

SIERRA LEONE (FREETOWN, WATERLOO AND BO CITIES)

Participating Cities Basic Information

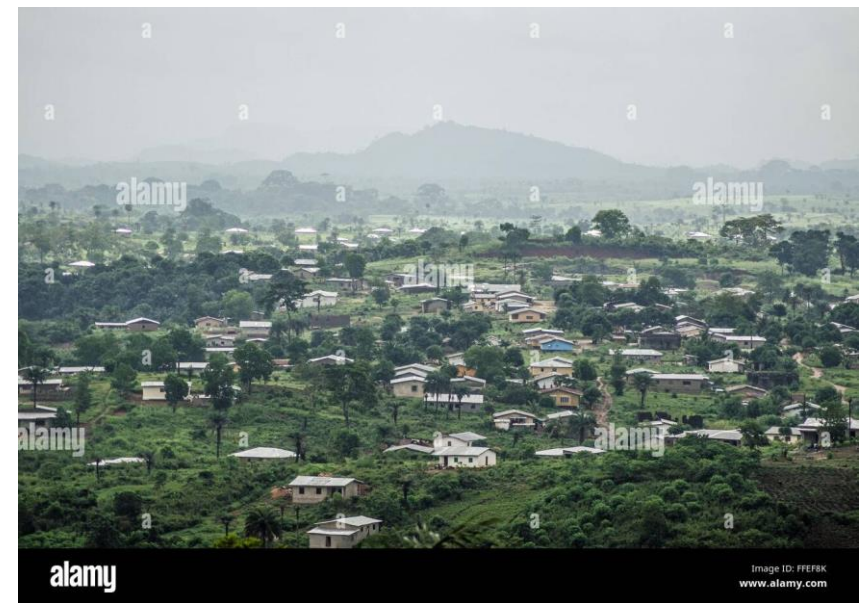
Country: Sierra Leone C4B Cities: Freetown, Waterloo and Bo

Sierra Leone is globally recognized as a biodiversity hotspot being part of the Upper Guinea Rainforest. There are rich indigenous flora and fauna including important endemic species and internationally rare and threatened species. Sierra Leone is the eighth in the world in terms of plant species diversity and fifteenth in terms of plant species endemism (STEWART, 2011). Sierra Leone hosts a significant population of West African chimpanzees, populations of the extremely rare pygmy hippopotamus, and a large variety of rare native and migratory birds.

Freetown is the capital and largest city of Sierra Leone. It is a major port city on the Atlantic Ocean and is located in the Western Area of the country. Freetown is Sierra Leone's major urban, economic, financial, cultural, educational and political centre. Freetown has an area of 81.8Km² with a population of about 1.2M inhabitants. Freetown has the green reserved areas on its hill sides and hosts the Tacogama chimpanzee sanctuary and the Sierra Leone River Estuary (Ramsar site).

Waterloo is the capital of the Western Area Rural District, which is one of the sixteen districts of Sierra Leone. Waterloo is located about 20Km east of Freetown. Waterloo has a population of 156,000 inhabitants. It hosts the Western Area Peninsula Forest

Bo is the second largest city in Sierra Leone. Bo is the capital and administrative center of Bo District and regional headquarter of the Southern Region. The city of Bo has an estimated population of 306,000. The Kangari Hills Forest Reserve is found at the outskirts of the city.



Protected Areas in Sierra Leone

Protected area	Status	Size (ha) ³	District	Description
Outamba Kilimi	National Park	110,900	Bombali	Part of the transboundary Fouta Jallon Highlands where six of West Africa's major rivers rise.
Gola Rainforest	National Park	71,070	Kailahun, Kenema, Pujehun	The last significant patch of closed canopy rainforest in Sierra Leone.
Western Area Peninsula Forest	Non-Hunting Forest Reserve	17,688	Western Area	Forest on the hills outside of Freetown which provide much of the capital's freshwater supply.
Loma Mountains	Non-Hunting Forest Reserve	33,201	Koinadugu	Site of the country's highest mountain, Mount Bintumani (1,948 metres).
Kangari Hills	Non-Hunting Forest Reserve	8,573	Bo, Tonkolili	Steep-sided range of hills in the centre of the country that provide an important habitat for wildlife and could be a release site for reintroduced chimpanzees.
Tingi Hills	Non-Hunting Forest Reserve	10,519	Koinadugu, Kono	Remote area of north-eastern Sierra Leone renowned for its batholiths.
Tiwai Island	Wildlife Sanctuary and Community Conservancy	1,200	Pujehun, Kenema	This small island in the Moa river is an important habitat for primates, birds and the very rare pygmy hippo.
Kambui Hills	Forest Reserve	21,228	Kenema	Forest on low-lying range of hills west of Kenema which is threatened by logging and mining.
Sierra Leone River Estuary	Ramsar site	295,000	Port Loko, Western Area	The country's only Ramsar site, and as such the only marine area afforded any level of protection.

Summary of Urban Biodiversity Context

1. Our cities do not have existing green city plans; however, for Freetown, the Council is implementing the “Freetown the Tree Town” campaign (it intends to plant 1 million trees as part of the Transform Freetown Strategy)
2. The cities do not have comprehensive database instituted to record and map species
3. The Environment Protection Agency, the National Protected Area Authority, the Water Resource Management Agency, and the Conservation Society Sierra Leone are the institutions responsible for the management of Biodiversity in Sierra Leone
4. Biodiversity issues were not included in the existing cities’ development/master plans, but the RUSLP intends to support these cities to update these plans; I hope the review will capture urban biodiversity and environmental planning



The top three key challenges in implementing urban biodiversity strategy in Sierra Leone

These include but not limited to:

1. Unsustainable Land use practice;
2. Lack of appropriate legal framework.
3. Inadequate investment from both public and private sector



Opportunities for implementing urban biodiversity strategy in Sierra Leone

1. Enhance the protection of our marine and other environments through inter- and intra-government and private-sector cooperation.
2. Local and national governments to fully harness the potential of existing international cooperative initiatives for biodiversity.
3. Update existing legislation and create legal framework for contemporary challenges related to urban biodiversity
4. Create and raise awareness about the strong connection between humans and nature
5. Collaborate with climate change and disaster risk mitigation initiatives

