

Normon Community Forest Management Plan

Vision

The vision of the Normon Community is that after the first 5 years of implementation of this management plan, 5% of our population will begin to feel the positive impact of improved forest governance and management as will be reflected in better livelihoods and increased income. It also is our expectation that within the remaining 10 years of this 15-year Community Forest Management Agreement signed with the FDA on 30 April 2021, an additional 15% of our population shall have benefited.

Community Forest Management Body
Normon Community
Kongba District
Gbarpolu County
Republic of Liberia

Acknowledgements

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFC	:	Authorized Forest Community
BSC	:	Benefit Sharing Committee
CA	:	Community Assembly
CCT	:	Citizen Conservation Team
CFMA	:	Community Forest Management Agreement
CFMB	:	Community Forest Management Body
CFMPs	:	Community Forest Management Plans
CRL	:	Community Rights Law with Respect to Forestlands
EC	:	Executive Committee
EPA	:	Environmental Protection Agency
FDA	:	Forestry Development Authority
GoL	:	Government of Liberia

GPS	:	Geographical Positioning System
NCF	:	Normon Community Forest
NGOs	:	Non-Governmental Organizations
NTFPs	:	Non-Timber Forest-Based Products
SCNL	:	Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia
TPFM	:	Third Party Forest Management
WAC	:	World Agroforestry Center

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1. Goal: Conserve and sustainably manage and use the resources of the Normon Community Forest to benefit Normon Community's entire population now and for future generations and beyond.

I.2. Specific objectives:

- Promote the benefits this forest would provide in products and services through a community-wide education and awareness program that fosters sustainable resource management.
- Take an account of the various resources of this forest, including its animals, plants and fresh water bodies.
- Advocate and ensure a Third-Party Forest Management arrangement that prioritizes value addition as among its most important activities.
- Promote swamp rice and other systems of farming that can reduce movement from one forested area to another each year for the production of rice and other food crops.
- Design and implement small-scale forest-based enterprises to support sustainable livelihoods and generate income by, among others, improving harvesting, processing and marketing of non-timber and timber forest-based products.

I.3. Duration of the Plan

This Community Forest Management Plan is legally limited to 5 years and is possibly renewable after every 5 and up to 15 years as per good performance on the part of the Normon Community, pending FDA's recognition of such efforts and subsequent approval.

2. INSTITUTIONAL, LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

This section of the management plan outlines and briefly discusses the relevant local and national institutions and the roles and responsibilities each plays. These institutional and legal frameworks hold true for this and other community forests with or without Third Party Forest Management (TPFM) arrangement. Few of the key institutions are the focus here.

2.1. Institutional framework

2.1.1. The Community Assembly (CA). The CA is the highest decision-making body of the Authorized Forest Communities (AFCs). It reviews and adopts forest management and related reports submitted by the Executive Committee (EC) which it elects to manage the CA's affairs when it is not in session. The rest of the CA's sole duties and responsibilities are to (i) Appoint members to the Community Forest Management Body (CFMB), (ii) Approve all Community Forest Management Plans (CFMPs) and budgets submitted by the CFMB, and (iii) Ensure that forest resources are used and managed according to an approved CFMP in a sustainable manner , and that income generated from community forest management activities contribute to the development and well-being of the community (CRL 2009) **and the integrity of the forest.**

2.1.2. Duties and functions of the Community Forest Management Body (CFMB). The CFMB represents the interests of the Norman Community and, as such, is mandated to enter into a Forest Management Agreement with the FDA following the provision of information regarding the community, the community's management intent, the demarcation of the NCF, the conduct of inventory of the forest's resources, and payment of a non-refundable Registration fee of US\$250,which had already been paid to the FDA for conferment of an Authorized Forest Community status that was realized by signing a Community Forest Management Agreement (CFMA) with the FDA on 30 April 2021. The major rights and obligations of the CFMB are that it must (i) Operate in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Community Forest Management Agreement, community forestry rules and other relevant legislations and regulations, (ii) Develop and implement community forest management plans under guidelines and specifications issued by the FDA for the NCF and other Community Forests,(iii) Prepare and implement the rules/guidelines of the NCF, (iv) Conduct awareness raising activities in the community, and (v)Represent the community in all matters and negotiations related to Norman as an Authorized Forest Community (CRL 2009).

2.1.3. The Forestry Development Authority (FDA). The FDA has jurisdiction over community forestry management, may grant official recognition to the demarcation of the boundaries of community forests, recognizes and terminates an Authorized Forest Community status, and coordinates with other government institutions and relevant parties on the implementation of community forestry programs in the country as a whole. Consistent with the FDA-authored Community Rights Law Regulations, the Authority is also mandated to (i) Monitor and evaluate Community Forestry Management Programs,(ii)Facilitate the resolution of conflicts upon request by an Authorized Forest Community,(iii)Assist in building the capacity of Authorized Forest Communities in sustainable community forest management, and (iv) Assist in securing financial and technical assistance for forest communities in support of their community forest management programs.

2.2. The legal and policy framework

This section summarizes the obligations that the management plan must meet within the legal framework of Liberia's laws.

2.2.1. The Regulation for Chain Saw Milling (Chain Saw Milling Regulation No.115-11), that defines and imposes restrictions on the areas where milling must be done (e.g., Community forests and private/deeded land, and the set of conditions that must be met before milling begins in these areas, among others) (FDA 2012).

2.2.2. The Wildlife and Protected Area Law (2016), that aims to govern the management of wildlife resources within and outside protected areas (PAs), and thus demands compliance of the community forest management plan with its requirements relating to hunting wild animals in community forests.

2.2.3. The Regulation on the Commercial and Sustainable Extraction of Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPs) (Regulation No.111-08), that imposes an “unprocessed NTFP Commercialization

Fee” and local processing fees on collectors and processors of NTFPs, but exempts the quantities of certain NTFPs from taxation; the Regulation also lists some NTFPs which “should not be transported for commercial purposes without a valid Waybill” (FDA 2009).

2.2.4. The 1986 Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, that gives the constitutional basis for community forestry in Article 7 and provides for public participation in the protection and management of the environment and natural resources in Liberia.

2.2.5. The National Forestry Reform Law of 2006 (NFRL 2006), that states in Chapter 3 Article 3.1 that the FDA must “assure sustainable management of the Republic’s Forest Land, Conservation of the Republic’s Forest Resources, protection of the Republic’s Environment, and sustainable development of the Republic’s economy, with the participation in and for the benefit of all Liberians”.

2.2.6. Community Rights Law with Respect to Forestlands (CRL 2009), that defines and supports communities’ full engagement in the sustainable management of the forests of Liberia by creating an enabling legal framework which includes implementing regulations promulgated in 2011, requires a management plan in Article 3.2(b) that is prepared by the Community Forest Management Body (Article 4.2(c) consistent with FDA guidelines and specifications.

2.3. National and International NGOs

In the Normon Community, the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia is the only National NGO; not a single international NGO operates in the community. There, however, are two important and locally powerful traditional secret societies in this community: the Sande (Women) and Poro (Men) secret societies.

2.4. Demographic information and socio-economic summary of the community

The towns and satellite villages constituting the Normon community include Normon Town, Jaiwajeh, Lyne, Gailahun, Borborhun, Fayama, ULC/Gola Village, Smith Village, Wango Village, Njagbeima, Fallah Village, Vaisami and Domamana. Livelihood and income generating activities include backyard gardening of food and tree crops (plantain and other fruit-bearing trees, vegetables, etc.), swamp rice and mixed rice-based farming in the uplands and the collection, extraction and use (consume, market) of a variety of timber (as lumber, poles, etc.) and NTFPs (Bush meat, charcoal, firewood, medicinal plants, palm wine, nuts, seeds, Rattan and yam).

The common food crops of the Normon Community include root crops (Cassava, and yams in a limited extent), banana (as snack food) and rice (often cultivated in upland areas but also in swamplands). The consumption and marketing of NTFPs by far outweigh those of timber in terms of direct economic benefits. The most important NTFPs in these respects include fruits, mushrooms, Rattan, bitter shoot (mistakenly called bitter root), monkey vine, medicinals, bush meat, firewood, construction materials and thatch (for roofing). The current population of the Clan is 4,486 and the major ethnic group is Gola. Minor ethnic groups include Mendi, Gio, Kpelleh and Vai.

2.5. Description of the Normon Community Forest

2.5.1. History of forest resource management and use. As a tradition, the people of this community use forestlands for farming, hunting, cultural and historical sites, cutting and collection of a variety of non-timber forest products, human settlements and to some extent, artisanal mining. In sum these activities are a serious threat to the NCF. In the 1980s, for example, about 3 logging companies operated in some parts of this forest and had served some Liberian and Lebanese business interests. Never in their history has there

been a time when inhabitants of this community forest had ever benefitted from commercial logging. There also are sizeable patches of swamplands which are owned and used by people some families for swamp rice production from generation to generation; that practice also holds true for patches of oldgrowth forested areas that are used for upland rice production. These multiple and conflicting uses of this forest ecosystem have been undertaken without the benefit of a management plan in place, oral or written.

2.5.2. Location, major vegetation formations, animal and plant species, water bodies and size of the forest. The NCF shares borders with the Proposed Foya Protected Area, Gola Forest National Park, the Tonglay Community Forest Kongba District, Gbarpolu County. Patches of oldgrowth and secondary forests, and savannah grasslands are the major vegetation formations. It shares the same types of animal and plant species with adjacent forests of the Gola Forest National Park and Tonglay Community Forest. Examples of animal species are *Caracal aurata* (Golden Cat), *Cephalophus dorsalis* (Bay duiker), *Loxodonta cyclotis* (Forest elephant), *Neotragus pygmaeus* (Royal antelope) and *Choeropsis liberiensis* (Pygmy hippopotamus).

Table I lists of some of the animal species of the NCF, including the examples provided here. Table 2 reflects some of the plant species common to this community forest a few examples of which are *Entandrophragma angolense* (Edinam, Tiama), *Bussea occidentalis* (Bussea), *Canarium schwienfurthii* (Aiele), and *Dacryodes klaineana* (Monkey plum). The Norman Clan is, indeed, blessed with too many water bodies which either originate from the NCF or flow through or adjacent to this forest and include the following creeks (cs), streams (ss) and rivers (rs): Nyogbah (c), Towah (c), Madowo (c), Maion (ca), Gabowor (c), Konamakpor (c), Keinduemunya (c), Kodia (c), Wuyeikpeh (c), Tolobu (c), Mawuyah (c), Buweiah (c), Fayah (s), Bonotomah (s), Godama (s), Wuajon (s), Galia (s), Kajama (s), Makpoi (s), Maheimay (r), Manormeh (r) and Moao (r). Area covered by the NCF is estimated at 12,483 hectares.

2.5.3. Climate, topography and soils: The NCF has the same climate as the Gola Forest National Park and surrounding forest ecosystems. As is true with the Gola Forest National Park, the NCF lies within the wet tropical climatic zone and has marked wet (April to November) and dry (December to March) seasons. Climatic data and information have not been specifically collected and analyzed for the NCF; this is also true about its soils. Many of the people from the Norman community say the NCF has a combination of flat and hilly areas but are not sure about how many hectares of the NCF are flat and those with steep and moderate slopes.

2.5.4. Definition of major threats to the forest. Threats to the NFC include shifting cultivation, uncontrolled hunting and fishing, fire, destructive logging practices (including industrial and chainsaw harvesting), mining, human settlements, and over harvesting (collection, extraction) of NTFPs (Bushmeat, Rattan, mushrooms, nuts, fruits, seeds, etc.). Some of the underlying causes of these threats are conflicting land uses, lack of alternative to shifting cultivation and poverty.

3. MANAGEMENT OF THE NORMON COMMUNITY FOREST

As used in this Plan, the term “management” is a reference to the process of planning and organizing resources and activities to achieve a goal and specific objectives in the most effective and efficient manner possible. For our purpose, resources include plants (herbs, shrubs, trees, vines, etc.), wild animals, cultural and historical sites (e.g., secret forests, caves, waterfalls, etc.), and freshwater bodies. After a heated debate (that lasted for more than 2 hours), an agreement was reached by participants to a planning workshop representing the towns and villages of the Norman community, that a Third-Party Forest Management agreement with a logging company is possible if the company is willing and prepared to:

- Train a number of community members on how to identify, select and mark trees that are to be felled and how felling should be done so that the damage to other trees is lessened.
- Train community members on how to determine the volume of wood and to monitor all logging activities each day, including taking account of the number of logs sawn, how many are exported and how many are left in the forest to be processed in the community, by community members.
- Loan the community a portable saw mill and teach a selected number of people in the community to operate and maintain the sawmill.
- Tap only the people of Normon and other communities in the County or beyond to undertake all forest management activities, not individuals of other nationalities.

The Normon community, through the selected participants to the 4-day forest management planning process, made the following recommendations which could finally be enacted as rules governing sustainable forest management:

- No one should make the decision to cut down trees in the Normon Forest without getting a permission to do so from the CFMB.
- Any farming that involves the cutting down and burning of trees in the Normon Forest should not be allowed as is the case now.
- The people in the towns and villages of the Normon Clan should organize themselves so that they can engage in a successful tree growing activity in the deforested areas of the forest.
- The NCF must be divided into 3 zones: Conservation, farming and logging.
- Every action will be taken so that the set of activities compatible with sustainable forest management for each of the zones mentioned here are defined and undertaken efficiently and effectively.
- Hunting animals by any methods, especially trapping, should be banned or forbidden.

Under the CRL (2009), a management plan is a requirement for FDA's approval of a community's right and responsibility to govern and manage a given forest. A management plan, in a practical sense, is a document that changes with time as new ideas present themselves during its implementation. This Plan adheres to and largely demonstrates the FDA's Guidelines for Community Forest Management and the universal "best bets" for the participatory planning process. In the paragraphs that follow, proposed forest governance and management activities are briefly outlined and discussed.

3.1. Boundary definition, demarcation, maintenance and patrol

The responsible governance and sustainable management of the NCF is fraught with felt disputes and conflicts. As mentioned earlier in Section 2.5.2., this approximated 12,483-hectare forest shares boundaries with other important landscapes that include the Proposed Foya Protected Area/Reserve, Gola Forest National Park, the Tonglai Community Forest, and serves as a corridor between Liberia and Sierra Leone for people and animals. In attempts to finally define and demarcate the NCF, its final expanse is highly likely to be greater or smaller than the current size. In other words, the actual size of the NCF has yet to be determined on the ground (demarcated) and finally be maintained (Keeping the boundary line(s) cleared) and patrolled. Farming, mining, human settlements, hunting and other activities incompatible with sustainable forest management are a commonplace in and around the NCF, listed earlier as threats (Section 2.5.4). Among the number of effective measures to reduce or stop these unlawful incursions in the forest are to clean and patrol the boundary line.

Desired outcome:
• A boundary line that is maintained and effectively patrolled to keep intruders out of the NCF.
Actions and guidelines:

- Define criteria for identifying and selecting a joint patrol team, consisting of individuals from the NCF community, the forest guards and representatives of the various landscapes with whom the NCF shares boundaries.
- Employing the criteria, select, train and further equip the team (including women).
- Prepare a brochure detailing the duties and responsibilities of the team, including sanctions regimes when individuals do not live up to the assigned duties and functions.
- Prepare permanent pillars to be introduced in the boundary line.
- Establish and geo-reference (GPS) concrete pillars on the boundary line.
- Work with the FDA, District Commissioners and other local leaders and partners to peacefully settle any boundary disputes and conflicts which cannot be managed or resolved by the team.
- Undertake boundary maintenance and patrol activities as frequently as may be deemed necessary.

3.2. Assessment and avoidance/reduction/control of threats to the forest. Among the most common threats to the NCF, as listed above, are fire, human settlements, hunting, and artisanal mining. Governing and managing this forest responsibly and sustainably will not be possible if these threats are not reduced/ controlled or even stopped. The threats of note are both internal (caused by people of the Norman community) and external (caused by people of NCF-fringe communities).

Desired outcome:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained assessment and effective and efficient avoidance/reduction/control of the threats to the NCF.
Actions and guidelines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a quarterly threat assessment reconnaissance of the forest. • Identify, geo-reference and submit to the CA a summarized description of areas where threats had occurred/are repeatedly reported. • Create a forum, comprising representatives from the NCF community and neighboring communities, to compare notes on the threats this forest faces in a more comprehensive fashion. • Take all the steps necessary to avoid/reduce/stop all that threaten the NCF

3.3. Conduct of inventory of animal and plant species of the forest

This plan calls for an inventory for both the animal and plant species of the NCF. Keen attention should be paid to plants (timber, medicinals and other types) which feature in livelihoods, nutritional, traditional and related values or uses. An inventory of at least 5% would well serve management planning.

Desired outcome:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A compendium of animals, plants and other resources of the NCF. • Sustained efforts to create awareness about wild animals, plants and other natural resources which support livelihoods and sustain the forest as an ecosystem. • Broadened awareness of the various resources towards which management efforts are directed.
Actions and guidelines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design simple (user-friendly) methods of assessment and inventory of animal and plant species of the forest. • Identify, select, organize and train members of a local inventory team, largely from the NCF communities (and possibly from NCF-fringe communities), to conduct an inventory of any intensity, with an expert as a team leader. • Design and implement a program of continuing education about the value(s) of the forest and the importance of inventory as a forest governance and management decision-making tool, among others.

3.4. Zonation of the forest and its buffer zone. It appears that the NCF comprises 3 types of vegetation formations whose various sizes are currently not known. They are old growth and secondary forests, and savannah formations. The latest guidelines on community forest management planning (FDA 2020) seems to be standardizing that 3 zones must be defined for a given community forest. During implementation of this Plan, management must establish internal zones and an external buffer zone, and the management prescriptions of these zones must be prepared and carry out by the Norman community and other communities in the larger landscape.

Desired outcome:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core and buffer zones of the NFC had been established and the best management prescription(s) for each zone defined and undertaken.
Actions and guidelines:
<p>Old growth forest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, measure and record mature and over-matured trees of commercial species. List and state the uses of trees other than for timber (e.g., medicinal, spiritual and others) in this zone. Prepare and carry out a harvesting plan that will strictly adhere to the practices of reduced-impact logging as outlined In Section 3.10 below. <p>Secondary forest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probe into the possibility of establishing and managing agroforestry systems and component technologies. Assess this forest to determine any other appropriate management activities. <p>Savannah forest:</p>

3.5. Identification, geo-referencing and description of sites of cultural/historical/tourism significance. Identify and set aside areas in the forest which could serve cultural and historical purposes and could even attract people to visit the forest and increase their interest in the forest and its sustainable management.

Desired outcome:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth knowledge base on the cultural and related values of the forest other than for resources such as a habitat for animals and plants. Heightened and sustained awareness and appreciation of the contribution of cultural/natural resources/sites to forest conservation and protection (the concept of biocultural conservation).
Actions and guidelines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop criteria for the identification and selection of members of a team to document cultural/historical/ecotourism sites of the forest. Employing the criteria, select members of the team, including both women and men, young and old. Identify and document cultural/historical sites in the forest. Conduct a detailed field reconnaissance of the forest for the purpose of identifying the sites in point. Prepare a brochure on results of the field reconnaissance, with a list of each site, its size and it's summarized description.

3.6. Caring for and wise use of water resources

In many communities around the NCF, traditional codes of conduct declared certain creeks, streams and rivers as sacred and where fishing, swimming, and fetching water are forbidden. However, these bodies of

water are a fraction of existing ones and in almost all cases, the code is no longer respected now as before. For example, in the recent past, a buffer strip of 20-25 meters of forest was always left along the banks of creeks/streams and rivers when farms were established within these riparian zones to protect water bodies. There are many creeks and rivers along whose banks such buffer strips are no longer established. These water bodies are littered with logs and other debris from shifting cultivation, mine spoils or as a result of road construction by logging companies and other land uses. The Norman Clan is, indeed, blessed with many water bodies as listed in Section 2.5.2. These must be carefully managed and protected.

Desired outcome:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freshwater bodies that flow from or through the NCF, or thrive near its landscape, are protected and not used or abused as bins for organic and inorganic wastes from mining, logging and other such activities.
Actions and guidelines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the site(s) in the forest that are sources of water bodies in the NCF. • Draft and enforce rules to protect the freshwater bodies that originate from or flow through the NCF. • Leave out buffer vegetative strips of about 20-25 meters along the banks of creeks/rivers/streams (riparian zones) if farming near a water body for its protection. • Establish and enforce rules against depositing wastes into all fresh water bodies and against destructive mining of sand from such water bodies. • Establish and enforce rules against water blocking (in streams) and the use of chemical or organic poisons as fishing methods. • Educate communities and conduct awareness campaigns to support enforcement of rules on better water conservation practices.

3.7. Rehabilitation of deforested or otherwise degraded areas (patches of secondary forests, grasslands, mined areas, log landing areas in the community forest, etc.).

Desired outcome:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patches of the NCF that have been degraded by excessive collection of firewood, farming, logging, mining, fire, and other of such human activities are rehabilitated and eventually restored.
Actions and guidelines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and record (with the use of GPS) the location and size of all mining pits, farming spots, timber extraction areas and other such areas in the forest. • Prepare and implement a rehabilitation plan for all degraded areas, and monitor and document the progress of recovery (trying out naturally assisted or artificial regeneration methods), using indigenous tree species. • Monitor progress of rehabilitation efforts by documenting challenges and what has been achieved in the face of such challenges.

3.8. Fire management

Fire is the most common threat in nearly all adjacent forests and other vegetation types in this community, and the NCF had suffered from several fire hazards in its recent history. Because of these realities, this plan finds it necessary to devote a session on fire as a threat, suggesting few of the good examples on how it could be controlled, its frequency lessened or occurrence totally avoided.

Desired outcome:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict and sustained enforcement of rules against activities that are highly likely to cause fire in the NCF and its buffer zone.
Actions and guidelines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop rules on the use of fire in the managed forest and its buffer zone.

- Educate and create awareness among NCF's inhabitants of fire as the most common threat to this community and the greater landscape.
- Conduct awareness sessions among NCF and buffer zone communities about the rules governing the use of fire and the measures to be taken for its control.
- Disseminate the rules through the local channels of communication, employing dramas, town criers and cultural performances.
- Enforce the rules through patrols, fines and other forms of sanctions.

3.9. Establishment, development and management of small-scale forest-based enterprises

This plan proposes four small-scale forest-based enterprises whose significance in livelihood improvement and income generation capacity was found quite promising for NCF and adjacent communities in the district. Nimba and are highly likely to hold true for the NCF community. During the participatory planning exercises recently undertaken this year in NCF, examples of these enterprises were a common place in Normon Clan. These are (i) Basketry (Weaving mats, nets, and chairs from rattan and other canes and vines), (ii) Carpentry (Fixing beds, boxes, carvings, doors, window and door frames, and toys from wood), (iii) Chainsaw logging (for the production of lumber – planks) and (iv) The production of quality charcoal.

Desired outcomes:

- Small-scale forest-based enterprises are established, including the production of quality charcoal employing improved techniques and methods.
- Entrepreneurial culture and spirit take roots in people of the NCF and neighboring communities, local jobs created, and the level of poverty eventually reduced.
- Reduced level of dependence on government for employment and other income generating opportunities.
- Heightened local consciousness of the value of forests and other natural resources and the wise use of such resources as income accrued from their improved local management and use benefits the community most.

Actions and guidelines:

If a Third-Party contract becomes a possibility, make it a must that a certain percentage of the timber harvested remains in the community for processing and that the forest should never ever be clear cut.

- Develop criteria to identify individuals in the community with some knowledge, skills and the will to engage into the establishment, development and management of small-scale forest-based enterprises (not limiting the choice of people only on the basis of the four small-scale enterprises mentioned here as better additional enterprises from communities' perspectives are possible).
- Prepare and employ a user-friendly training manual, and ascertained that it is a 70:30 (practical: theoretical) type in content and context.
- Using the criteria proposed above, select, organize and train the individuals identified (men, women –old, young).
- Ensure that the actions a Third Party must perform and the recommended rules and actions on the part of the Normon community are factor into these guidelines.

3.10. Harvesting and processing timber and non-timber forest-based resources. Harvesting and processing timber is nothing new in this Clan; what is new are improved methods to cut down waste, protect residuals and to exercise Reduced Impact Logging (RIL). What is currently needed so urgently is to make harvesting and processing sustainable and profitable, and to employ simple tools. Simple tools for harvesting and processing are, at least for our purpose, of two types: (i) Simple physical tools such as chainsaws/handsaws and any other simple processing equipment; and (ii) Procedural tools such as simple

management guidelines, simple approvals, simple management plans, simple and practical regulations and simple inventory techniques.

Desired outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Simple physical and procedural methods and tools are assembled and employed to support profitable and sustainable small-scale forest-based enterprises.
Actions and guidelines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review any timber and non-timber harvesting, processing and transporting regulations and take note of those that highly likely to discourage local small-scale timber businesses from establishing and growing.Organize and train members of a harvesting (timber, non-timber) team.Employ reduced-impact harvesting methods in the selective extraction of trees (e.g., Cut climbers and lianas (that link canopies) in advance before felling, conduct directional tree felling to inflict the least impact on the surrounding/neighboring residuals, and establish stream buffer zones and watershed protection areas before felling, etc.).Determine the volume or quantity of harvested timber and non-timber resources.Establish storage and processing facilities for harvested timber and non-timber resources.Identify markets and marketing channels.

3.11. Establishment, management of largely plant-based Agroforestry Systems and Component Technologies

Desired outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">An establishment of largely plant-based (including carefully selected tree and agronomic crops) Agroforestry Systems (alley cropping, hedgerows, home gardens) and Component Technologies (small-scale plantations of fruit and timber trees,) to meet the need for wood and other tree products, food and income generation from tradable agroforestry products. These agroforestry systems and technologies will reduce the level of dependence on forest land and could generate income faster than what the nearly total reliance on natural forest could provide.
Actions and guidelines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Carry out assessment of soil characteristics of the various zones of the forest, employing local and scientific knowledge systems.Procure (or otherwise make available) quality germplasm (seed, cuttings, tissue culture, etc.) of the potential plants for a given management zone where agroforestry options are most appropriate.Establish small-scale tree nurseries to produce/raise planting stocks.Produce, harden, prepare sites and introduce planting stocks in any agroforestry design adjudged as appropriate for those sites.Maintain planting material/seedlings, including replacing plants that failed to thrive on the site where they are introduced/out planted.Monitor field performance and protect the plants from fire and animals that may do them some harm.Until these crops are harvestable, they are to be maintained for as many years to obtain the age of biological and income-generating maturity.

4. DEFINITION AND FORMATION OF FOREST ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

For the set of proposed management activities, planning and implementing committees are needed. In consultation with the CFMB and local partners who may be tasked with assisting the CFMB in forest

governance and management decision making, six (6) committees are suggested, along with some key examples of their duties and responsibilities to which more could be added. This number of standing committees is highly likely to either increase or decrease, during the implementation of the plan and as the CFMB gains some level of experience within this planning horizon of 5 years and beyond. The CFMB is not expected to depend entirely on a Third Party, should such arrangement be made, to make unilateral resource governance and management decisions.

4.1. Committee on Benefit Sharing and Conflict Management

- Mediate, manage and/or resolve disputes and conflicts arising from implementation of the plan and related activities.
- Develop and implement a fair, equitable and just benefit sharing plan and mechanism in the community and beyond as required by law.

4.2. Committee on Agroforestry Systems and Component Technologies

- Design, introduce and manage people- and site-specific Agroforestry Systems (e.g., home gardens, contour farming, multiple cropping, etc.) and Component Technologies (e.g., Small-scale timber tree and fruit-tree (coffee and cocoa plantations) and animal husbandry (poultry, honey bees, etc.).
- Procure/collect/produce quality germplasm (genetic material such as seed, cuttings, etc.) and production of planting stock (Seedlings) of selected plant species, etc.) in tree nurseries for eventual introduction on prepared sites, and the maintenance (ring weed, replacement of dead plants, etc.) of such plants.

4.3. Committee on Forest Resources Management and Use

- Harvest timber and NTFPs within designated zone(s) of the forest, including removal of matured/over-matured trees to liberate preferred undergrowth/introduced species (indigenous) and other trees.
- Strict adherence to the principles and practices of reduced-impact logging (RIL), which are to: (i) Cut climbers and lianas well in advance before felling trees; (ii) Conduct directional tree felling so as to inflict the least impact on the surrounding/neighboring residuals that may include fruit bearing and medicinal trees, canes and so on; and (iii) Establish buffer zones (vegetative strips) along streams and watersheds for protection purposes.
- Keep harvesting records and the issuance and maintenance of such records.
- Determine/compute harvested volumes/quantities of timber and non-timber forest products.

4.4. Committee on Forest Conservation, Protection and Rules Enforcement

- Supervise forest guards and organize their patrols.
- Enforce rules and report violations to the CFMA without delays.
- Liaise with the FDA and any institution(s) with law enforcement mandate, and take primary responsibility for boundary maintenance and patrol assignments.
- Develop education and outreach materials of forest governance and management, and ensure that information is disseminated and understood by the community.

4.5. Committee on Small-Scale Forest-Based Enterprises

- Process timber and non-timber forest-based resources into semi-finished and finished products (e.g. wooden chairs, door frames, tables, doors, boxes, medicines, brooms, etc.).
- Produce quality charcoal from wood and agricultural wastes (sawdust, coconut husks, small branches, logs discarded because of their length or size, etc.).
- Identify local, national and international markets and marketing channels for finished or semi-finished products.
- Conduct local and national marketing workshops to abreast the public and existing markets with what is manufactured locally, to encourage and promote value addition from both the natural and human resource perspectives.

4.6. Committee on Membership and Rules Making

- Identify, select and recruit members from each community to the CFMB and other forest management institutions in the Normon community

- Conduct detailed consultative meetings with communities for inputs in the enactment of new rules and to improve on existing rules that govern implementation of the plan and a host of related activities.

5.Training, capacity building and benefit sharing

5.1. Training and capacity building. Training is required to ensure that representatives from the various communities, who will serve in the six initial committees of this plan, are prepared and well equipped to get the job done. The suggestion here is that starting from year one, 2-3 individuals from each of the six committees should attend and complete a training course, return to their base and resume active duties immediately so that capacity is quickly built. A suitably qualified and experienced mentor is needed to work with individuals in this community so that “learning will be by doing” on the ground where it counts and matters most, and to cut down cost.

Training topics include but are not limited to knowledge and skills in forest inventory; reduced impact logging; basic literacy, numeracy and cost accounting skills; knowledge and skills in conflict and disputes management and resolution; in-depth knowledge on the CRL, its Regulations and other laws and regulations bearing on community forestry and forest resources governance and management; establishment, development and management of small-scale forest-based enterprises; progress monitoring, evaluation and reporting skills; establishment, development and management of Agroforestry Systems and Component Technologies; climate change; gender in natural resources governance and management; and processing and marketing skills. Before training takes off, training needs assessment should be undertaken to, among others, help point out other themes and the prioritization and sequencing of such trainings. Potential training providers include the Norwegian Refugee Council, Center for Justice and Peace Studies, and USAID programming.

5.2. Benefit sharing

Chapter 4, Section 4.2(b) of the CRL (2009) demands that revenue accrued from forest resource use and management must be divided among residents in the concerned community, the District, the County and the Liberian government. It also states that the government knows best as to how the money is to be shared to be able “to please the various groups” mentioned here.

Desired outcome:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A viable and practical mechanism that advances fair and equitable sharing of benefits accrued from tradable multiple products (and services) from responsible governance and sustainably managed forest and natural resources.
Actions and guidelines:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure and train a benefit sharing committee (BSC) to develop rules and systems to ensure fair and equitable benefit sharing; the BSC will then: • Define the sources or streams (timber harvesting, permits, ecosystem services, etc.) of benefits. • Determine how benefits will be shared within and between households, individuals, the FDA and community. • Develop proper procedures for reporting, auditing and monitoring benefit streams (and this will require the facilitation and support of USAID programming, the EU and other resource providers).

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

6.1. Financing and budgeting framework

The CRL (2009) addresses finances in Chapter 4 Sections 4.3 (a, b, c, d, and e) and its Regulation, Chapter 9 Section 9.2 (c, d, e). The two categories of potential funding source deemed most appropriate and relevant at

the time, as dictated by lessons learned for some years of work in and with people in these communities and during the planning process, are:

6.1.1. Fees, fines, grants and permits. Fees from community forest management activities as established by the AFC bylaws and community forest rules, the issuance of permits for resource extraction, fines imposed on resource extraction that had not been permitted, grants and other financial assistance from donors and third parties (CRL 2009 Regulation, Chapter 9 Section 9.2 (c, d, e) are funding streams with the strong potential to help the CA and CFMA. For grants in particular, the duties and responsibilities of the parties involved must be clear since this would be an investment not a development effort (humanitarian assistance).

6.1.2. Cash rewards from responsible governance and sustainable management of forest ecosystems and resources. The establishment, development and management of Agroforestry Systems and Component Technologies, as well as small-scale forest-based enterprises in carefully selected zones of the forest are among the key forest management regimes that make for sustainable cash returns if successfully undertaken. If established, buffer zones of the NCF should serve as sites for Agroforestry and forest-based enterprises, and are not to be subjected to timber extraction, except for the removal of matured and over-matured trees to release undergrowth regeneration of preferred timber and non-timber resources. There are a host of other potential funding streams in the quoted reference that are left with the CA and CFMB's discretion of choice.

6.2. Organization and training of an implementation team

Even with a Third-Party arrangement, one of the first set of actions to be taken is to identify, select, train and organize an implementation team to be tasked with the duties and responsibilities to prepare support and supervise quarterly actions plans with defined objectives and results.

6.3. Preparation, submission (to the CFMB) and Implementation of Quarterly Action Plans

The implementation team will prepare quarterly action plans with defined objectives and results. Before activities actually begin in the field in the first 5 years of the plan, a thorough and detailed discussion of such activities should be undertaken. Additionally, a progress report and pertinent implementation challenges should always be prepared and submitted to the CFMB. All of these tasks constitute implementation of the plan. Some members of the Committee on Forest Resource Management and Use will play a leading role in these efforts.

6.4. A Matrix of Implementation Milestones for the Norman Community Forest Management Plan (2022-2026) is shown below. For each of the Management Actions listed in the second column of the matrix, corresponding tasks are to be defined and listed separately during the actual implementation of the Plan as Quarterly Action Plans or Annual Work Plans or whatever the case may be. Take boundary demarcation and maintenance for an example. A series of tasks could be prepared and scheduled under this activity for the last quarter each year or for the first and last quarter each year. This will require a separate action plan or a series of action plans. What this matrix shows, therefore, is largely subject to some changes during the implementation of the plan, hence is primarily meant to be more instructive or illustrative of the planning process and not a pre-determined set of actions. Activities must be planned on the basis of what "actually happens on the ground" as the plan is being implemented, following FDA's approval and endorsement.

Ref. No (Section)	Management Actions	Schedule of Activities (In years)				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
3.0	Management of the forest					
3.1	Boundary maintenance and patrol	█	█	█	█	█
3.2	Assessment and avoidance/reduction/control of threats to the forest	█		█	█	█
3.3	Conduct of an inventory of the animal and medicinal plant species of the forest		█	█	█	█
3.4	Zonation of the forest (including management compartments in the forest, and its buffer)	█	█			
3.5	Identification, geo-referencing and description of sites of cultural/historical/tourism significance			█	█	█
3.6	Caring for and wise use of water resources	█	█	█	█	█
3.7	Rehabilitation of degraded areas (patches of secondary forests, grasslands, mined areas, log landing areas in the community forest)	█		█	█	█
3.8	Fire management	█	█	█	█	█
3.9	Establishment, development and management of small-scale forest-based enterprises	█		█	█	█
3.10	Harvesting and processing timber and non-timber forest- based resources			█	█	
3.11	Establishment, development and management of largely tree-based Agroforestry Systems and Component Technologies		█	█	█	█
4.0	Definition and Formation of Forest Administration and Management Committees	█				
5.0.	Training, capacity building and benefit sharing					
5.1	Training and capacity building	█	█	█	█	█
5.2	Benefit sharing		█		█	
6.0	Implementation of the Plan					
6.1	Financing and budgetary framework (Financing)	█	█	█	█	█
6.2	Organization and training of the implementation team	█				
6.3	Preparation, submission and implementation of quarterly action plans	█		█	█	█
6.5	Updating the Plan			█	█	
6.6	Monitoring and Evaluation	█	█	█	█	█

6.5. Updating the Plan

Based on reviews of performance and continuous monitoring, changes to the actions within the plan should be recommended to the CFMB by the implementation team before an annual work plan is prepared. The annual plan can be implemented as quarterly action plans. Updating and revising the management plan are two different but closely related actions. Modifying/revising the plan, including its goal and objectives, can only be carried out by the production/development of a new plan that will have to be approved by the FDA.

6.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

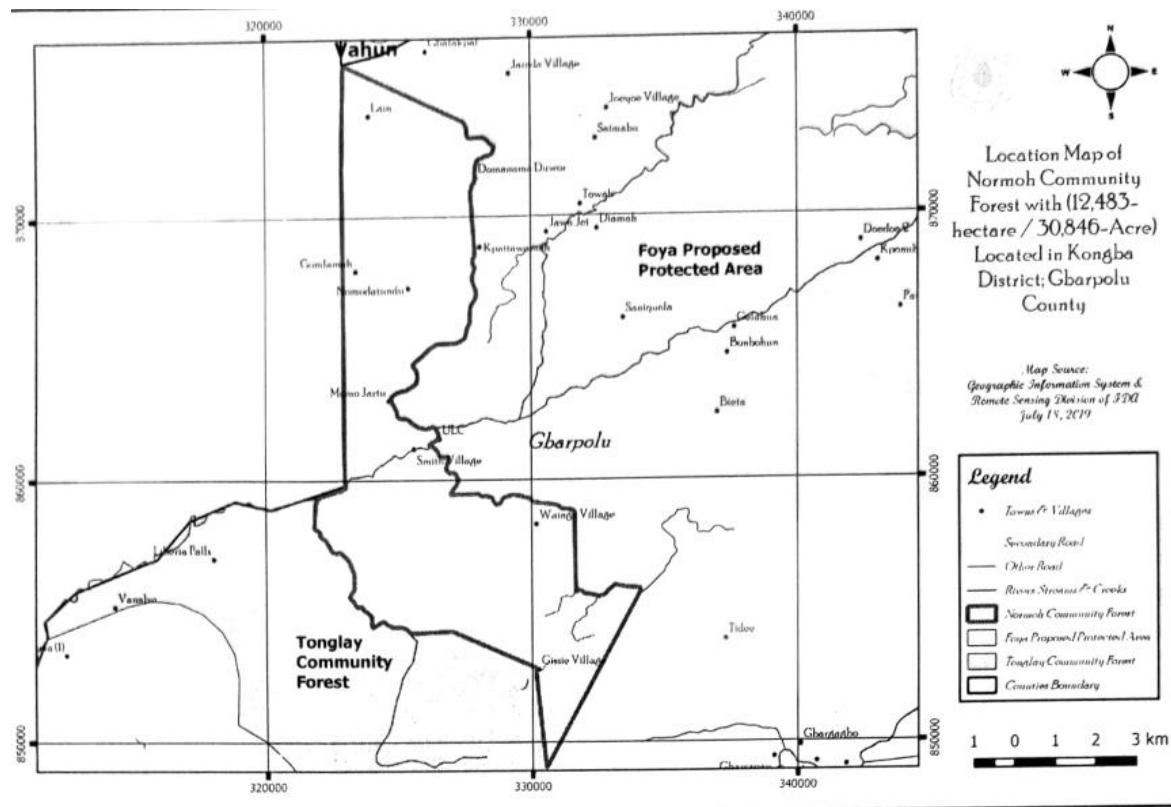
As one of the critical parts of this management plan, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) helps ensure sustained progress in the delivery on proposed activities.

Desired outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A monitoring and evaluation system that serves as a constant reminder of progress made in implementation of this plan, and the associated challenges/difficulties which must be addressed towards fulfilling the goal and objectives of the plan.
Actions and guidelines:
Reports are to be prepared by authorized groups and individuals (Eco guards, etc.) to the CFMB on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The number of unauthorized incidences (hunting, mining, extraction of chewing sticks, mineral prospecting, etc.) in and around the boundaries of the managed forest.• The number of wild animals sighted or tracked in and around the forest (through the annual biomonitoring exercise and from records gathered from hunter and NTFP collectors).• The types and degree of vegetation changes (as monitored and evaluated through the management of permanent sample plots).• Audits conducted internally on the annual basis by the CFMB to ensure that all records are in place.

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APPENDICES



Map of the Normon Community Forest

Annex. The Community Forest Management Agreement of 30th April,2021, Entered into by and Between the Government of Liberia, Through the Forestry Development Authority (FDA), and the Normon Community Forest Management Body (NCFMB).

Tables

Table 1. Scientific and common names of some of the animal species of the Normon Community Forest

Scientific names	Common Names	IUCN Red List Threat Category*
<i>Caracal aurata</i>	Golden cat	VU
<i>Cephalophus dorsalis</i>	Bay duiker	NT
<i>Cephalophus ogilbyi brookei</i>	Brooke's duiker	VU
<i>Cephalophus jentinki</i>	Jentinki's duiker	EN
<i>Cephalophus maxwelli</i>	Maxwell's duiker	LC
<i>Cephalophus niger</i>	Black niger	LC
<i>Cephalophus silvicultor</i>	Yellow-back duiker	NT
<i>Cephalophus zebra</i>	Zebra duiker	VU
<i>Cercocebus atys</i>	Sooty Mangabey	NT
<i>Cercopithecus campbelli</i>	Campbell's monkey (Mona)	LC
<i>Cercopithecus nictitans</i>	Greater spot-nosed monkey	NT
<i>Cercopithecus petaurista</i>	Lesser spot-nosed monkey	LC
<i>Choeropsis liberiensis</i>	Pygmy hippopotamus	EN
<i>Colobus polykomos</i>	Western black and white colobus	VU
<i>Galago demidoff</i>	Demidoff's galago	LC
<i>Galago thomasi</i>	Thomas's galago	LC
<i>Hyemoschus aquaticus</i>	Water chervrotain	LC
<i>Neotragus pygmaeus</i>	Royal antelope	VU
<i>Panthera pardus</i>	Leopard	VU
<i>Pan troglodytes verus</i>	Western chimpanzee	CR
<i>Perodicticus potto</i>	Potto	VU
<i>Piliocolobus badius</i>	Western red colobus	EN
<i>Procolobus versus</i>	Olive colobus	VU
<i>Syncerus caffer nanus</i>	Buffalo	LC
<i>Tragelaphus euryceros</i>	Bongo	NT
<i>Tragelaphus scriptus</i>	Bushbuck	LC

*Explanation of IUCN's Categories for Threatened Species: **CR**=Critically Endangered, **EN**=Endangered, **NT**=Near Threatened, **LC**=Least Concern, **VU**=Vulnerable

Table 2. Scientific and common names of some of the plant species of the Normon Community Forest

Scientific names	Common Names	IUCN Red List Threat Category*
<i>Albizia adianthifolia</i>		
<i>Alstonia boonei</i>	Emien	VU
<i>Anopyxis klaineana</i>	Badio, Kokoyi	VU
<i>Bussea occidentalis</i>	Bussea	NA
<i>Calpocalyx aubrevillei</i>	Matu	NA
<i>Canarium schweinfurthii</i>	Aiele	NA
<i>Carapa procera</i>	African crabwood	LC

<i>Ceiba pentandra</i>	Cotton tree	NA
<i>Dacryodes klaineana</i>	Monkey plum	NA
<i>Dialium aubrevillei</i>	Gia Kaba	CR
<i>Entandrophragma angolense</i>	Tiama, Edinam	VU
<i>Funtumia elastica</i>	Mutundu	NA
<i>Harungana madagascariensis</i>	Haronga	NA
<i>Heritiera utilis</i>	Niangon, Whismore	VU
<i>Irvingia wombolu</i>	Bitter bushmango	CR
<i>Lophira alata</i>	Ekki, Ironwood	VU
<i>Macaranga heudelotii</i>	Falabo	NA
<i>Maesobotrya barteri</i>	Barteri	LC
<i>Mammea Africana</i>	Obote	VU
<i>Musanga cecropioides</i>	Musanga/umbrella tree	LC
<i>Nauclea diderrichii</i>	Bilinga, Kusia	NA
<i>Parinari excelsa</i>	Rough skin palm	NA
<i>Pentadesma butyracea</i>	Black mango	DD
<i>Piptadeniastrum Africana</i>	Dahoma	NA
<i>Pycnanthus angolensis</i>	Ilomba	NA
<i>Raphia hookeri</i>	Raphia palm	NT
<i>Uapaca guineensis</i>	Rikio	NA
<i>Xylopia staudtii</i>	Bush pepper	CR

*Explanation of IUCN's Categories for Threatened Species: **CR**=Critically Endangered, **DD**=Data Deficient, **EN**=Endangered, **LC**=Least Concern, **NT**=Near Threatened, **VU**=Vulnerable, **NA**=Have yet to be Assessed,

Annex