

**16 July 2025**

**Context:** Tiwai Island and Gola Rainforest in Sierra Leone have been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, marking the first of its kind in the country.



**About the Sierra Leone World Heritage Site:**

**A natural heritage site that includes:**

- Tiwai Island Wildlife Sanctuary
- Gola Rainforest National Park (GRNP)
- **Location:** Located in the southern region of Sierra Leone, along the Moya River, adjacent to the border with Liberia.

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**Unique Features: Tiwai Island:**

- Spanning only 12 sq. km, it is home to 11 species of primates, including the endangered western chimpanzees, Diana monkeys, and king colobus monkeys.
- Serves as a hub for biodiversity research and a model for ecotourism in West Africa.

**Gola Rainforest:**

- The largest tropical rainforest in Sierra Leone.
- Habitat for pygmy hippopotamuses, African forest elephants, and numerous bird and insect species.
- A crucial area for carbon sequestration, climate regulation, and genetic diversity.

**About Sierra Leone:**

- **Capital:** Freetown, situated on the Sierra Leone Peninsula, boasts one of the largest natural harbours globally.
- **Neighbouring Countries:** Guinea, Liberia, and the Atlantic Ocean

**Key Geographical Features**

**Rivers:**

- Prominent rivers include Moa, Sewa, Mano, and Rokel.
- These rivers originate from the Fouta Djallon highlands in Guinea and flow southwest.

**Mountains:**

- Mount Bintimani (Loma Mansa) – The highest peak at 6,391 ft (1,948 m).
- The Tingi Hills, Sula Plateau, and Kambui Schists contribute to the rugged landscape.

**Coastal & Inland Plains:**

- Characterized by mangrove swamps, lateritic soils, and seasonally flooded Bolilands.
- Experiences a tropical climate with significant rainfall and Harmattan winds during the dry season.

**Natural Resources:**

- Abundant in diamonds, gold, bauxite, and rutile.
- Agriculture and mining are the primary economic activities.