETLANDS AND WETLAND RESOURCES

SECTION 5: WETLANDS

Any portion of land which is saturated or flooded by water, either permanently or seasonally.

SECTION 6: DECLARATION OF PROTECTED WETLANDS.

The Agency may, by publication, declare an area to be a protected wetland where such area is established to have national and international significance due to its-

- a) Biological diversity;
- b) ecological importance;
- c) landscape;
- d) natural heritage, or
- e) aesthetic value; and/or may provide the benefits as a,
- f) wildlife nursery
- g) flood control
- h) pollution filter
- i) storm and wind buffers
- j) fertile farm land or
- k) recreation and tourism

Upon declaration of an area to be a protected wetland, the following shall be the only activities permitted to be carried out in the said area-

- a) research;
- b) eco-tourism; restoration or enhancement of the wetland; or
- c) any other activities approved by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Forestry Development Authority and the Management Plan (where applicable).

SECTION 7: PROCEDURE FOR DECLARATION OF A PROTECTED WETLAND

- I. The declaration of a protected wetland may be done by the Agency in consultation with the relevant line ministries, agencies, commissions and interested institutions/persons.
- II. Where the Agency on its own or in consultation with the relevant parties mentioned in 7(i) initiates the process of declaring an area to be a protected wetland, the Agency shall –
 - a) by notice in the Gazette and in at least one newspaper circulating in the local area, notify the public of its intention to declare the area to be a protected wetland;
 - b) prepare a Wetland Management Plan for the area and establish a taskforce including relevant stakeholders to oversee compliance to the Plan;
- III. The Wetland Gazettement process shall include:
 - a) Stakeholder Engagement: mapping/clustering of communities in case of

- large area; engagement at county, district or national level (where applicable)
- b) Environmental & Social Impact Assessment: collecting scientific data; mapping and flagging of the designated area;
- c) Build Consensus for Conservation Agreement: issue of livelihood is addressed as incentives to sign the agreement.
- d) Apply steps provided in FDA gazette procedure

- IV. Where a lead agency, a member of the public or a registered civil society organization petitions the Agency to initiate the process for declaration of an area as a protected wetland, the Agency shall consider the petition and may initiate the process as set out in paragraphs (a) and (b) of sub-section 7 (ii) and (iii) of these regulations.
- a) Without prejudice to the foregoing, a petitioner for the declaration of a Wetland as protected area may cause a Wetland Management Plan to be developed in consultation with the Agency, and the costs associated with the activities thereto shall be borne by the petitioner.
 - b) Where following a petition, the Agency declines to initiate the process of declaring an area to be a protected wetland, it shall communicate its decision together with its reasons, to the petitioner within 60 working days of the decision to decline.
 - c) For wetlands outside a protected area, the following shall apply:
 - Persons claiming ownership shall first contact the Agency and Liberia Land Authority (LLA) and provide all documentations validating such claims;
 - If such claim is proven valid by the LLA, the Agency shall make a determination, after field verification, about the suitability of the site for sustainable use/development; the Agency reserves the right (based on scientific determination) to approve or decline any request for development of said wetland;
 - If approved, the Agency shall advise said persons about the steps required to sustainably develop the site.
- V. Notwithstanding, the provisions of the preceding sub-sections, it is prohibited to use a wetland for unsustainable activities such as sand mining, mangrove harvesting, backfilling with borrowed materials and waste disposal.

PART III: PROTECTION OF WETLANDS

SECTION 8: REGISTER OF WETLANDS

The Agency shall conduct inventory of wetlands every two (2) years and shall maintain a register of all wetlands and any activities thereon. The data obtained from the inventory shall feed into the subsequent State of Environment Report. Notwithstanding the inventory schedule, the Agency shall conduct regular monitoring of all wetlands within the territorial boundaries of Liberia.

SECTION 9: MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR WETLANDS

The Agency shall:

- a) provide for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and their resources in Liberia;
- b) promote the integration of sustainable use of resources in wetlands into the local and national management of natural resources for socio-economic development;
- c) ensure the sustainable use of wetlands for ecological and aesthetic purposes for the common good of all citizens;
- d) ensure the protection of wetlands as habitats for species of fauna and flora;
- e) provide a framework for public participation in the management of wetlands;
- f) by enhancing education research and related activities; and prevent and control pollution and siltation of wetlands.
- g) Ensure that environmental, health impact assessment and environmental audits as required under the EIA Regulations shall be mandatory for all activities (*drainage, discharge, excavation etc.*) likely to have an adverse impact on the wetland;
- h) Take specific measures essential to promote, preserve and maintain knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities;
- i) Embody traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the wetlands.
- j) encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices;
- k) integrate wetlands management into the national and local land use plans
- l) ensure community and public participation in the management of wetlands;

9.1 The land owner or legally authorized operator of the land on which a wetland situated is required to apply to the Agency for approval for any proposed or existing developments such as drainage, discharge into or construction that would affect the wetland.

9.2 Whenever any proposal for the drainage and reclamation of a wetland involves the subsequent use by the applicant of all or any of the water conserved by the drainage or reclamation of such wetland, the applicant shall submit an application for a license for the diversion, abstraction, storage or use of such water with a Hydrological Assessment Report and Environment & Social Impact Assessment.

9.3 No works involving the drainage of a wetland shall deprive any lawful water user of reasonable access to water except by agreement or on payment of compensation, or on supplying water from other sources or by other means, and the applicant concerned shall submit to the Agency all plans and documents showing his or her proposals to provide such water user with access to water, and any agreements to this effect, and he or she shall, if his or her proposals include any works for supplying such water user with water, submit an application for a license.

SECTION 10: INVENTORY OF WETLANDS

10.1 Within two years from the date of commencement of these Regulations, the Agency shall, in consultation with FDA and other relevant line ministries, agencies and commissions prepare and maintain an inventory of all wetlands in Liberia and shall cause such measures, including the development of wetland management plans, to prevent and control degradation of such wetlands. The boundaries of such wetlands shall be shown

on all official boundary maps of Liberia.

10.2 The Agency may, in consultation with FDA and other relevant line ministries, agencies and commissions register changes in the boundaries of wetlands on maps in the inventory and make any other necessary changes in the inventory to reflect the actual situation on the ground.

10.3 In preparing an inventory of wetlands, the Agency shall consult with FDA and other relevant line ministries, agencies, commissions and county leaderships with a view to involving the public in determining whether a wetland should be included in the list of wetlands of national or international importance. The Agency should ensure that inventory process also align with RAMSAR Convention's standard for establishing RAMSAR sites to justify that the wetland is significant and its conservation contributes to global environmental management of ecosystem services.

SECTION 11: PERMITTED USE OF WETLANDS.

- 11.1 The following sustainable uses of wetland resources shall not be subject to these Regulations –
- 11.2 Subsistence harvesting of medicinal plants, trees and reeds as provided under the Forestry Development Authority Laws and regulations;
- 11.3 Any cultivation which is not likely to adversely affect the wetland;
- 11.4 Fishing, subject to the provisions of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Management and Development Law (2019);
- 11.5 Collection of water for domestic use;
- 11.6 Hunting, subject to the provisions of the Forestry and Wildlife Law of 2016;
- 11.7 Grazing of livestock.

SECTION 12: WETLAND RESOURCE USE PERMIT

12.1 No person shall carry out any activities within a wetland (excluding activities mentioned in section 11) without a permit issued by the Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia. Failure to comply by sub-regulation 12.1, penalties will be applied consistent with the Environmental Protection and Management Law of Liberia (2003).

SECTION 13: TEMPORARY PERMIT

- 13.1 The Agency may, after consultation with the relevant line ministries, agencies and commissions, grant a temporary permit to an applicant for the use of a wetland where: -
- i. there is need to use water for emergency situations pending the availability of alternative sources of supply; or
 - ii. a special research project requires the use of the wetland for a specified period of time;
- 13.2 The temporary permit issued under this Regulation shall be valid for a maximum period of three months, and may be renewed for a further period of three months upon application by the holder with reasons to the satisfaction of the EPA as per its institutional framework. No temporary permit shall extend beyond the period of two times application which amounts to a six (6) months period of operation;

13.3 The decision to issue wetland use permits or temporary permits shall be done upon recommendation of the Environmental & Social Impact Assessment Internal Review Committee and approval by the Executive Director of the Agency.

SECTION 14: DUTY OF LAND OWNER, USERS AND OCCUPIERS

- 14.1 If an owner, occupier or user of land which is adjacent or contiguous to a wetland observes an intrusion in said wetland or an undertaking deemed injurious to the wetland, the owner, occupier or user is advised to immediately notify the Agency of said activities. The Agency shall at all times protect the identity of the informant;
- 14.2 Any person who carries out proscribed activities under these regulations commits an offence and liable to penalties consistent with the provision of the Environmental Protection and Management Law of Liberia.

SECTION 15: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RIPARIAN COMMUNITY IN WETLAND

Wetlands are very important resources for Communities residing within the vicinity. They provide very important primary natural resource and ecosystem service and as sources the role of these communities in the management of wetlands is key to its sustainability.

- 15.1 The riparian communities will work with the EPA, and all the relevant MACs, and the local authorities to develop strategies that will ensure that ecological functions of the wetlands are maintained.
- 15.2 Riparian communities will be part of the design and management of watershed and catchment area management in collaboration with EPA and all the relevant MACs, and local authorities.
- 15.3 The community will work with EPA and all the MACs, and local authorities to develop and implement flood mitigation and management plans.
- 15.4 The community will work with EPA and all the relevant MACs, and local authorities to intensify monitoring and surveillance to reduce pollution of water, soil and vegetation ecosystems of the wetlands.
- 15.5 The community will assist the local authorities in the development and enforcement of local bylaws for the protection of the wetlands.
- 15.6 The community will work with the local authorities in the development of sustainable exploitation strategies of the wetland resources.
- 15.7 The communities will also work with EPA, and the relevant MACs, and local authorities to develop restoration strategies of the wetlands in the cases of natural disasters such as flooding, drought, wild fire, and management of exotic species invasions, large herbivore management to maintain natural characteristics and functions and to sustain them over time.

SECTION 16: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

The intent is to stop the decline of wetland flora and fauna by producing more and better wetland habitats.

16.1 The management strategies plan of wetlands will be developed based on the specific wetlands site character and the objectives and motivations of the management. This will be done by EPA, in collaboration with the relevant MACs, local authorities, and riparian communities.

16.2 When necessary, appropriate treatments may be needed to manipulate the wetland communities to the desired mix of woody and non-woody plants.

16.3 Several options for managing woody wetland vegetation include cutting, grazing, chemical methods (herbicides), and the use of fire.

16.4 EPA, the relevant MACs, local authorities, the riparian community and research Institutions will explore new technologies for wetland management.

SECTION 17: REQUIREMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESMENT.

17.1 A developer intending to undertake a project which may have a significant impact on a wetland shall carry out an environmental & social impact assessment in accordance with the provisions of the EPML.

17.2 The developer referred to in sub-section (1) shall carry out an environmental study as provided for by the EPML. The intent is to stop the decline of wetland flora and fauna by ensuring more conducive wetland habitats.

SECTION 18: ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION ORDERS

The Executive Director may issue Environmental Restoration Orders pursuant to the provisions of Part VII Section 90 of the EPML in order to allow the regeneration of the affected water resources.

SECTION 19: DUTY OF ENVIRONMENTAL INSPECTOR AND/OR WETLAND SECURITY

An environmental inspector / wetland security within whose jurisdiction activities are likely to degrade or are degrading the water resources, shall ensure that the communities living near such areas participate in conservation activities and assist them in implementing these Regulations and any other law that protects the wetland or water resources.

Section 20: TRANSITION

Any person carrying out any activities on a wetland immediately before the coming into force of these Regulations, shall within ninety days from the coming into force thereof, take all necessary measures to ensure full compliance with these Regulations.

Section 21: IMPROVEMENT NOTICE

Where an environmental inspector/wetland security has reasonable cause to believe that any person is violating the provisions of these Regulations, the inspector/ wetland security shall

- (a) invite the person to show-cause-why they should not be held liable for violating these regulations;

- (b) Take such measures as are provided for under the EPML.

SECTION 22: ENFORCEMENT NOTICE FOR WETLAND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- 22.1 If it appears to the Agency that any conditions subject to which a license/permit or consent to carry out any of the activities referred to as “wetland -related activities” have not been or are not being complied with, the Agency may, pursuant to this Regulation, serve on a person a notice (hereinafter referred to as an “**enforcement notice**”);
- 22.2 The Agency shall specify in a notice served the water-related activity which is alleged to have been carried out without a valid license/permit or consent as aforesaid or, as the case may be, the matter in respect of which it is alleged that any such conditions as aforesaid have not been complied with.

SECTION 23: RESIDUAL POWERS OF THE AGENCY

- 23.1 The Agency may require such steps as may be specified in the notice to be taken within such period as may be so specified for restoring the land and the waters to their condition before the water-related activity took place, or for securing compliance with the conditions, as the case may be, and in particular may, for the purpose aforesaid, require the demolition or alteration of any works, the discontinuance of any use of the waters or the carrying out on land of any operations.
- 23.2 The Agency may, in the notice, order the immediate cessation of the offending action if it is of the opinion that the circumstances giving rise to the notice are such as to warrant an order to that effect.

SECTION 24: APPEAL AGAINST ENFORCEMENT NOTICE

- 24.1 If any person on whom an enforcement notice is served under these Regulations is aggrieved by the notice, he/she may at any time within the period specified in the notice appeal against the notice to the nearest Court in the affected area; and on any such appeal, the Court in a summary manner-
- a) if satisfied that permission was granted under this Regulation for the water-related activity to which the notice relates, or that no such permission was required in respect thereof or that the conditions subject to which such permission was granted have been complied with, shall quash the notice to which the appeal relates;
 - b) if not so satisfied, but satisfied that the requirements of the notice exceed what is necessary for restoring the land and the waters to their condition before the water-related activity took place, or for securing compliance with the conditions, as the case may be, shall vary the notice accordingly;
 - c) in any other case, shall dismiss the appeal: Provided that where the enforcement notice is varied or the appeal is dismissed the Court may, if it deems fit;

- d) Where an appeal is made against an enforcement notice in which the cessation of the offending activity is ordered, the notice shall remain in effect pending the final determination or withdrawal of the appeal.
- e) Any person who uses water or causes or permits water to be used or carries out or causes or permits to be carried out any operations in contravention of enforcement notice commits an offence under these Regulations.

SECTION 25: OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

Consistent with Part VI Section 75.6 of the EPML, any person who contravenes the provisions of these Regulations commits an offence and is on conviction liable to a fine not exceeding 5,000 US DOLLARS or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years or to both.

SECTION 26: DELEGATION OF POWERS AND FUNCTIONS

The Agency may where necessary, delegate any of the functions and powers provided for within these Regulations to a line ministry, agency or commissions where applicable

SECTION 27: OPERATION OF REGULATIONS

These Regulations shall be in addition to and not in derogation from any other law and regulations relating to the environment made under the laws of Liberia.

SECTION 28: EFFECTIVE DATE

These regulations shall become effective immediately after signing approval by the Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia.

SECTION 29: BINDING FORCE

These Regulations shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable to all aspects of Wetlands Management of Liberia.

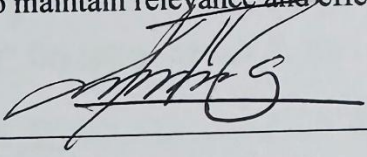
Done on this 5th of December, A.D. 2021.

Updated on this 5th of December, A.D. 2024 in the city of Monrovia, County of Montserrado, Republic of Liberia.

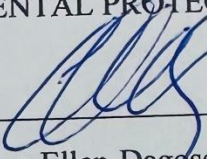
This document has been reviewed and is hereby approved for implementation. The approval confirms that the document aligns with applicable standards and objectives and may be acted upon by the responsible authorities.

The EPA will oversee implementation, coordination, and any necessary follow-up to ensure the document is effectively applied. Periodic review and oversight will be undertaken as required to maintain relevance and effectiveness.

Signed: _____


Dr. Emmanuel K. Urey Yarkpawolo
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/SECRETARY OF THE BOARD AND POLICY COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Approved: _____


Hon. Magdalene Ellen-Dagoseh
Minister, Ministry of Commerce
CHAIRPERSON
EPA BOARD AND POLICY COUNCIL OF LIBERIA