

Liberia



Indicator	Data
Population, 2019 (no.)	4,937,374
Population density, 2018 (people per sq. km of land area)	50.03
Coastal population, 2014 (no.)	2,148,271
Share of people living in urban areas, 2019 (%)	51.6
Total MSW generated, 2014 (tons/year)	518,605

Socioeconomic Profile

Liberia is a low-income country in West Africa bordered by Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire. Liberia's principal exports are iron ore, rubber, diamonds, and gold, while palm oil and cocoa are emerging increasingly as new export products.¹ The country is divided into 15 administrative counties² and runs a presidential republic system with a parliament.

In 2019, Liberia's overall GDP (PPP) was just above \$7 billion, with a GDP (PPP) per capita of \$1,428.^{3, 4} With an area of 111,369 km², Liberia has a population of 4,937,374 (2019) and a population density of 50.03 people per km² (2018).⁵ Majority of Liberians—51.6 percent of the total population (2018)—reside in urban areas.⁶ In 2014, 2.1 million Liberians resided in coastal areas,⁷ most notably in the capital city, Monrovia.

Plastic Industry and Ecosystem

In 2018 and 2019, Liberia had no domestic resin production. Its conversion industry processed 5 kt of PE resin in 2018 and 2 kt of PE resin 2019. Liberia is a net importer of plastics. In 2019, 13.3 million kg of plastics were imported into the country, with PE and PP accounting for about 94.6 percent of the imports.⁸ Only 125,606 kg of plastics were exported from Liberia that same year, all of which consisted of PE.⁹

¹ CIA, *The World Factbook: Liberia* (Langley, VA: CIA, 2021), <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/liberia/>.

² Ibid.

³ GDP, PPP (constant 2017 international dollars) and GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2017 international dollars).

⁴ World Bank Group, "World Development Indicators," 2020.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Jambeck et al., "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean."

⁸ UN Comtrade, "UN Comtrade Database," 2019.

⁹ Ibid.

Solid Waste Management

Liberia generates 0.6 kg of MSW per capita per day and this amounts to an overall daily MSW generation of 1.3 million kg.¹⁰ It should be noted, however, that about 84.4 percent of MSW generated in Liberia is inadequately managed.¹¹

Plastic waste accounts for about 14 percent of MSW arisings, with a daily generation rate of about 180,000 kg, of which 84.4 percent is inadequately managed;¹² 3,596 kg/day of plastic waste leaks into the environment in Liberia.¹³

Legislation, Policies, and Other Initiatives

The government ministries responsible for municipal waste management in Liberia are the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy.¹⁴ Waste management in Liberia is driven by the following law:

- Environment Protection and Management Law of Liberia, 2002: This law regulates solid waste disposal at the national level.¹⁵

¹⁰ Jambeck et al., “Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean.”

¹¹ Ibid.

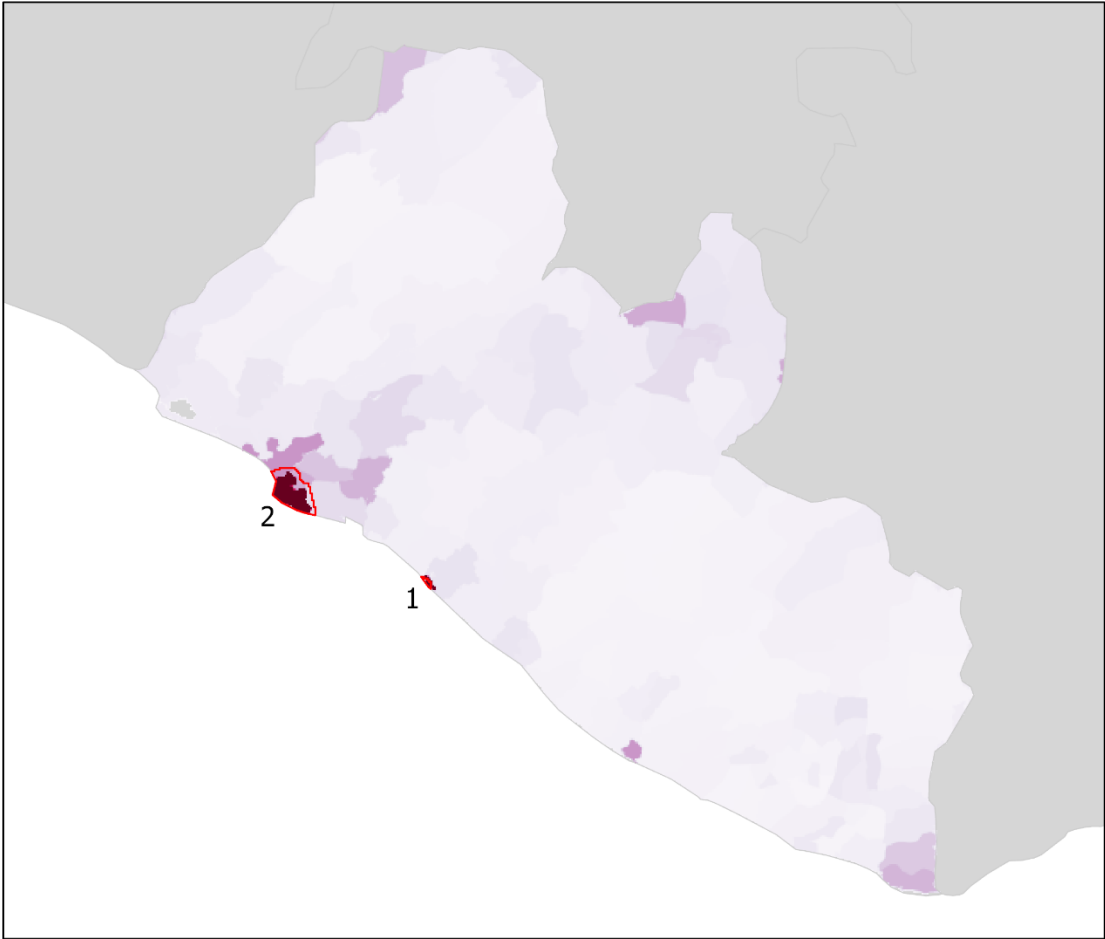
¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Victor Emery David, Yasinta John, and Shahid Hussain, “Rethinking Sustainability: A Review of Liberia’s Municipal Solid Waste Management Systems, Status, and Challenges,” *Journal of Material Cycles and Waste Management* 22 (2020): 1299–317, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10163-020-01046-x>.

¹⁵ Chatham House, “Policies.”

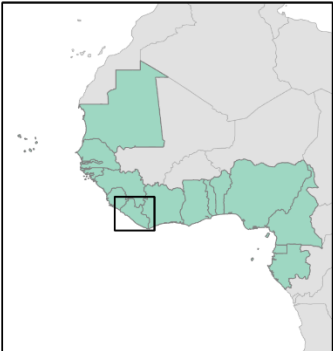
Plastic Waste in Liberia



Plastic Generation Hotspots

ID	Locale	Rank	Plastic Waste (kt)	Population	Area (km ²)
1	Buchanan	63	0.3918	18,653	13.8309
2	Monrovia	11	34.2194	1,629,266	409.5838

Location in Region



Total Annual National Plastic Waste Generation: 106.07 kt

