



Liberia



STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT LAUNCHED

Minister calls for urgent action

Monrovia, Liberia – 6 June 2007: The first State of the Environment report for Liberia commissioned by UNDP, the EPA and other stakeholders has been launched in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County by Mr. Andrea Tamagnini, Director of Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Recovery at UNMIL representing the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General to Liberia Alan Doss, and the Acting Minister of Lands, Mines and Energy Mr. John Nylander. The launched of the report in Buchanan coincided with the observance of World Environment Day. Over one thousand citizens participated in the occasion which commenced with a parade through the principle streets of Buchanan creating awareness on the threats to the environment by natural causes and man-made actions and the need to take urgent action to safe the environment.



Jubilant citizens parade on World Environment Day

Speaking at the well-attended program, the Superintendent of Grand Bassa County Julia Duncan Cassell said it is no mistake that Buchanan was selected to host activities for the observance of World Environment Day. She said, “We are glad that our young people found it fit to come and participate in this all important day because they are the ones who will carry out the environmental policies and plans that are going to be set by the Environmental Protection Agency”. The superintendent spoke of the emergency situation in the country with the beach erosion that has affected a considerable portion of the city along the Atlantic Street.

Speaking on the significance of the State of the Environment Report, Deputy Minister John Nylander said the report is a reference material that sets benchmarks on the environment. “Serious concerns must be given to environmental management and we must develop policies that will lead to sustainable environmental management,” he added. He said, global climate change is affecting all regions of the world and could have a consequential effect on Liberia if the environment is not taken seriously.



Beach erosion threatens city of Buchanan

The 131-page report argues that poor waste management and sanitation is a major problem facing post conflict Liberia and this is partially due to inadequate legislation, weak enforcement of laws, lack of substantial financial and human resources, lack of appropriate technologies and effective mechanism to coordinate stakeholders. The report identified charcoal and fuel wood as

the two major sources of energy since the destruction of the LEC hydropower plant and this has a serious negative impact on the forests and biodiversity resources.

The State of the Environment report is encouraging the promotion and efficient use of alternative energy such as biomass, hydro-electricity and solar power. It highlights the need for land-use planning, environmental friendly mining, logging and agricultural practices and environmental impact assessment for all major development projects and the establishment of additional protected area in Liberia. The report calls for an integrated water resource management policy for the country to address the weak water resource management in the country.



Forest trees use to burn charcoal

During the program, the Students Environmental Awareness Club established with assistance from UNDP and the EPA was inaugurated. This was preceded by the official commissioning of the EPA regional office in Buchanan and the assignment of three environmental officers who recently benefited from a two week intensive training conducted with assistance from the United Nations Environment Programme.

The act establishing the EPA mandates the agency to produce a report on the state of the environment every five years.



EPA Executive Director Ben T. Donnie

According to the EPA Executive Director Ben Donnie “the main intend of world environment day is to draw everyone attention to the negative impact that man places on the environment time and again and to seek the highest political action for support to environmental management”.

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