

Through a combination of policy, community engagement, infrastructure development, gender inclusion, and international cooperation, the Government of Liberia through its National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA) is making measurable progress in fostering sustainable fisheries management in Liberia. These efforts are crucial for the long-term health of marine ecosystems, livelihoods of coastal communities, and national food security.

1. The Government of Liberia is empowering communities to take part in decision-making, resource monitoring, and enforcement. We have established five Co-Management Associations (CMAs) in coastal counties to provide awareness to fishermen and fishmongers on environmental compliance, and to monitor Illegal, Unregulated and Unrecorded fishing. The CMAs are also equipped to patrol their control areas against IUU.

2. Besides community-led efforts to combat IUU, Liberia has Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and Automatic Identification System (AIS), to track industrial and licensed vessels. Our collaboration with international organizations, public endorsement of the Global Charter for Transparency in Fisheries Governance and recent ratification of the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions (BBNJ) Agreement are testament of our commitment.

3. Liberia is investing in infrastructure to improve post-harvest handling and reduce losses among artisanal fishers through the construction and rehabilitation of integrated fish landing sites in all nine coastal counties. We are also providing ice plants, cold storage, and hygienic processing facilities to ensure quality and safety of fish products.

4. Women play a critical role in Liberia's fisheries value chain, particularly in processing and marketing. The Government supports them by facilitating access to eco-friendly fish processing technologies (e.g., improved ovens and drying racks); and through training to improve hygiene, efficiency, and market access.

5. Liberia is developing its inland and coastal aquaculture to reduce pressure on marine resources by teaming with the private sector to operationalize two fish hatcheries. The hatcheries will support smallholder farmers with fingerlings, training, and feed development. We are also implementing a national Aquaculture Strategy aligned with food security goals.

6. Liberia is positioned as a transparent player and regional leader in global fisheries management. Besides Liberia's membership in the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI), Liberia is the President of the Fisheries Committee for West and Central Gulf of Guinea. This coordinating group for six countries (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo) promotes best practices amongst member states, monitors vessels as a means of combatting IUU, and conducts due diligence for new vessels.

Even with these advances, Liberia is impatient to scale up its efforts. The Government hopes to unlock public and private investments for sustainable fisheries and

aquaculture enhancement. In particular, a flagship project for US \$5.2 million in this regard has been developed as part of the country's Blue Economy Strategy. With concrete achievements already being realized, this financing will be a showpiece for sustainable fisheries management and support to small scale fishers.