

Environment Protection and Management Law.

An Act to establish a legal framework for sustainable development, management, and protection of the environment by the Environment Protection Authority in partnership with regulated Ministries and organizations and in close and responsive relationship with the people of Liberia; and to provide high quality information and advice on the state of the environment and for matters connected therewith.

The Act consists of 115 sections divided into 13 Parts: Preliminary (I); General principles and objectives (II); Environmental impact assessment, audit and monitoring (III); Environmental quality standards (IV); Pollution control and licensing (V); Guidelines and standards for the management of the environment and natural resources (VI); Protection of biodiversity, natural heritage and the ozone layer (VII); Environmental restoration Order (VIII); Inspection, analysis and records (IX); International obligations (X); Information, access, education and public awareness (XI); Offences (XII); Miscellaneous (XIII).

Section 3 contains a comprehensive list of definitions. Part II sets out the general principles of environmental management and defines the right to a clean and healthy environment. Part III provides for environmental impact assessment required for development, defines its procedures and content and requires developers to submit an environmental mitigation plan. An Environmental Impact Assessment Committee shall be constituted under section 20 to review environmental impact statements.

The decision on an application for the approval of a project shall be taken by the Environmental Protection Agency established under the Agency Act (sect. 22). Other provisions of this Part concern environmental monitoring and audit and some matters relating to environmental impact assessment licences. Part IV concerns the establishment of environmental quality standards by the Agency in relation to water (sect. 35), air (sect. 36), hazardous waste and materials (sect. 37), solid waste (39), soil (sect. 40), noise (sects. 41 and 42), ionisation and other radiation (sects. 44 to 46), noxious odours (sects. 47 and 48). Furthermore, the provisions of this Part classify hazardous waste (sect. 38), make exemptions for noise standards (sect. 43), define offences in relation to ionising radiation (sect. 45 and provide for inspection in relation to ionising radiation (sect. 46) and specify guidelines for environmental disasters (sect. 50), Part V regulates the licensing of use, handling, importation and exportation, discharge, etc. of polluting materials.

Various sections concern the discharge of effluent water and the disposal of solid (hazardous) waste. Registers of pollutant licences shall be kept. Part VI empowers the Agency to issue guidelines and to prescribe measures for the protection or management of rivers, lakes and wetlands (sects. 74 and 75), for the protection of forests (sect. 77), for the management and protection of coastal zones and the marine environment (sect. 82) and requires every County Environment Committee to identify areas which are at risk from environmental degradation (sect. 76).

Part VII requires the Agency to adopt guidelines and to prescribe measures for the conservation of biological diversity (sect. 83), for the protection of biological resources in-situ (sect. 84) and ex-situ (sect. 85), to initiate legislative proposals in respect of access to genetic resources, to prescribe guidelines for land use planning (sect. 87), to identify sites of natural heritage (sect. 88) and to initiate studies and issue guidelines regarding the protection of the ozone layer. Part VIII empowers the Agency to issue Environmental Restoration Orders and describes the procedures following such Order.