



IGCC NEWSLETTER

June, 2007
Edition

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HIGH LEVEL MEETING FOR THE FINALIZATION AND ADOPTION OF THE LBA PROTOCOL FOR THE ABIDJAN CONVENTION AND STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME (SAP) 25-29 June, 2007

The week of 25-29 June, 2007 marked an important stage in the life of the GCLME, as it was dedicated to the finalization and adoption of the Land and Sea Based Activities (LBA) Protocol for the Abidjan Convention and the regional Strategic Action Programme (SAP), two key documents and indicators of progress for the Project.

The Meeting, opened by the Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Environment, Ghana, Hon. Stephen Asamoah Boateng, attracted over 50 participants including GCLME countries' National Directors, UN agencies representatives, NGO's and consultants for the GCLME. Also in attendance were representatives from three non-GCLME countries but parties to the Abidjan Convention.

Prof. Chidi Ibe, Executive Secretary, IGCC and Regional Director, GCLME welcomed the delegates to the IGCC Secretariat and the workshop.

Representatives from UNIDO, UNDP and UNEP made brief statements each commending the Executive Secretariat and his staff for the achievements made so far. They also reconfirmed continued support from their organizations.

In his Keynote Address, Hon. Asamoah Boateng restated Ghana's continued support to the project and lauded the 16 GCLME member countries for their commitment to the Project as it demonstrated their ownership of it and collective will towards solving the trans-boundary problems confronting their coastal and marine environment.

Prof. Alo Babajide, the chair of the meeting urged the few countries that have not finalized their National Action Plan (NAP) documents to do so as a matter of urgency.

The LBA Protocol will be presented at the joint Conference of Parties of the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions in South Africa September 10 - 14 for adoption while the SAP Document is due for signing at the Ministerial Meeting envisaged for October-November, 2007.



The High Table at the Opening Ceremony. L-R: Dr. Anjan Datta (UNEP), Prof. Babajide Alo (Chairman), Hon. Asamoah Boateng, Minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment, Ghana, Prof. Chidi Ibe Executive Secretary, IGCC / Regional Director, GCLME, Dr. Chika Ukwe (UNIDO) and Dr. Duah-Yentumi (UNDP).



During the Session, HE Okoulou-Kachati Issifou, Minister of Environment, Togo called on the Meeting. He seized the opportunity to reconfirm the full support of his Government to the GCLME Activities. L-R: Dr. Anjan Datta (UNEP), Madam Nasséré Kaba (Chair of the SAP Session), HE Okoulou-Kachati Issifou, Minister of Environment, Togo, Prof. Chidi Ibe Executive Secretary, IGCC / Regional Director, GCLME, Dr. Abdoulaye Ndiaye (UNDP) and Dr. Chika Ukwe (UNIDO).



Signing the Memorandum of Understanding for the IGCC-NGO Network Partnership Accra, Ghana, 29 June, 2007



Mr. Vincent A. Niagme, President of GCLME NGO Network expressed gratitude to the IGCC for setting up this Network as a means to reach the populations, the final and real beneficiaries of Project outcomes.

Prof. Ibe signing the Memorandum of Understanding for the IGCC-NGO Network Partnership. Looking on are Hon. Dugan, Deputy Minister of Fisheries, Ghana, Mr. Vincent A. Niagme (President GCLME NGO Network) and Dr. Chika Ukwé (UNIDO).



More of the High Level Meeting in Pictures



Mr. Felix Ugbor Chief of Africa Programme, UNIDO, during his visit to Prof. Chidi Ibe, with whom he represented Dr. Kande Yumkella, UNIDO DG, at the African Union Summit. With him is Mr. Masayoshi Mastushita, UNIDO Representative in Nigeria and Director of Regional Office in West Africa.

Mr. Masayoshi Mastushita bidding participants farewell after participating in several sessions of the Meeting.



Dr. Bradford and Mrs. Mabel Brown unveiling the plaque naming the courtyard of the Executive Secretariat after Dr. Brown. They were assisted by Hon. Stephen Asamoah Boateng, Prof. Chidi Ibe and Lady Ibe



The Cocktail evening was the occasion to crown the honouring rites. Here "Nana" Bradford Brown (middle) with (L-R) Hon. Stephen Asamoah Boateng, Mrs. Mabel Brown, Lady Chi and Prof. Chidi Ibe, in the Courtyard named after him.

Co-operation Between IGCC and FAO



Hon. Daniel Dugan addressing the audience at the launching of the fish survey cruise on board the RV Fridtjof Nansen, in June, 2005.

As part of efforts to enhance the recovery of fish stocks and ensure fish food security for the GCLME region's over 300 million people, the Interim Guinea Current Commission seeks to enlist the support of regional and sub-regional fisheries bodies within the region to fulfill its mandate of:

- Promoting the sustainable utilization of living marine resources and
- Addressing common problems of fisheries management and development confronting member states.

It is against this background that the Deputy Minister for Fisheries of Ghana, Hon. Daniel Dugan, on behalf of the IGCC, embarked on a 6 day mission to the FAO in Rome, Italy from 25 to 30 May, 2007, to solicit FAO's advice and assistance and to discuss expanded programmatic cooperation between the FAO and the IGCC.

The Hon. Minister held discussions with a team of FAO officials consisting of the Director of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Division, Mr. Jorge Csirke, Fisheries Research Officer, Ms. Merete Tanstad and the Chief of International Institutions and Liaison Service, Mr. Ndiaga Gueye.

FAO's support and expertise was requested in the following areas:

- Integrated Coastal Management towards the attainment of IGCC's objective of restoring degraded habitats through education on good environmental practices and training of fisher folk in alternative livelihoods.
- Technical assistance to the Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) Division of the Ministry of Fisheries of Ghana, to strengthen its Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), to accommodate member countries of the IGCC.



*Hon. Daniel Dugan, second from right, at FAO during the presentation of a new fish species, *Caranx fischeri*, named after Dr. Fischer, a retired FAO official.*

- Assistance in analyzing the time series survey data and propounding models for fisheries management by IGCC countries.
- Collaboration with the WWF and IGCC to encourage and assist member countries to develop political will and to harmonize the formulation of minimum terms and conditions for negotiating Access/Partnership Agreements to their advantage.

Mr. Csirke reiterated FAO's sustained commitment to the IGCC/FAO partnership for the implementation of Ecosystem based Fisheries Management in the GCLME region through the Nansen Research Surveys.

The FAO will commit technical and scientific support to the IGCC and assist member countries to source for funds to improve Fisheries Surveys and Research.

To enhance and expand Ghana's MCS/VMS to accommodate other countries in the region, the FAO will invite Ghana to participate in its International Plan of Action to monitor vessels operating in the region.

The FAO team advised developing nations to apply the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, as well as their national fisheries laws, as a guide, when entering into Access/Partnership Agreements.

The FAO commended the IGCC for its role in promoting the recovery and sustainability of depleted fisheries and living marine resources and pledged their continued support towards the management of fisheries resources in the GCLME region.

The IGCC salutes FAO and especially the team led by Dr. Jorge Csirke for the warm welcome accorded the Hon. Deputy Minister and for the enlightened discussions with him.

Catching the "little guys" - Successful tow of CPR in the GCLME



CPR routes towed in June, 2007

A continuous plankton recorder (CPR) was successfully deployed from the RV Fridtjof Nansen on June 2nd as part of the annual fish trawl survey in the GCLME. The CPR was successfully towed from Tema (Ghana) to Cote d'Ivoire Liberia border, and later on in the month, from Benin to Cameroon.



Mr Moses Angmortey (CPR Technician, Middle) preparing CPR cassette for deployment

During the Pilot Phase of the project involving six countries, the necessary capacity for CPR survey was developed in the region. For this year, Mr Michael Oyeibanji of NIOMR was the Plankton Expert on board during the first and second CPR tows. Plankton monitoring using CPR is the most cost effective method of collecting samples. The samples were sent to the GCLME Productivity and Biodiversity Centre in Ghana for analysis.

Michael Oyeibanji fixing samples after successful tow of CPR.



Plankton survey forms an integral part of the GCLME project and is one of the Regional demonstration projects. Plankton, the "little guys" of the oceans, form the basis of the food chain in the oceans and without them the ocean will be as barren as a desert. The very large whale feeds solely on plankton (called krills or euphausiids). The importance of the regional demonstration project on productivity is in line with assessment of plankton as primary food source for fish and other living marine resources.



The CPR being deployed into the ocean to collect plankton.

Upcoming Events

- July 2-5: The Executive Secretary, IGCC/ Regional Director, GCLME, Prof. Chidi Ibe will lead a Team from the US Army Corps of Engineers to meet with the DG of NOSDRA on Regional Emergency Preparedness and oil spill contingency planning and response. Abuja and Lagos, Nigeria.
- July 8 -12 : The Executive Secretary, IGCC/ Regional Director, GCLME, Prof. Chidi Ibe will participate in the 9th IOC - IUCN -NOOA - UNEP Consultative Committee Meeting on Large Marine Ecosystem.
- July 29 - August 4 : The Executive Secretary, IGCC/Regional Director, GCLME, Prof. Chidi Ibe will lead a Regional Team to Cape Town, South Africa to participate in 4th International Waters Conference.