

Republic of Liberia

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



TITLE:

**REPORT FROM
MESURADO WETLANDS
ASSESSMENT**

Presented By:

**EPA INTER-DEPARTMENT WETLAND
ASSESSMENT TEAM**



EPA INTER-DEPARTMENT WETLAND ASSESSMENT TEAM MEMBERS

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OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. General Assessment Objective
3. Description of the Mesurado Wetlands
3. Assessment Methodology
4. Key findings
 - Observation
 - Temporal-spatial change
 - Community structure and composition in the Mesurado landscape
5. Challenges
6. Recommendations

Introduction

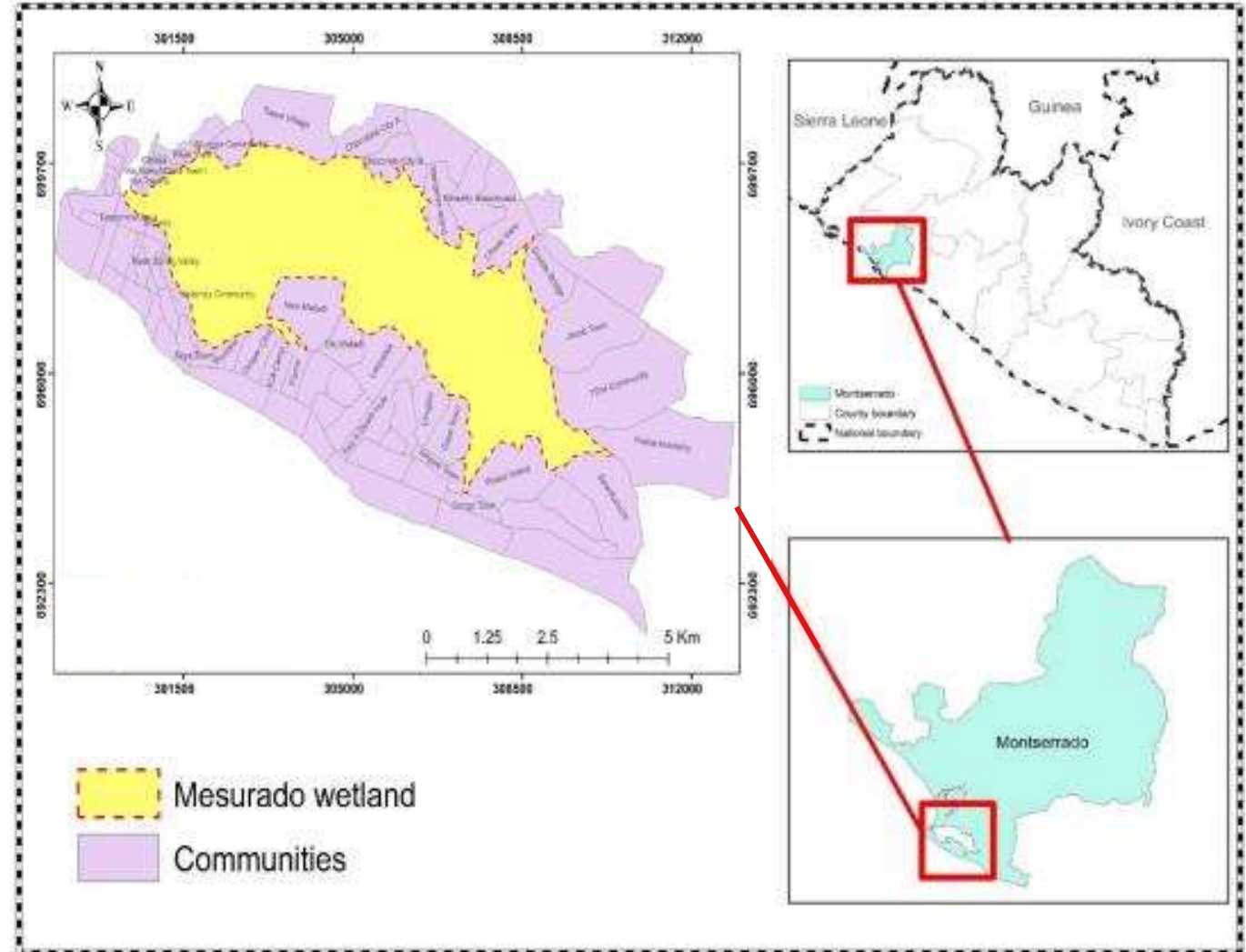
- The Mesurado wetlands mangrove forest is disappearing considerably faster than anticipated.
- In August 2022, a sixteen (16) day robust wetland mapping assessment plan was developed to engage communities along the Mesurado Wetlands.
- The assessment was focused on the monitoring of mangrove depletion and how the EPA would collaborate with communities' leaders on the protection of the mangrove wetland ecosystem.
- A full team of environmental technicians from the Department of Compliance and Enforcement (GIS, Conservation, and Inspectorate) Intersectoral and Ramsar were designated to do an assessment through community engagement, mapping, drone imagery, on all degraded mangroves and wetlands on the Mesurado Wetlands.
- 16 communities on the fringes of the Mesurado Wetlands were targeted for the assessment.

OBJECTIVES

- Develop a map of Mesurado wetlands showing the meets and bounds of the Ramsar Site, and produce a report from spatial land use land cover change analysis to monitor the extent and rate of mangrove degradation.
- Improve collaboration between communities and the EPA; on the protection and management of wetlands
- Gather on-the-ground data on the socio-economic drivers of wetland degradation

DESCRIPTION OF THE MESURADO WETLANDS

- The Mesurado wetlands is one of the five (5) Ramsar Sites established in Liberia and added to the Ramsar management network in 2006.
- The Mesurado Wetlands occupies an area of 6,760 hectares and is located between 06°18'N and 010°45'W in the capital city Monrovia, Montserrado County (the largest administrative region of the country with about 1.5 million people).
- There are about thirty-six (36) clans, with a host of communities around the Mesurado Wetlands.



METHODOLOGY

The wetland assessment was conducted based on the following activities:

- Pre-planning meetings were held to decide on the scope of the assessment
- Held community engagement meetings to inform community dwellers about the assessment, and to raise awareness on the alarming rate of wetland degradation - its consequence and impact on the environment
- Ground truthing to collect aerial photographs (drone surveillance), and handheld GPS coordinates of degraded portions of the wetlands.
- Use of satellite imagery (Landsat 8 OLI/TIS and Landsat 5 TM) for supervised classification of the land cover types in the area, and for running land use land cover change analysis for a Fourteen-year period (2008 – 2022) (<https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov>).



EPA staff and Peace Island community Chairman

KEY FINDINGS

Below were findings made during the assessment:

- Affected communities along the wetland are not actively involved with the management and protection process
- Community leaders and dwellers are not fully informed about national wetland policies and regulations
- Township Commissioners are heavily selling the wetlands and giving it as squatter-right
- The communities do not know the Mesurado wetlands as a Ramsar site due to limited/rare awareness.
- Current wetland securities' presence is not felt within affected communities.



KEY FINDINGS

Assessment findings continues:

- The EPA does not encourage community leaders who are vibrant in helping to save the wetland's integrity.
- No signboard to inform wetland protection.
- The mangrove is fast depleting.
- Many communities dwellers disposed their sewage directly into the wetland.



Household waste deposited in wetland



Illegal river sand mining

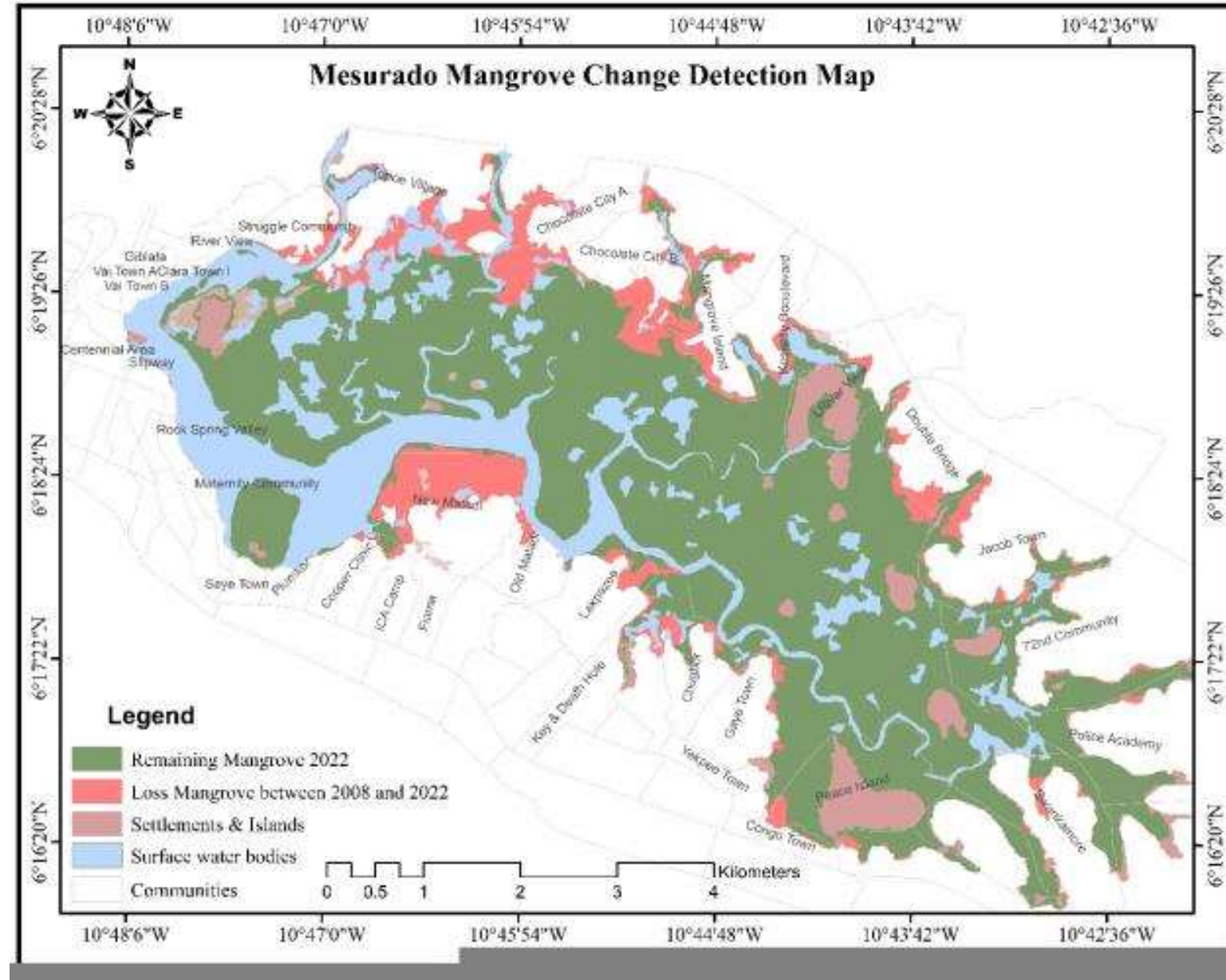


Construction on backfilled wetland

KEY FINDINGS (Temporal-spatial change)

The map shows the areas experiencing mangrove cover loss from 2008 to 2022.

The areas with most degradation are New Matadi Fanti town, Topo Village, Chocolate City, Old Road, Jacob Town, etc...



COMMUNITY STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION IN THE MESURADO LANDSCAPE

- Most communities the team visited had inadequate knowledge on the protection of Mesurado Wetlands as a Ramsar Site of International Importance.
- However, many communities have an existing governance structure which is important for future activities.



NO :	Community	Chairman	Contact	Coordinates	
				Latitude	Longitude
1	Pagos Island, Congo town	Mr. James R. Kerbay	0776584707	6.272815	-10.725502
2	SKD Boulevard, Lover street, police Academy junction Tyler Island	Mr. Scott Lydia Greine	0777024259	6.29132	-10.723032
3	Peace Island behind E L J Ministerial Complex	Yanquo Yeakeh	0777347911	6.27334	-10.730742
4	Gardnerville, Chocolate city(Port Harcot)	Mr. George T. Freeman	0775120446	6.327251	-10.779151
5	Jacob Town community	Mohamed Kamara	0776327704	6.296891	-10.727914
6	Kesselly Boulevard	Mr. William G. Akoi	0776633214	6.291554	-10.722942
7	St Paul's Bridge	Trokon v. Davies	0778685716	6.397862	-10.775415
8	Caldwell North Community	Morris Kiazulu	0777014660		
9	Caldwell South Community	Mr. Gerbo Gboto	0777494658	6.398257	-10.783745
10	12 th Street	Rachard W. Singbah	0775540836	6.299078	-10.779151
11	Clara Town Community	Mcgill M. Gbessie	0776487392	6.328011	-10.759658
12	New Matadi, Fanti Town	Daniel Howard	0777203009	6.302941	-10.767796
13	Duport Road Community	Vision G.S. Mandeh	0775948244	6.264113	-10.667383
14	Doe Community	Mr, Patrick A. Grove	0777747843	6.334115	-10.783945
15	Old Road, Gaye Town	Emmanuel Wolo	0777046965	6.289744	-10.741984
16	White House community	Thomas K. Gbeh	0776766392	6.270586	-10.728470
17	Saye Town	Abraham C. Robert	0776036421	6.296683	-10.790758
18	Plumkor Community	Boakai Kawah	0777239407	6.296893	-10.787344
19	New Matadi wetland Community	Author Momah	0770043377	6.306423	-10.771065
20	Vai Town	-		6.324545	-10.7998

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Involve local authorities and all stakeholders in the Mesurado Wetlands planning and management
- Enforce the EPA wetland policy and regulations
- Erection of bill boards in communities around the Mesurado Wetlands
- Increase massive awareness within communities around the Mesurado Wetlands
- Conduct wetland training for Township Commissioners who provide squatter-right permits for wetland use

