

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **ActionAid Liberia Calls for Urgent Action towards Climate Justice**

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ActionAid Liberia expresses deep concern over the escalating global impact of climate change, which has resulted in the loss of countless lives, exacerbated poverty, and imposed financial burdens on economies worldwide, with a particular impact on countries in the Global South. As the climate crisis intensifies, the culprits, namely fossil fuel and industrial agriculture, continue to expand unchecked.

In Liberia, the extractive industries, including Mining and Forestry, are the primary drivers of environmental degradation, despite contributing more than 54% to the national GDP. The nation's fertile lands are predominantly dominated by monoculture plantations like rubber, cocoa, and palm production, undermining thousands of smallholder farmers and their sustainable agroecological systems, which have the potential to both feed the nation and mitigate climate change. Moreover, logging activities carried out by major companies have led to severe biodiversity loss and deforestation.

In 2019/2020, the forest sector produced a staggering 87,996.7 m<sup>3</sup> of round logs, with financing from five major companies, namely Mandra Forestry Liberia Ltd., Brilliant Maju Inc., Alpha Logging & Wood Processing Ltd., L&S Resources Ltd., and West African Forestry Development Inc., accounting for a substantial 63% of round log production in Liberia (source: [Liberia EITI 13th Report - FY 2019 - 2020.pdf](#)). Mineral mining in Liberia has disrupted communities' livelihoods, polluted rivers and streams, degraded land, created toxic deposits in open pits, and forced migrations and displacements. Major players like Bea Mountain, Arcelor Mittal, and MNG Gold are investing millions in this sector, often with inadequate regulation.

These poorly regulated activities significantly contribute to the ongoing climate crisis in Liberia, resulting in erratic rainfalls, flooding, coastal erosion, windstorms, epidemics, food insecurity, and more.

While acknowledging the government's efforts, including investments in the Global Environmental Facility Fund to preserve Liberia's coastal natural capital and the ambitious nationally determined contribution plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, there is a pressing need for more substantial funding for agroecology and renewable energy. These sustainable systems are effective in promoting food security and reducing carbon emissions. Renewable energy, in particular, has the potential to surpass global energy demand by 2050 and is already more cost-effective than fossil fuels in most cases.

However, adequate financing remains a challenge, including the need for scaled-up funding to achieve universal energy access. Transforming the food system is also crucial to address the climate crisis and global food and livelihood needs. Agroecology is increasingly recognized as a viable alternative to industrialized agriculture, but this transformation requires governments and funders to prioritize food sovereignty and shift away from extractive commodity-focused

approaches. It necessitates support in the form of gender-responsive training, market access, subsidy reallocation, and investments in infrastructure, production, and processing facilities.

In this critical era of climate change, it is imperative that public funds are mobilized and directed towards renewable energy and agroecology to facilitate equitable transitions. The continued financing of planet-destructive activities by world banks and governments must cease.

Banks should put to a halt corporate financing for the expansion of fossil fuels and develop rapid exit strategies from oil and gas investments. ActionAid Liberia ActionAid is calling out this absurd flow of money towards the climate crisis, and demanding with young people, women-led organizations and allies for increased public funds for agroecology and renewable energy. Additionally, banks should discontinue funding for deforestation and harmful industrial agriculture practices, establishing robust guidelines for exit strategies.

The government is urged to enforce effective regulation of the banking, finance, fossil fuel, and industrial agriculture sectors, including the mandatory development of climate transition plans. Redirecting harmful subsidies and prioritizing just transitions towards real solutions such as renewable energy and agroecology is of utmost importance.

For more information or media inquiries, please contact:

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**About ActionAid Liberia:** ActionAid Liberia (AAL) is a human rights and social justice organization operating in Liberia since 1997 to advance the rights of women, children, young people, excluded and marginalized communities and shift the development paradigm to one that is people-centered, utilizing our human rights-based approach (HRBA) and an intersectional feminist analysis across all programs, campaigns, policy, advocacy and partnerships. In taking sides with the most excluded, this has meant that AAL is often present in rural and physically hard to reach communities.