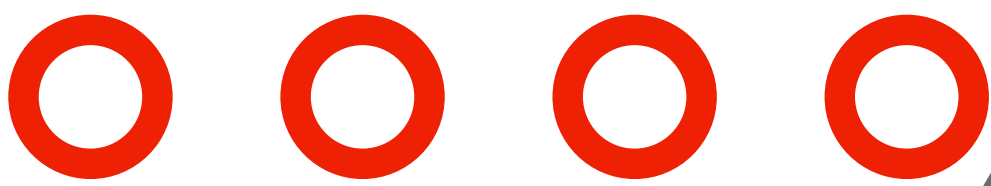


Elevating the Narratives Around Carbon

COMMUNIQUÉ CARBON MARKET IN LIBERIA

The training with CSOs convened by ActionAid Liberia, with support from ActionAid USA and the ActionAid Global Secretariat funded by SUNRISE Project, aimed deepened collective understanding of the emerging carbon market landscape and built coordinatiuon with civil society response rooted in the rights and lived experiences of frontline communities

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COMMUNIQUE OF THE NATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY CONSULTATION ON THE CARBON MARKET IN LIBERIA

Issued on June 3, 2025 | Monrovia, Liberia

Background:

We, civil society organizations (CSOs), youth-led movements, Indigenous and forest community representatives, women's rights groups, and climate justice advocates from across Liberia, gathered in Monrovia from June 2-3, 2025, for a National Training and Strategy Meeting on the Carbon Market in Liberia.

The training, convened by ActionAid Liberia, with support from ActionAid USA and the ActionAid Global Secretariat funded by SUNRISE Project, aimed to deepen collective understanding of the emerging carbon market landscape and to build a coordinated civil society response rooted in the rights and lived experiences of frontline communities.

Our Shared Context and Concern

As the climate crisis intensifies, the need for real, deep, and funded emission reductions is more urgent than ever. Yet, Northern governments and corporations continue to promote carbon offsetting a false solution that allows continued pollution while shifting responsibility to vulnerable communities in Africa.

Liberia, with its rich forest ecosystems and resource-dependent communities, is increasingly targeted by so-called "carbon cowboys," seeking to profit from land-based carbon credits with limited regard for land rights, food systems, or community sovereignty.

Evidence shared during the training drawn from ActionAid Liberia's 2025 research across Grand Gedeh, Margibi, and Gbarpolu counties confirms that forest communities overwhelmingly oppose the proposed carbon credit deal for Liberia, citing threats to land tenure, livelihoods, food security, and human dignity.

Key Findings from the Research Report

1. Carbon markets do not reduce emissions:

Up to 90% of rainforest offset credits sold by Verra, a leading carbon registry, were found to be "phantom credits" with no real climate benefit.

2. Offset schemes mask inaction:

The misuse of "net-zero" targets enables polluters to delay emissions cuts, greenwash their image, and avoid accountability

3. Communities are harmed and excluded:

More than 100 documented cases globally link offset projects to displacement, violence, and rights violations, particularly for Indigenous Peoples and rural women.

4. Benefits do not reach communities:

For example in Kenya, only 2% of revenue from major offset projects reached local communities. The rest was captured by intermediaries, certifiers, and foreign companies.

5. Host communities carry unfair risks:

Without proper safeguards, communities could be held liable for failed carbon projects, facing reputational and financial losses.

Our United Demands

We, the undersigned civil society actors, issue the following demands to the Government of Liberia, private sector actors, and international carbon market stakeholders:

1. Uphold Land Tenure and Community Rights

- Communities must never surrender land tenure as a condition for participating in carbon projects.
- Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) must be secured, documented, and respected.

2. Ensure Transparency and Accountability

- All existing and proposed carbon market agreements (including the Blue Carbon deal) must be publicly disclosed.
- Negotiations must include independent observers, affected communities, and civil society.

3. Reject Host Community Liability

- Communities must not be held liable for project failures or reversals beyond their control.

4. Eliminate Middlemen and Maximize Local Benefit

- Communities must receive direct and fair compensation, avoiding unnecessary intermediaries.

6. Say No to Offsets - Prioritize Contributions

- Any carbon credits sold must be framed as "contributions", not as offsets that allow polluters to claim false neutrality.

Our Collective Commitments

- We will mobilize and educate communities on the threats of carbon markets and the myths of net-zero.
- We will monitor carbon deals, advocate for policy reform, and build grassroots resistance to land grabs.
- We will collaborate across movements locally, regionally, and globally to advance real climate solutions rooted in justice, equity, and human rights.

Resolutions from the Strategy Meeting

1. Establishment of a National Climate Justice CSOs Network to coordinate advocacy, monitoring, and movement building on carbon market issues.
2. Endorsement of a National Climate Justice Advocacy Strategy, aligned with community perspectives and shared with government and development partners.
3. Engagement with the National Legislature, FDA and EPA to ensure that any future carbon policy or law includes rights-based safeguards, clear benefit-sharing frameworks, and civil society oversight.

Issued By:

- National Civil Society Council of Liberia (NCSCL)
- Climate Justice CSOs Network – Liberia
- MAP Liberia
- NGO Coalition of Liberia
- Liberia Youth Biodiversity Network (LYBN)
- National Alliance of Climate and Environmental NGO of Liberia
- Liberian Feminist Forum
- Female Journalist of Liberia
- Press Union of Liberia
- Forest Communities from Grand Gedeh, Margibi, and Gbarpolu Counties
- ActionAid Liberia