

SALAYEA COMMUNITY FOREST CONSTITUTION

We the member of **Salayea** Authorized Forest community of Lofa county Republic of Liberia do here by establish this constitution for the governance of our community we, as an authorized Forest Community with the goal of sustainably managing our forest while benefiting from its resources hereby established in this constitution the organizational structure of our governance bodies and the power and the responsibilities of those bodies as require by Chapter 4, Section 4.1 (j) of the Community Rights Law of 2009 with Respect to Forest Lands (CRL).

Article I – Name

The Name of our organization shall be the **Salayea Authorized Forest Community**, hereafter referred to as the Authorized Forest Community for short "**SCF**"

Article II – Objectives

The objectives of the Salayea Authorized Forest Community are as follows:

- (a) To support biodiversity and promote the sustainable use of the natural resources for the benefit of the Authorized Forest Community, the nation, and the environment;
- (b) To create public awareness of the economic, sustainable, environmental, cultural and recreational value of the resources of the Salayea Community Forest, through information campaigns, to include meetings, workshops and the distribution of educational documents;

- (c) To manage the Salayea Community Forest resources in a way that improves the well-being of all community members;
- (d) To work in close collaboration with national and international forestry organizations to build the capacity of all members of the Authorized Forest Community;
- (e) To solicit financial, technical, and material assistance from national and international organizations in order to ensure sustainable and effective management of forest resources;
- (f) To engage in any other activity that will contribute to the improvement of the livelihood of the Salayea Community through the sustainable management of forest resources.

Article III – Motto and Logo

Section 1: Motto

The Motto of the Authorized Forest Community shall be:
Community United for Development and Accountability

Section 2: Logo

The Logo of the Authorized Forest Community shall be/depicts children looking at the forest for their future

Article IV – Technical Description of Community Forest Lands

The **(PLEAS INSERT CF NAME)**

Article V – Rights and Responsibilities of the Authorized Forest Community

Section 1: *Rights*

Within the framework of the Community Rights Law of Liberia of 2009, the Authorized Forest Community affirms its right to:

- (a) Manage and develop its community forest resources under regulations issued by the FDA;
- (b) Pursue conservation programs independently or with the assistance of third-parties, to safeguard the sustainable livelihoods of Authorized Forest Community members;
- (c) Negotiate and enter into commercial contracts to sustainably harvest timber and non-timber products in its Community Forest, in order to benefit from revenues generated.

Section 2: *Responsibilities*

Rights carry with them responsibilities. Accordingly, the Authorized Forest Community affirms its responsibility to:

- (a) Manage its forest resources in a sustainable manner under regulations issued by the FDA;

- (b) Ensure full participation of Authorized Forest Community members in decisions over forest resources;
- (c) Ensure that revenues from forest resources are used for the benefit of all Authorized Forest Community members; and
- (d) Report to the FDA and other relevant institutions (public or otherwise), on the effective, efficient and sustainable management of its forest resources

Article VI – Community Assembly

Section 1: *Establishment*

In compliance with the Community Rights Law of 2009, this Constitution hereby establishes the Salayea Community Assembly to provide oversight on all Authorized Forest Community activities. The Community Assembly shall be the supreme decision-making body of the Authorized Forest Community.

Section 2: *Composition of the Assembly*

Section 2A: *Membership.*

Voting members of the Community Assembly shall be made up of representatives from towns and independent villages (villages that are not sub-units of towns), which are part of the Authorized Forest Community.

Section 2B: Town and Village Representatives

Each town and village will select three members to represent their interests at all Community Assembly meetings.

Section 2C: Tenure of Community Assembly Members

Community Assembly members shall serve five (5) year terms, for a maximum number of two (2) terms.

Section 2D: Representatives of the National Legislature

Two (2) members of the Lofa County Legislative Caucus shall be selected by members of the caucus to represent it on the Salayea Community Assembly. One such member shall be the representative of the constituency in which the Salayea Community Forest is located. Members of the National Legislature shall have no voting rights, but may observe and provide advice.

Section 3: Leadership of the Assembly

The leadership of the Community Assembly shall be made up of the two (2) members of the National Legislature, described in Section 2D, and four (4) officers elected from the membership of the Community Assembly: a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. Together they will be known as the Executive Committee.

Section 4: Subsidiary Bodies

The Community Assembly may appoint other committees, permanent or temporary, or recognize the existence of existing committees as it may deem fit. However, in all such instances, the Community Assembly shall ensure that functions, responsibilities and powers of the committees do not overlap or conflict.

Section 5: Powers and Functions

The powers and functions of the Community Assembly shall be to:

- (a) Meet at least twice a year to discuss and take decisions on community forestry matters;
- (b) Elect officers of the Community Assembly to the Executive Committee;
- (c) Receive, review and adopt reports submitted by the Executive Committee of the Community Assembly and other subordinate committees;
- (d) Appoint members to the Community Forest Management Body;
- (e) Receive, review and adopt reports of the Community Forest Management Body;
- (f) Approve Community Forest Management Plans and budgets drafted by the Community Forest Management Body;

- (g) Ensure sustainable management of community forest resources; and
- (h) Ensure that incomes from community forest resources contribute to the development of the community and the wellbeing of community members, according to the vision of the Community Assembly.

Section 6: Headquarters of the Assembly

The Community Assembly shall be headquartered at **Telemu Town, Palama Clan**, Salayea District, County.

Section 7: Meetings

The Community Assembly shall meet at least twice a year to consult and take decisions on Authorized Forest Community matters, and how resources generated from the Community Forest are to be allocated. All Community Assembly meetings⁵³ will be held within the territory of the Authorized Forest Community at a place chosen by consensus at the previous Community Assembly meeting.

Article VII – The Executive Committee

Section 1: Composition of the Executive Committee

Section 1A: Administration

The core membership of the Executive Committee shall be made up of four (4) officers elected from the Full Membership of the Community Assembly: a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Executive Committee is responsible for the administration of the Community Assembly.

Each officer retains full voting rights in the Community Assembly.

Section 1B: Representatives of the National Legislature

The Executive Committee shall include the two (2) members of the National Legislature, described in section 2D. Members of the National Legislature shall not be entitled to vote in Community Assembly meetings, but may observe and provide advice.

Section 1C: Co-Opted Members

The Community Assembly may appoint additional members with special skills, such as accountants, foresters, and lawyers, to the Executive Committee, if it decides that these persons will enhance community forestry management. Co-opted members shall not be entitled to vote in Community Assembly meetings, but may observe and provide advice.

Section 2: Election and Tenure of Executive Committee Officers

Members of the Community Assembly shall elect the officers of the Executive Committee by secret ballot, for five (5) year terms. No officer of the Executive Committee may serve for more than two (2) terms.

Section 3: Powers and Functions

Between sittings of the Community Assembly, the Executive Committee of the Community Assembly shall supervise the work

of the SCFMB. The oversight responsibilities of the Executive Committee over the SCFMB shall be as follows:

- (a) Making policies and providing strategic direction to the Community Forest Management Body;
- (b) Approving Community Forest Management Plans and budgets drafted by the Community Forest Management Body;
- (c) Ensuring that community forestry funds are managed transparently and accountably;
- (d) Receive and review quarterly reports submitted by the Community Forest Management Body on the management of the community forest;
- (e) Account to the Community Assembly on the performance of the Community Forest Management Body; and
- (f) Undertake all other functions usually performed by Executive Committees of this nature

Section 4: Meetings and Reporting

The Executive Committee shall meet at least once every three months, or as often as is required. The Executive Committee shall report on all of its activities at Regular meetings of the Community Assembly.

Article VIII – Community Forest Management Body

Section 1: *Establishment of a Community Forestry Management Body*

In compliance with the Community Rights Law of 2009, this Constitution hereby establishes the Salayea SCFMB, to oversee the day-to-day management of the Authorized Forest Community's forest resources.

Section 2: *Composition of the SCFMB*

The SCFMB shall be made up of five (5) members, at least one of which shall be a woman. These shall be a Chief Officer, Secretary, Treasurer, and two (2) others to be determined by the Community Assembly. Unless there are no suitably qualified candidates, all members of the SCFMB shall be residents of the Forest Community. Where no suitably qualified candidates can be found, the Executive Committee may authorize non-residents to serve on the SCFMB. None of the five (5) members of the CFMB shall be a member of the Community Assembly, a government official, or a member of the National Legislature.

Section 3: *Selection, Appointment, and Tenure of Members of the SCFMB*

Members of the Community Assembly shall select and appoint SCFMB members for five (5) year terms. No CFMB member shall serve for more than two (2) terms.

Section 4: *Election of Leadership of the SCFMB*

From among the five officers of the Community Forest Management Body, the Community Assembly shall elect through secret ballot, and by simple majority, the Chief Officer, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.

Section 5: Powers and Functions of the SCFMB

The Community Forest Management Body shall have the following powers and functions:

- (a) Implement policies and decisions of the Community Assembly;
- (b) Develop and implement CFMPs;
- (c) Prepare and submit an annual work plan and budget to the Community Assembly for approval;
- (d) Implement the approved budget and manage the Community Forest Fund;
- (e) Manage the day-to-day activities of the Authorized Forest Community;
- (f) Ensure compliance with all relevant legal requirements relating to the community forestry program;
- (g) Negotiate and oversee commercial arrangements with third parties;
- (h) Represent the Authorized Forest Community in all forestry matters;
- (i) Periodically report to the Executive Committee and Community Assembly.

Section 6: Meetings and Reporting

Members of the SCFMB shall meet as often as is required in order to perform their duties. Whenever the Executive Committee and Community Assembly meet, the SCFMB shall report on all of its activities. At meetings of the Community Assembly, the SCFMB shall report directly to the full Community Assembly.

Article IX – Management of Community Forest Funds

Section 1: *Establishment of Accounts*

The SCFMB shall establish and administer two separate bank accounts, authorized by the Executive Committee: one for the operations of the community forestry management program and the other for the implementation of community social development projects.

Section 2: *Use of Community Forest Funds*

Funds generated from community forest resources shall be shared between forestry management activities and community development activities, as determined by the Community Assembly on an annual basis.

Section 3: *Financial Management*

The SCFMB shall ensure that community forest funds are managed in an accountable and transparent manner, under clear provisions for budgeting, expenditure approvals, and annual external audits. As part of its responsibility, the SCFMB shall keep an accurate financial record of all financial transactions and shall prepare from these records financial

statements in both standard and simplified versions, compatible with the accounting system being used by the Liberia Revenue Authority, for presentation to the Community Assembly.

Article X – Amendment

The Community Assembly may amend this Constitution at any of its regular meetings, provided the proposed amendment has been circulated one meeting prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon. Amendment shall be by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Community Assembly membership.

Article XI – Conflicts with other Laws

The Constitution of Liberia, the Community Rights Law of 2009, and the National Forest Reform Law of 2006, in this order, take precedence over the **Salayea Authorized Forest Community's Constitution.**