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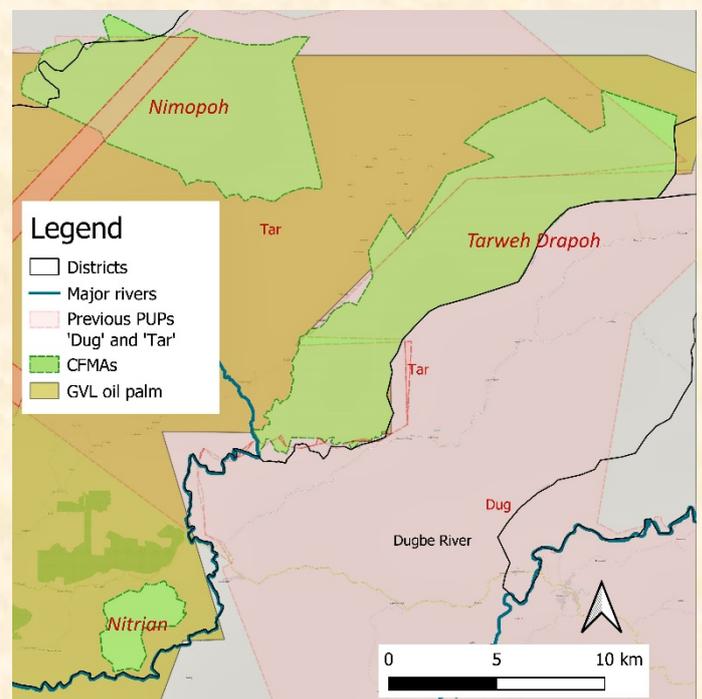
# Decoding ten years of the Tartweh-Drapoh forest conflict – the deception, actors and victims

Claims and counterclaims about who is right or wrong in the Tartweh-Drapoh (Sinoe County) forest conflict continue to grow, as the community languishes in abject poverty. Liberia Forest Media Watch (LFMW) could not logically conclude on who is responsible for the long-running conflict, due to the involvement of multiple parties including local government officials and legislators, with varying interests. However, this brief contains sufficient information about the history of the conflict and violations of forest laws and regulations vis-à-vis challenges with community forest in Liberia.

## Phase One: Tartweh-Drapoh PUP

The history of Tartweh-Drapoh forest is characterized by reports of financial inducements and interferences by current and former high-profile government officials, dating back to the period of Private Use Permits (PUP, see Figure 1). For instance, a cash receipt dated 29 December 2011 indicates that an amount of US\$41,452.50 was allegedly disbursed by Universal Forest Corporation (UFC) to group of people claiming to be members of the Community Forest Management Body (CFMB) as Land Rental Fees (see Figure 2). According to the [Special Independent Investigating Body report on the issuance of Private Use Permits](#) commissioned by former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2012, as early as 2008, UFC appears to have been deeply involved in the Tartweh-Drapoh forest.<sup>1</sup> The same report describes the community “embroiled in internal conflict” regarding the operation of their PUP by UFC (the original operator) and, later, by Atlantic Resources.

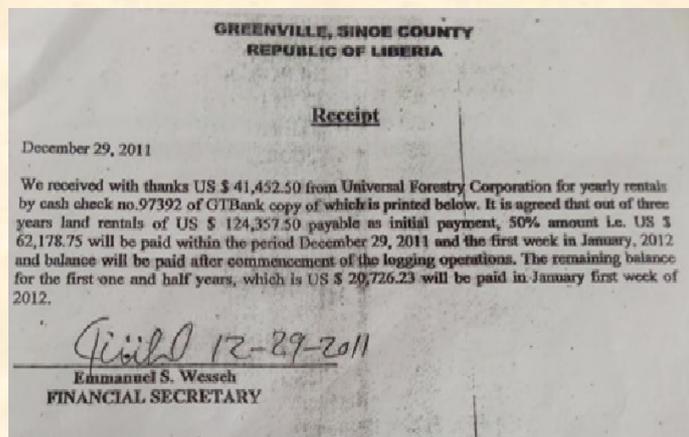
On 10 January 2012, one month after payment of the above amount, another payment of US\$20,726 was made by UFC, again as Land Rental Fees (Figure 3). Both amounts were reportedly received by one Emmanuel S. Wesseh. A year later, on 11 January 2013, the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) received US\$47,038, from the same UFC, as full payment for boundary line demarcation of the perimeter of Tartweh-Drapoh Forest (Figure 4).



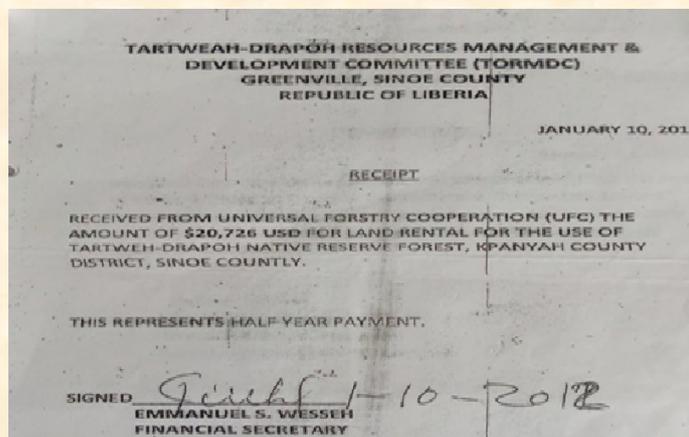
**Figure 1: Map of Tartweh-Drapoh CFMA and former PUPs**

Payment of these amounts were uncovered through an investigation conducted by the National Security Agency (NSA) and Dorbor Jallah’s [committee](#) during the PUP saga.<sup>2</sup> Findings from this investigation and a [report](#) by Global Witness, SAMFU and SDI<sup>3</sup> led to the [closure of the PUPs](#) by the Government of Liberia under President Ellen Johnson-

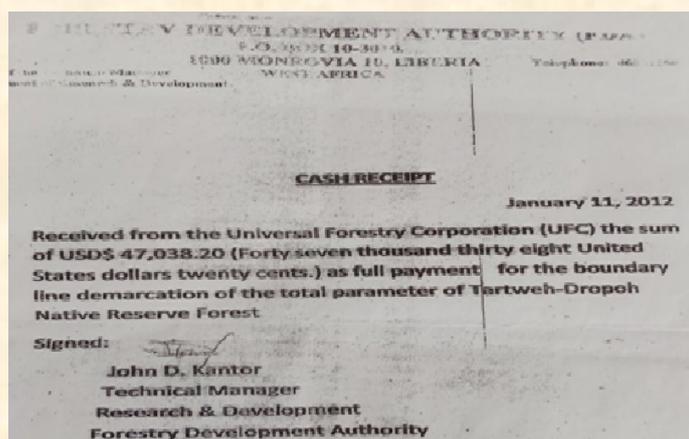
Sirleaf.<sup>4</sup> The NSA's report alleged a former county official received US\$15,000, and that the County Legislative Caucus received US\$5,000 from the community's share of the money. Upon the release of the report by NSA, the government dismissed key staff of the FDA for their involvement into the financial scandal allegedly influenced by UFC and other logging companies.



**Figure 2: Land Rental receipt, 29 December 2011 (from an informant close to Tartweh-Drapoh PUP.)**



**Figure 3: Land Rental receipt, 10 January 2012 (from an informant close to Tartweh-Drapoh PUP.)**



**Figure 4: FDA receipt, 11 January 2012 (from an informant close to Tartweh-Drapoh PUP.)**

## Phase Two: the start of the community forest era

Following the suspension of the PUPs, and subsequently the introduction of the community forest initiative, Tartweh-Drapoh Forest Community applied for Approved Forest Community status in 2014, but this was during a [moratorium](#) period when new permits were not being issued.<sup>5</sup>

Fast-forward to November 2017, and Tartweh-Drapoh was [awarded](#) a Community Forestry Management Agreement (CFMA), thus formally establishing its CFMB, the Community Assembly (CA) that it is accountable to, and the latter's Executive Committee (EC).<sup>6</sup> In 2018 the community began negotiations to award their forest to a logging company of their choice. Surprisingly, UFC, whose alleged bribery helped trigger the closure of PUPs, surfaced again.

According to a community source, on 9 December 2018, UFC, with the approval of Magistrate George Karoteh of Tubmanville Magisterial Court along with District Superintendent, Abraham Sokan and Wiah Toe (Land Coordinator) of the Ministry of Land Mines and Energy, some local chiefs, headed by Paramount Chief Peter Korn, Paramount Chief Henry Saywon, General Town Chief Mitchell D. Padma, and Clan Chief Peter B. Wiah, authorized UFC to carry out prospecting in the forest without the knowledge of the CFMB, the FDA, or the county authority.

In reaction, some community members said they sought to arrest the foreign experts, who told community authorities that they were sent into the forest by UFC. In an apparent reaction to community's action, the county security reportedly arrested and detained community members on crime of torturing investors. Following the arrest of community members, some concerned Tartweh Community members in Sinoe and Monrovia wrote to the Police Inspector General of Liberia, Patrick Sudue, complaining that the county's police detachment tortured them for stopping "intruders" in their forest.

As head of the county, Superintendent Lee Nagbe Chea launched an investigation into reports of illegal entry by UFC into the community forest. LFMW established that the Superintendent found UFC representatives culpable of illegal entry into the community forest, thereby taking instruction from an "unauthorized" forest body outside of the CFMB arrangements.

As a result of the investigation, the County Superintendent fined UFC US\$1,500 for illegally entering the community forest. But to a great surprise, the very Superintendent who punished UFC, on 30 March 2019, allowed community chiefs and elders to conduct a meeting with the same UFC investors, a meeting the Superintendent himself attended, along with the County Attorney, Police Commander, and

other community officials. LFMW learned that UFC sponsored this very meeting.

LFMW learned that during the meeting the chiefs and elders assured the management of UFC that they will give them the Tartweh-Drapoh forest. It is following this meeting that tension rose between the leadership of the CFMB on the one hand and chiefs, elders and the offices of the District #1 Representative, Crayton Duncan, on the other hand.

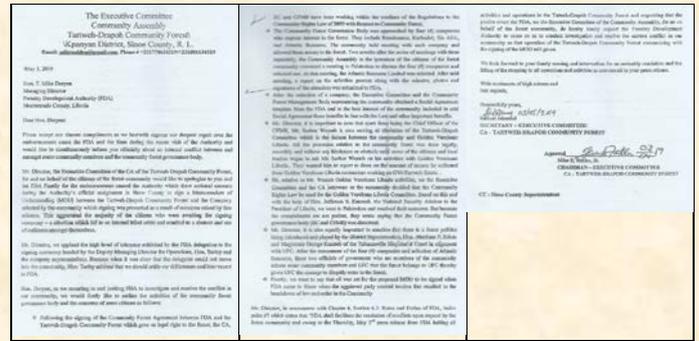
***A surprising feud between the Community Assembly and CFMB Leadership***

Prior to the involvement of the county officials and lawmaker in the Tartweh Community forest activities, members of the CA – the ultimate community governance institution in a community forest – and CFMB operated in a normal and cooperative fashion. That is until rumors of financial influence and interference from government officials became prevalent. For example, in his 3 May 2019 communication to FDA Managing Director C. Mike Doryen, Mike Neklan, Chairman of the EC of the CA, referenced the fair play in the selection of Atlantic Resource Limited as the logging company selected by the community through the CA, EC and CFMB (Figure 5). He named four companies that bid for the forest, excluding UFC:

*Following the signing of Community Forest Agreement between the FDA and the Tartweh-Drapoh Community Forest, which gave us legal rights to the forest, the CA, EC and CFMB have been working within the confines of the regulations to the Community Rights Law With Respect To Community Forest of 2009. The community forest governance body was approached by four companies who expressed interest in the forest. They include Renaissance, Karbadeh, Sing Africa and Atlantic Resources. The community held meetings with each company and allowed them access to the forest. Two months after a series of meetings with them separately, the CA, in the presence of the citizens of the forest community, convened a meeting in Palatroken to discuss the four companies and selected one. At the meeting, Atlantic Resources was selected. After said meeting, a report on the selection process along with the minutes, photos and signatures of the attendees was submitted to the FDA. — Mike Neklan, 3 May 2019 letter to the FDA*

Mike Neklan admitted on Forest Hour in October 2019 that he serves as Chief of Office Staff to Representative Duncan, concomitantly with his portfolio as Chairman of the EC of the Tartweh Forest Community. The 2009 Community Rights Law limits the involvement of influential government officials in the management and control of community forest, but Neklan declared on Forest Hour and through

telephone conversations that his position is not an influential one.



**Figure 5: EC Chairman Mike Neklan's letter of 3 May 2019 to the FDA**

Like the Chairman of the EC, a probe by LFMW into reports of the CFMB Chief Officer, Sorbor Wesseh, holding influential government positions at the time of his leadership at county level proved affirmative. Mr. Wesseh served as Director of the County Service Center and County Information Officer before his dismissal by the Superintendent in June 2020.



**Figure 6: A victim of the shooting incident in March 2019 (@ FrontPageAfrica)**

Mike Neklan's letter to the FDA Managing Director was as a result of the series of disturbances he claimed had been caused by community members over forest issues including, in March 2019, an [exchange of gun fire](#) between opposing forces over the legitimacy of the forest contract (Figure 6).<sup>7</sup> Neklan had written a letter of regret to the FDA for the disturbances that took place during signing of the

community-company contract on 27 April 2019. But prior to this day, credible sources told LFMW that Mike Neklan secretly arrived in Greenville on 25 April 2019, ahead of the arrival of delegates who were expected to participate in the signing of the community-company contract on 27 April 2019, which Mike Neklan was reportedly opposed to, after endorsing the selection process.

Upon his early arrival in Greenville, Mike Neklan immediately proceeded to the Tartweh Community, where LFMW learned that he engaged the chiefs and elders in two consultative meetings to reportedly interrupt the signing of the community-company contract. Following his consultative meetings with the chiefs and elders, a roadblock was erected to prevent delegates from coming in to sign the contract with a company that he, the EC Chairman, Mike Neklan, had earlier endorsed through a written communication to the FDA. After the roadblock, police arrested and jailed a few people, but County Superintendent Chea, along with the District Superintendent Soken and Magistrate Karoteh, signed for their release.

As a result of the shooting incident, Tubmanville Magistrate and his Assistant arrested and charged 22 people suspected of carrying out the conflict. Of these, six were ordered jailed by the county officials. However, LFMW learned that the Superintendent and the Magistrate released those who publicly admitted instigating the violence, but failed to yield to calls to release the six people on bond. It is interesting to note that to date, no single perpetrator of the shooting incident has been arrested and prosecuted, even though, in one of the meetings in April 2019 County Superintendent Chea provided 86,000 Liberian Dollars to community members for the losses they incurred as a result of fighting from opposing forces. The Superintendent later confirmed this on tape recorder at a meeting held on 28 November 2019.

*I was beaten on 28 April 2019 on the order of the Clan Chief Peter Blay Wiah, for being a supporter of the CFMB Chairman Sorbor Wesseh. They beat me in the presence of EC Chairman Mike Naklen and the Political Officer of the office of Hon. Duncan. — Madison Togba, victim*

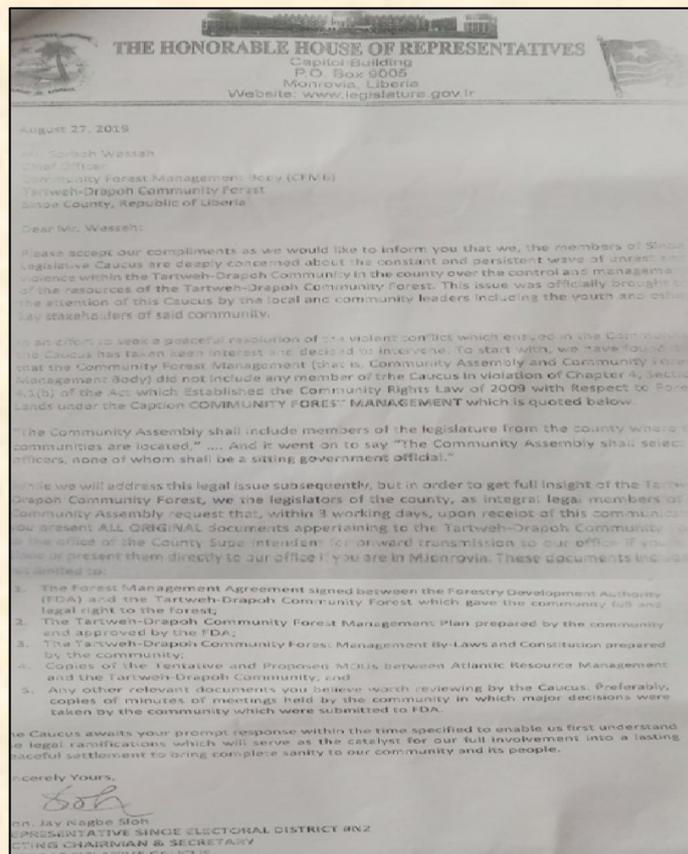
In an effort to release the six people, some community members along with the CFMB leadership travelled to Monrovia and joined efforts with Monrovia based Tartweh citizens to call on the Supreme Court to issue a [Writ of Mandamus](#), which the court did, thus compelling the county authority to release the six people from prison.

After the failure of the 27 April meeting due to roadblocks, County Superintendent Chea proposed another meeting, in the first week of May 2019. However, the Superintendent's

request for this meeting was challenged by some community officials:

*We wrote to the Superintendent and said it was not proper to call meeting when our people are in the bushes, some are wounded and some are hospitalised, but Superintendent refused to listen, and went ahead to host the meeting. — 1 May 2019 letter from community executives to County Superintendent Chea*

Nonetheless, the meeting went ahead, and the Superintendent, without consultation with community members, attempted, without success, to appoint District Superintendent Soken as a replacement to CFMB Chief Officer Sorbor Wesseh. The FDA also issued a [statement](#) to suspend all activities in the community forest.<sup>8</sup>



**Figure 7: County caucus' letter of 27 August 2019, requesting all CFMB documents**

As claims and counterclaims over ownership of the forest continued, the Chairman of the Sinoe County Caucus, Representative Crayton O. Duncan, wrote through the secretary, J. Nage Sloh (late) to Mr. Wesseh on 27 August 2019, requesting him to submit all original documents relating to the Tartweh Community Forest (Figure 7). Wesseh, along with his corps of CFMB officials, did not yield to the County Caucus' request. An insider told LFMW that Wesseh's failure to submit to the Caucus prompted Representative Duncan's sponsorship of the chiefs and elders to remove Wesseh and his leadership, on grounds

that Wesseh was being disrespectful to the chiefs, elders, and county officials.

*Sorbor Wesseh don't respect the chiefs and elders. He holds two government positions, and he is using his positions to jail the chiefs and elders. We are the leaders of the community, and so we have saying over the forest.*  
— Henry F. Saywon, Paramount Chief, Upper Tartweh

Due to the high-level involvement of the chiefs and elders, some concerned citizens of Tartweh wrote to the Minister of Internal Affairs in August 2019, complaining about the chiefs' consistent interference in the community forest management.

In his response, the Minister mandated the County Inspector, then Acting County Superintendent, to investigate the matter and to share the findings with him. Nevertheless, when the County Inspector invited the chiefs to answer questions, the chiefs and elders asked the Inspector for extension of time so as to afford them time to get a lawyer. In the process of seeking a lawyer, the chiefs and elders came to Monrovia as guests of Representative Crayton Duncan. LFMW learned that the chiefs spent three months in Monrovia under the sponsorship of Representative Duncan, who was out of the country on a visit to the United States.

Upon his return, credible sources say Representative Duncan gave over US\$3,500 to his Chief of Office Staff, Mike Neklan, (who is also the EC chairman) and his political officer to accompany the chiefs back to Sinoe County, where they were expected to take part in a meeting to remove the CFMB leadership in October.

At a meeting held on 7 October 2019, 20 members of the CA and EC voted to remove the leadership of the CFMB. Where the community, which has no forest income until it secures a logging company, gets money from to organize such a meeting remains a mystery. However, the meeting was believed to have been influenced or financed by high profile county officials including Representative Duncan.

The signing of the resolution to remove Sorbor Wesseh and the rest of the leadership of the CFMB was witnessed by LFMW and the FDA. Among others, the CA and EC accused Chief Officer Wesseh of constantly using his government's portfolio to arrest and imprison local chiefs, traditional and youth leaders who are critical of his leadership. When contacted, Mr. Wesseh declined to comment on the matter other than to say *"I am willing to resign my post as Chairman of the CFMB once we sign the [company-community contract] with the legally vetted company. As for the conflict, I don't want to talk about it because a senior official and citizen of the county had opted to intervene, and hence,*

*talking to the media or CSOs could undermine the peace process"*.

Following this meeting, on 28 October 2019, EC Chairman Naklen sought further help from a range of groups:

*The Executive Committee (EC) of the Tartweh-Drapoh Community Forest is inviting National and International Non-Governmental Organizations (Forest Partners) to conduct investigation to know the perpetrators behind community forest conflicts in Sinoe County. The EC is also asking the FDA to provide clarity as to the unclear purported Atlantic Resources or Delta Timber Company MOU which signing ceremony the Authority attempted to witness in April 2019 in Sinoe County. — 28 October 2019 letter from Mike Neklan to the FDA and non-governmental organizations.*

It is following this request that LFMW initiated this investigation.

Among others, the EC Chairman accused the leadership of the CFMB, headed by Sorbor Wesseh, of entering into a deal with Atlantic Resources Limited without the knowledge and approval of the EC, even though the same EC Chair, Mike Naklen, is on record of satisfying the process that led to the selection of Atlantic Resources. The EC Chairman also said, despite so much pleading from members of the EC, Chief Officer Wesseh went ahead to sign the company-community contract ("MOU") with Atlantic Resources, which prompted a mass protest from citizens. The EC chairman also accused the CFMB leader of denying them access to the contract, noting that *"the FDA and Atlantic Resources may have altered the MOU for sinister purpose"*, which is why, he said, the CFMB Chief Officer has not allowed them to have access to the contract.

The EC Chairman's letter also referenced a Facebook post by the CFMB Secretary, Morris Q. Wiah, in which Mr. Wiah is quoted as saying the company-community contract that was about to be signed was not between the community and Atlantic Resources, but rather between the community and Delta Timber Company. Below are the counts outlined against the CFMB leadership by the EC Chairman:

1. The refusal of Mr. Wesseh to allow the community to have access to their forest documents such as CFMA, Community Assembly By-Laws and Constitution and the Community Forest Management Plan.
2. Mr. Wesseh's denial of the community to have input into and review of the proposed company-community contract prepared between Atlantic Resources and the community.
3. Mr. Wesseh's leadership of bad governance by his constant act of instituting legal or court processes,

arrest and detention actions against the chiefs, elders, traditional leaders and citizens of the community.

4. Mr. Wesseh's failure to submit a single report to the EC even when the community requested him to do so.
5. That in February 2019, Mr. Wesseh was investigated by the EC for misconduct, bad governance and financial misapplication and was found guilty, asked to apologize to the chiefs for detaining them, asked to make available to the community their community forest documents, asked to make a comprehensive report to the EC on his activities, and asked to reconstitute the community funds collected, but he failed in all.

Even though the EC Chairman's letter accused the Chief Officer of misconduct and the FDA for altering the company-community contract, it is surprising that the same EC Chair wrote to the FDA regretting what he then termed as embarrassment caused to the Authority and the State by the chiefs, traditional leaders and some citizens including those from Monrovia and the diaspora during the signing of company-community contract on 27 April 2019.

### *Further efforts to remove the community forest leadership*

Amidst his request for investigation, Chairman Neklen organized another meeting in an attempt to remove Mr.

Wesseh, with the help of one Emmanuel Saywon, Political Officer to Representative Duncan. This meeting took place on 28 November 2019 in Tubmanville City.

At this meeting, also attended by representatives from the FDA and CSOs, Mike Neklan and his colleagues failed to form a quorum to remove the CFMB. The FDA representative, Alvin Roberts, said the Nine Steps process to obtain a CFMA in 2017 were legally followed, intimating that the CFMB had been appointed through due process. Alvin noted, however, that the EC did not get the two-thirds majority required to remove the CFMB. The EC Co-Chairman, Moses Teh-Swen, and its Secretary, Samuel Jelemue, along with 13 ordinary members, distanced themselves from Mr. Neklan's resolution to remove the CFMB.

In a recorded statement, County Superintendent Chea said that he had personal issues with the chairman of the CFMB, and went to endorse a vote of no confidence in it. He, therefore, instructed the FDA to organize an acting CFMB until elections are held. Surprisingly, the FDA's Alvin Roberts also later endorsed the vote of no confidence. However, Sorbor Wesseh and his co-CFMB member objected to their removal outright, claiming they were not accorded due process.



**Figure 8: Sorbor Wesseh being taken away by the police, June 2020 (photos provided by an onlooker)**

*Sorbor Wesseh is causing serious trouble for the community which want development. He has refused to disclose the draft social agreement to community members. We want him to resign and let new vetting process of companies for our forest starts. We call on you civil society to investigate this matter because the chiefs and elders are not respected by the CFMB. — Personal communication from Wiah Toeh, Land Coordinator, 1 March 2020*

*I made this request [to investigate the leadership crisis] several months ago. Why now? However, I cannot stop you. But we have had the intervention of other key stakeholders. Thanks for your interest. — Personal communication from Mike Naklen, EC Chairman, 4 March 2020.*

The removal exercise was in response to request made by the EC of allegations levied against Sorbor Wesseh. However, the following month, a group of community forest leaders challenged the way Wesseh and Neklen were removed, terming it illegal in a letter to the FDA:

*We... wish to complain the fact findings team from your Entity (FDA), led by Mrs. Getrude Weedor for its decision to illegally dissolved the leadership (CFMB/EC and CA) of our community forest, and subsequently constituted a new leadership ... without regard to the Tartweh/Drapoh Community Forest Constitution and by-laws and the Community Forest regulations of 2009. — 22 January 2021 letter from EC, CFMB and community leaders to FDA<sup>10</sup>*

In June 2020, Sorbor Wesseh was reportedly ordered beaten by the Superintendent for refusing to turn over the keys to the County Service Center, where he, Wesseh, served as Head (Figure 8). Superintendent Chea, in an emotional live radio conversation via telephone on Forest Hour in August 2020, admitted ordering Wesseh to open his office and turn over the keys to him. According to him, Wesseh’s refusal to obey his orders led to the scuffle between him and the county law enforcement officers.

*New officers elected, same challenges continue*

On 18 and 19 December 2020, a two-day investigative probe into the situation was conducted by a five-member FDA and CSO team, headed by Mrs. Weedor H. Gray of the Community Extension Services and Mobilization Manager of FDA (Figure 9). During this time, the leaderships of Sorbor Wesseh and Mike Neklen were dissolved, and a new CFMB was elected.<sup>9</sup>



**Figure 9: Participants at the two-day investigative probe in December 2020 (photo © FrontPageAfrica)**

The letter accused the FDA delegation of entering their community under heavy armed security, who policed every entrance to the town hall. This prevented citizens who wanted to express their dissatisfaction about the entire process. It accused FDA officials of violating the 2017 [Community Rights Regulations](#), which calls for a free, fair and transparent election process, supervised by the FDA in the presence of at least two CSO representatives.<sup>11</sup> A few months after the election, however, the new leadership is once more engulfed in power struggle. In a meeting dated 30 June 2021, the CA members expressed vote of no confidence in their new Chief Officer, Mr. Myer Kuman Padma. They accused Mr. Padma of receiving US\$2,500 from one of the companies bidding to log the forest, Kisvan Timber Corporation (which did not win the bid), and diverting said amount to his personal use. This US\$2,500 is fee charged by the community to each company bidding to log in their forest. Among others, the CA accused the Chief Officer of rejecting the crafting of a company-community contract, opposing the EC decision to constitute a contract committee and his refusal to participate in the dissemination and explanation of the company-community contract to the CA.

When contacted for comment, Chief Officer Padma told LFMW that he did nothing that violates the Community Rights Law and its regulations. He termed the decision of the CA as politically motivated: *“My brother, our people elected us based on trust and more beside we are not willing to dance to any political decision; trust me, we will do what is right and not the other way those politicians feel and want to play on our people”*. Padma accused the new Chairman of the EC, Hilary Quaetoh, of inciting some CA members to remove him, but Mr. Quaetoh did not respond to our call for comment. His phone rang endlessly and he did not respond to our text messages.

## *Representative Crayton O. Duncan is once more suspected*

The Lawmaker of Sinoe County Electoral District #1 seem once more to be at the center of the conflict. He is accused by elements of the new community forest leadership for influencing the selection process of logging companies that applied to harvest logs in the community's forest. He is suspected of further fueling conflict by bringing in a logging company named Sinoforest Liberia Corporation. The 2017 Regulations for the Community Rights Law permits two members of the County Legislative Caucus to be in the EC, but it also states that the CA is the highest decision-making body of the Authorized Forest Community.

LFMW has observed that Representative Crayton Duncan seeks to overstep this arrangement, as he has endeavored to influence the decision of the CFMB in deciding the selection process of logging companies. His alleged acts of manipulation are typically channeled through current and former and CA members aligned to him, including his Chief of Office Staff, Mark Neklan (former CA Head) and Hilary Quaetoh (current CA Head).

One member of the CFMB interviewed by LFMW, Timothy Swen, said how disappointed he was by his colleagues' actions in the selection of a logging company: *"For some of us we were not able to talk because majority takes the day in terms of the decision that selected the Sinoforest company as a result of the money Hon. Duncan pumped in the process"*. Swen disclosed that each CA member received US\$100 to sign in favor of Sinoforest Liberia Corporation; a company said by some to be owned by Representative Duncan. *"I told them over and over but those guys used the cash violence on them,"* Swen told journalists. He

maintained that instead of the selection process being transparent or done in the open, it was done in a secret house where they left out journalists, women and youth groups in the name of taking a decision 'at traditional level'.

Representative Crayton Duncan, when contacted via WhatsApp in August 2021, neither denied nor confirmed his involvement. He told LFMW that he reserved comment on the issue on the grounds that he is out of the country. *"Ezekiel thank you for making this effort to reach me via WhatsApp, but I will be in the country soon and I will provide clarity to this gossip"* he said.

Another aggrieved CA member, Madam Victoria N. Saydee, [told the media](#) that major decisions are made without informing CA members, let alone other community members.<sup>12</sup> Like Timothy Swen, she too rejected US\$1,000 to sign a forest agreement with a concession company. She said the process of awarding the forest to the Sinoforest Corporation was done between a few CA members and local leadership of the county.

Meanwhile, the Secretary General of the CFMB, F. Kwankon Saytue, denied reports of inducement in the selection process of Sinoforest Corporation and the involvement of Representative Duncan. He told LFMW the Sinoforest Corporation was selected based on its capability and not on patronage basis as is being alleged by his colleagues: *"We needed a company with the capability. Three companies applied, and Sino Company agreed to build concrete bridge over Plazon River, while the other said they will build log bridge*. It has since come to light that Representative Duncan was listed as a shareholder in Sinoforest in July 2019, although the company changed its ownership structure in September that year and he was no longer listed.<sup>13</sup>

## References

- 1 Special Independent Investigating Body, 2012, Report on the issuance of Private Use Permits (see page 33 for payments to FDA; and pages 25-26, 36, 42, and 97-98 for Tartweh-Drapoh. <https://loggingoff.info/library/liberia-special-independent-investigating-body-report-on-private-use-permits/>.
- 2 Special Independent Investigating Body, 2012, *op. cit*.
- 3 Global Witness, Save My Future and the Sustainable Development Institute, 2012, Signing their Lives away: Liberia's Private Use Permits and the Destruction of Community-Owned Rainforest. <https://loggingoff.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/474b.pdf>
- 4 The News, 4 January 2013, Ellen Cites Abuses in PUP. <https://allafrica.com/stories/201301040360.html>
- 5 Global Witness, 2018, Power to the people? How companies are exploiting community forestry in Liberia, page 18. [www.globalwitness.org/documents/19467/GW2018\\_Liberia-PowerToThePeople.pdf](http://www.globalwitness.org/documents/19467/GW2018_Liberia-PowerToThePeople.pdf). In addition, a copy of the 2014 application letter from Tartweh-Drapoh community to the FDA was available from the FDA's website until October 2018.
- 6 Global Witness, 2018, Power to the people? *op. cit*.
- 7 FrontPageAfrica, 15 May 2019, Who instigated forest conflict in Sinoe? <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/county-news/who-instigated-forest-conflict-in-sinoe/>.
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- 9 FrontPageAfrica, 8 January 2021, Sinoe citizens resolve long-standing dispute over forest land. <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/county-news/sinoe-citizens-resolve-long-standing-dispute-over-forest-land/>.
- 10 Letter, 22 January 2021, Tartweh/Drapoh Community to FDA, from Sampson B. Borteh, Sr., Former General Chairman, TCIM; Edward Kanmoh, General Chairman, TCIG; Moses Tehswen, Sr., Co-Chairman, EC; Samuel Jelemue, Secretary, EC; Morris Weah, Secretary, CFMB; Anthony Geeplay, Member, CFMB; T. Konwroh Wesseh, Elder; Winston Kamawon, Youth Representative; and David Sarwonnio, Elder.
- 11 FDA, 2017, Regulation to the Community Rights Law of 2009 with Respect to Forest Lands, as Amended. [www.documents.clientearth.org/wp-content/uploads/library/2017-05-17-regulation-2017-forestry-development-authority-regulations-to-the-community-rights-law-with-respect-to-forest-lands-liberia-ext-en.pdf](http://www.documents.clientearth.org/wp-content/uploads/library/2017-05-17-regulation-2017-forestry-development-authority-regulations-to-the-community-rights-law-with-respect-to-forest-lands-liberia-ext-en.pdf).
- 12 The New Dawn, 17 August 2021, Decision made unknown to us – Community Forest Assembly Member. <https://thenewdawnliberia.com/liberia-decision-made-unknown-to-us-community-forest-assembly-member/>.
- 13 Articles of Incorporation for Sinoforest International Corporation, Liberia, Inc., dated 2 July 2019 have been obtained by LFMW. They list the following shareholders: Wang Xichang (63%), Liu Fenqiu (25%) and Crayton O. Duncan (12%). An amendment to these Articles, dated 27 September 2019 has also been obtained, and this amends the above shareholding to Wang Xichang 63%, Liu Fenqiu 25%, Wang Jie 7% and Louise Mapleh Kpoto 5%.