



# BRIDGES



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## Wetlands Demonstrate Low-Cost Wastewater Treatment

The GEF's first investment in constructed treatment wetlands offer valuable lessons for other regions. In GEF IW:LEARN's latest Experience Note, the UNDP-GEF Lake Manzala Engineered Wetland Project (LMEWP) demonstrates the viability of constructed wetlands as an alternative to capital-intensive tertiary treatment plants. By the end of the project, this demonstration showed that engineered wetland treatment facilities constitute an effective, low-cost -- one-fourth the price of conventional systems -- and low maintenance solution, particularly well-suited for the climatic and operational conditions present in the Nile Delta of Egypt.

The most significant impacts of the project are that treated water from the LMEWP can be effectively used as a source for fish farming and safely disposed in Lake Manzala. Reduction rates of 61% of biochemical oxygen demand, 51% of total nitrogen and 99.7 % of total coliform bacteria have been measured at the project site, demonstrating a highly efficient technology. The magnitude of water treated (approximately 25,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day) is similar to the amount of sanitary drainage produced from a town of 300,000 inhabitants. These successes, if replicated in the area, will have a significant impact

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## Message from the GEF Secretariat

*Al Duda, Senior Advisor, GEF Secretariat*

From Salvador, Brazil in 2005 to Cape Town, South Africa in 2007: what a difference in format for the GEF Biennial International Waters portfolio conference! During the first week of August, 2007, the Fourth Biennial GEF International Waters Conference was hosted in Cape Town by the South Africa Department of Environment and Tourism and the GEF/UNDP Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem project. Three hundred twenty delegates from 69 GEF International Waters projects and partners convened to share project experiences and provide feedback to the GEF family.

While the Third Biennial Conference in Brazil back in 2005 included a high level session and many project presentations, GEF listened to your feedback and planned the Fourth Biennial Conference to be more participative and exciting for those attending. Gauging from the feedback you provided in the conference evaluation forms, the new format was a success and we plan to build upon that for the Fifth Biennial in 2009. More about the Cape Town conference can be found in the article on page two of this issue of GEF IW Bridges . The summary report can be accessed on the IW:LEARN website at <http://www.iwlearn.net/iwc2007>.

A new, multi-media feature was introduced to participants at Cape Town. Each day opened with a "Reflections" video prepared overnight by local GEF collaborators from the organization EcoAfrica based on interviews from the previous day and events that occurred. This gave participants a chance to contribute instant feedback on the conference in their own words and provided a notable start to each day's discussions. The Reflections videos can be viewed on the IW:LEARN website at

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*IW:LEARN aims to strengthen International Waters Management (IWM) by facilitating structured learning and information sharing among stakeholders.*

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## Valuing LMEs to Conserve and Use Them Sustainably

*Francis Vorhies, IUCN Global Marine Program*

What is the value of a large marine ecosystem (LME)? What's it worth to society? Surely LMEs are not worthless. Simply declaring that they are priceless, on the other hand, does not help much to understand their worth. We need to understand how they can and should benefit society.

These are just some of the issues and questions which were addressed at a Workshop on Economic Valuation of Large Marine Ecosystems, held at the end of July 2007 in Cape Town, South Africa. The workshop introduced various techniques for valuing the LMEs, such as methodologies to calculate consumer or producer surplus, aesthetic values and the willingness to pay for ecosystem services. For example, empirical research in the Yellow Sea LME has indicated that management efforts to enhance such values can generate a positive net benefit.

More importantly, however, the workshop focused on the role of economic valuation in LME management. Valuing LMEs can help us to:

- ◆ understand the contributions that LMEs make to societies,
- ◆ assess whether a management action generates positive net benefits,
- ◆ identify winners and losers from LMEs management systems, and
- ◆ identify potential financing sources for conserving LMEs.

## Outcomes Flow Out of Portfolio-Wide Meeting

At the fourth GEF International Waters Conference last August, over three hundred GEF IW stakeholders offered many valuable insights for one another and the GEF. For instance, participants suggested the IW portfolio “enhance the role of climate change adaptation in international waters

management,” “add economic valuation of ecosystems to project design,” “reduce existing gaps between project approval and launch,” and

“adopt measures to enable regional institutions to sustain project commitments.”

Participants convened in Cape Town with the overall goal of learning from each others' practical experience, gained from over a decade and nearly \$4 billion of GEF investment. That purpose advanced through four conference objectives:

1. Share experiences and good practices among GEF IW projects
2. Promote learning and capacity building for GEF IW projects
3. Guide ongoing IW projects to apply evolving GEF policies and procedures for project implementation
4. Improve project performance through conference sessions

Participants' evaluations confirmed these objectives were largely met — about 80% gave the IWC4 high marks. The overwhelming majority of participants saw the GEF IWC as a valuable forum for networking, sharing lessons and experiences with peers, and for intra-portfolio learning on successful innovations and key management areas.

### Economic Valuation Considerations

- ◆ WHAT ARE THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS? FOR WHOM?
- ◆ HOW TO ACCOUNT FOR NON-MONETARY BENEFITS?
- ◆ HOW CAN MANAGEMENT MAXIMISE AND SUSTAIN BENEFITS?
- ◆ HOW TO LEVERAGE MANAGEMENT COSTS FOR GREATER BENEFITS?



*Participants at the LME EV workshop. --Photo courtesy Frank Vorhies*

## Facilitating Regional Dialogue and Twinning in Africa

*Mirey Atallah, Regional Technical Advisor, UNDP*

A new GEF medium sized project (MSP) aims to improve transboundary waters management in Africa through regional dialogue and twinning activities. Implemented by UNDP, the MSP will assist countries in advancing freshwater basin policies and investments through sharing of experiences and catalyzing regional partnerships.

Africans urgently seek the appropriate capacities and infrastructure to cope with the projected impacts of climate change and to expedite achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Thus, in response to the recommendations of the latest African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) meeting, African organizations and development partners have come together in the framework of this continental MSP to address common issues through continental responses. Project implementation will be undertaken keeping in mind the following principles: ensuring that activities benefit countries, basins and organizations, building on existing projects and initiatives and broadening the stakeholder base. The project covers three interlinked components:

(1) Legal and institutional strengthening for transboundary water cooperation: each and every shared basin is establishing its own water basin organizations legal agreements. These are being prepared in isolation from the bigger picture, leading to certain countries having to contribute to more than three shared basin organizations and similarly negotiate the same number of agreements which are then not smoothly ratified by parliaments. This component targets the media, parliamentarians and basin institutions to build public support for transboundary cooperation, raise the awareness and understanding of MPs on this issue and its linkages with national legislation, and help basin organization technicians effectively manage and implement their mandates.

New Africa MSP continued on page 9

## Leveraging a Regional Approach to Foster a Commission

How can GEF partners assist countries in their creation of new institutions to help nations jointly manage their shared water resources? States participating in the UNDP/UNEP-UNIDO Guinea Current LME project, parties to the Abidjan Convention, have joined a host of GEF projects in doing so successfully. Their recent ministerial-level declarations instigated the newly minted Interim Guinea Current Commission (IGCC), with the following immediate objectives:

- ◆ Build capacity for successful implementation of the Abidjan Convention including development of appropriate protocols;
- ◆ Ensure the completion of the development and implementation of the full Strategic Action Programme (SAP) by the end of the project term in year 2009;
- ◆ Provide a platform for the regional pursuit of international coastal and marine priorities (e.g., from NEPAD, the GPA-LBA, the Millennium Development Goals and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Goals);
- ◆ Promote concerted management of major and emerging environmental issues/problems as well as monitoring of specific situations for the rapid resolution of critical environmental issues in the GCLME region;
- ◆ Facilitate negotiations amongst all the member countries, parties to the GCLME Project, with a view to establishing a permanent Commission for the Guinea Current region by the year 2009.

Over the last year, the IGCC assumed increasing responsibility for supporting implementation of selected components of the existing GCLME project, dedicated to transboundary management of the Guinea Current LME. This success story meets the project's goal of establishing viable regional consultative and coordination mechanisms. It also illustrates how a gradual series of GEF investments over more than a decade may be required to realize



*Participants at the 6th Petersberg Roundtable on Transboundary Water Management in Africa. --Photo courtesy InWEnt*

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<http://www.iwlearn.net/iwc2007>. The new, highly interactive conference format was so successful that the technique is being replicated by other GEF International Waters projects, most recently by the GEF/UNEP South China Sea & Gulf of Thailand project (SCS) at its Third Roundtable for Mayors and Site Managers and Third Regional Scientific Conference (Bangkok, November 26-30, 2007). For details, check the SCS project website at <http://www.unepscs.org> or view the video at: [http://www.unepscs.org/Meetings/Mayors\\_Roundtable\\_Regional\\_Scientific\\_Conference/SCS\\_Scientific\\_Conference\\_Highlights.html](http://www.unepscs.org/Meetings/Mayors_Roundtable_Regional_Scientific_Conference/SCS_Scientific_Conference_Highlights.html).

Some negative feedback was voiced at the Fourth Biennial during the session on GEF Policies and Procedures. There was criticism about the Resource Allocation Framework that GEF has adopted in its Climate Change and Biodiversity areas and its pending application to International Waters. Frustration was expressed by participants at the new project review and approval procedures that have been instituted by GEF in its Fourth Replenishment with delays and confusion that accompany such changes. No doubt, a number of readers who were not with us in Cape Town have also had to adjust to new procedures and delays.

Following the replenishment of the GEF trust fund every four years, GEF is obliged to adopt and follow policy recommendations that the countries providing funding to the GEF include as a condition for the funding. The transition to new procedures and requirements this last year was especially difficult. It caused frustration for many, certainly confusion, and often delays until GEF agencies became familiar with new requirements. GEF is part of the multi-lateral world of development assistance. There is increasing pressure on all multi-lateral organizations to become more efficient and effective in delivering their services and GEF is no different. Some older projects that were late in maturing did get caught up

in the transition, and the frustration of “shifting goal posts” expressed at Cape Town is to be expected. Now, at the end of 2007, GEF agencies are more familiar with the new requirements and are there to serve you. Please contact your agency if there are any remaining questions or concerns.

The ultimate objective for the reform of GEF and other multi-lateral organizations is better service to client countries. In the case of GEF, we hope that increased effectiveness and efficiency will equate to increased trust in the GEF and increased levels of funding to serve the needs of developing countries. The GEF reforms are beginning to bear fruit. Those of you familiar with the Conference of the Parties under the U. N. Framework Convention on Climate Change may have been following the negotiations in

Bali, Indonesia during the first two weeks of December, 2007. You might have seen that the GEF has been named to administer the new fund for adaptation under the Kyoto Protocol. The Fund will be capitalized by a 2% levy on all Clean Development Mechanism projects that generate carbon credits.

This should translate to more opportunities for developing countries to access funding for immediate action to adapt to fluctuations in climate. In our area of

transboundary surface waters, groundwater, coasts, and oceans, we all know too well how serious these fluctuations can be for communities and ecosystems. With our new GEF reforms and procedures, we hope that we can now scale up our assistance to serve you better!

## Environmental Flows Workshop

IUCN and GEF-IW:LEARN, in partnership with the Itaipu Binacional, are holding a training workshop on the question of how river basin management meet the needs of people and economic development alongside environmental protection? This is the main challenge facing sustainable development in river basins today where dams or surface water abstraction have modified flows. Environmental flows entails allocating water between uses, whether for agriculture, hydropower, cities or wetlands and fisheries. Amounts allocated and the timing of flows are set using participatory processes, based on assessments of the social, economic and environmental impacts of alternate flow regimes. [http://www.iwlearn.net/abt\\_iwlearn/events](http://www.iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn/events)

## Call for Articles and Letters to the Editor

IW:Bridges depends on article and letter submissions from the GEF IW community. Send article proposals and announcements to [mish@iwlearn.org](mailto:mish@iwlearn.org). We are particularly interested in stories of lessons learned, challenges overcome, and milestones in IW project implementation.

**Engineered Wetlands continued from page 1**

on the quality of local fish for human consumption, and will help to improve water quality in Lake Manzala. It will also mitigate agricultural drainage discharges, much of which eventually flows into the Mediterranean Sea.

Egypt faces a pressing need to both treat and reuse wastewater emitted by its increasing population. Given Egypt's water scarcity, its vast amount of untreated wastewater, the availability of vacant land, and the need for low-cost technology, engineered wetlands were suggested as a viable solution.

Engineered wetlands imitate the processes of natural wetlands, which are known for their ability to improve water quality and regulate water flows. Water that enters a natural wetland loaded with a high concentration of suspended matter, nutrients and toxins is filtered by the wetland so that it leaves with reduced amounts of pollutants and nutrients, most of which are taken up by wetland plants. Wetland processes filter this water so that it leaves with reduced amounts of these pollutants, most of which

are taken up by wetland plants. Engineered wetlands are typically shallow basins lined with a relatively impermeable substrate, then filled with soil or gravel, and planted with vegetation tolerant of saturated conditions. Water is introduced at one end and flows over the surface, and is discharged at the other end through a structure which controls the depth of water in the wetland. The selection of aquatic plants – such as cattail, papyrus, and other reeds – along with the slope of the substrate determine the speed at which the water flows through the engineered wetland and consequently the extent to which it is cleansed through its passage.

Monitoring data indicates that this treatment system is effective in reducing pollutants from moderately polluted agricultural drainage water. The water released is of a high quality similar to that of water treated by conventional sewage systems. The facility in Egypt has not been tested using highly polluted municipal and industrial wastewater, however literature suggests considerable success in treating

these too. Benefits to local residents were prioritized from the onset of the project. Achievements included the creation of job opportunities in construction and facility maintenance, and training on improving fish production with reclaimed water.

The total budget of the project was \$4.8 million, with \$4.5 million from the GEF. The Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs contributed \$0.3 million as well as 245 acres of land as an in-kind contribution. This total figure is on the high side of what future project developers can expect when developing engineered wetland facilities in Egypt. The LMEWP was a demonstration project, utilizing international consultants and proprietary designs, and was situated at a difficult site to develop. Future facilities developed locally in Egypt should be able to reduce development costs by thirty to forty percent.

Key lessons from the Experience Note include:

- ◆ Directly involve national institutions in design, construction, operation and maintenance – under the supervision of the international consulting firm – which results in technology transfer to the project staff,

national consultants, national contractors and research students.

- ◆ Take a constructive and cooperative approach to initial suspicion by the local community, (e.g. where there exists issues of land ownership and squatters rights). Such can increase site safety and build local interest and support.

- ◆ Utilize an open advocacy approach, which seeks to maximize the involvement of relevant organizations and push for the merits of the technology. This contributes to a strengthening of national interest in the engineered wetlands.

In trying to achieve the Millennium Development Goals for water and sanitation, many countries are now preparing water sanitation plans. The high cost of achieving improved sanitation requires use of innovative low-cost technologies. The sanitation plans under development offer excellent opportunities for the promotion of engineered wetlands and provide a vast framework for the replication of such plants.



Lake Manzala Wetlands. --Photo courtesy the project



*Narriman Jiddawi introduces her exhibit*  
--Photo courtesy Francois Odendaal Productions.



*Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk addresses the conference.*  
--Photo courtesy Francois Odendaal Productions.

Views presented by Abraham Iyambo, Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources of the Republic of Namibia and Fritz Holzwarth, Deputy-Director General, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety, Germany converged in two vital areas: the urgent need to scale up effective interventions globally – and the critical importance of regional cooperation to meet targets such as the Millennium Development Goals, with water resources management as a universal catalyst for sustainable development.

Minister Iyambo, issued a collective challenge and call to action:

*Some communities live in water, but can not quench their thirst. Water is contaminated. The deficit of capital and infrastructure to ensure that water is safe for human consumption is mind-boggling. At times nature is merciless! Many parts of the world are arid, droughts and low rainfall compound devastating blows on economies. The scarcity of water leads to non-productivity. ... What is the status of our Wetland and rivers? Are they still a source of livelihood? They are being destroyed at an alarming rate. What a catastrophe! ... Man-induced climate change is astonishing and frightening. Mighty storms, flooding and persistent drought are vexing challenges for mankind. Humans should pause, think and get solutions! In short there is a global crisis and a mammoth task ahead of us.*

In his concluding remarks, Deputy-Director General Holzwarth signaled the importance of the role of GEF IW projects in the context of sustainable development - and gave IWC4 it's motto:

*The IW Portfolio has a lot to contribute, can provide a lot of success stories. All people involved in IW-projects can be proud on the achievements. IW-projects made a difference in the regions for the benefits of the people living there. And on top of that, without such cooperation all our efforts to achieve the water related MDG's, IWRM-plans, safe drinking water and sanitation will fail. The water mission has not yet been accomplished; there is a lot to be done all over the world. Without IW we would have missed a lot in a "water driven" world. The IW Portfolio generated and continues to generate a crystal clear message:*

***Water is not a source of conflict. It is a catalyst for cooperation and a source to share benefits.***



*Peers and friends at the Aquarium.*  
--Photo courtesy Francois Odendaal Productions.



*Conversations at the innovation marketplace.*  
--Photo courtesy Francois Odendaal Productions.



IWCAM's Vincent Sweeney shares a laugh with BCLME's Mick O'Toole during Indicators Jeopardy  
 --Photo courtesy Vincent Sweeney



Participants at the conversation tables.  
 --Photo courtesy Janot M. de Suarez

## Participant Reflections

*"I have been to many conferences, and this conference is unique because you feel like a participant, not a recipient."*

--Saadeldin Ibrahim Mohmed Izzedin, Secretary General, Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources

*"Many of the opportunities presented by organizers allowed more direct contact between participants."*

--Chris Corbin, UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme

*"I was particularly struck by the...Danube Day, a very good idea. We should look at LME's in a similar way, to have multi-country celebrations to promote a shared ecosystem."*

--Mick O'Toole, Benguela Current LME Project



Participants at the LME focused learning discussion.  
 --Photo courtesy James Oliver



Boarding the SA Agulhas.  
 --Photo courtesy Francois Odendaal Productions.



Peer-to-peer project clinics.  
 --Photo courtesy Francois Odendaal Productions.

LME Economic Valuation continued from page 2

For example, empirical studies of the potential losses from sea-level rise in the Caspian Sea prompted decision-makers in Iran to action. In the Benguela LME, a better understanding of the various economic drivers of the fishing industry is helping to shape an international LME management system involving Angola, Namibia and South Africa. Finally, in the Guinea Current LME, valuation studies are helping to assess the net economic benefits of a GEF grant to West African countries.

LMEs are indeed valuable. The flow of these values and their distribution among stakeholders

are critical to the long term sustainability of LMEs. This workshop showed the contribution that economic valuation can make to LME management.

Organised by the IUCN Global Marine Programme in partnership with IW:LEARN, the workshop brought together LME professionals and environmental economists from South Africa, Madagascar, Namibia, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, the Benguela Current LME, the Caspian Sea region, the Yellow Sea region, the Mediterranean, Europe and Central Asia regional seas, and the Pacific Islands to explore the values of LMEs.

For more information on this workshop, including a good selection of background readings, please visit: [http://www.iwlearn.net/abt\\_iwlearn/events/lmes/ev4lmes](http://www.iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn/events/lmes/ev4lmes). For more information on economic valuation please contact Dr Francis Vorhies, Senior Advisor to the IUCN Global Marine Programme ([fvorhies@earthmind.net](mailto:fvorhies@earthmind.net))

IWC4 Outcomes continued from page 2

The novel IWC design in Cape Town also demonstrated how large conferences can use new interactive techniques to involve all participants in significant ways. Key factors which contributed to this inclusiveness included: numerous opportunities to interact with a broad cross-section of GEF IW peers, emphasis on interactive breakout sessions in which everyone had a chance to speak and be heard, a majority of presentations given by projects and government representatives, and project exhibits at an aptly named Innovation Marketplace.

Participants also provided good advice for further enhancements to future GEF IWC's. They stressed the need for more substantive background preparation. Moreover, participants desired that individual sessions have more clearly defined objectives and desired outcomes/ outputs, along with clarifying how the GEF and IW:LEARN would use such outputs. While praised for encouraging active participation, IWC conversation tables did not fully deliver what many considered to be new information or innovations. Two schools of thought on this emerged: Some recommended that the leading questions provided as discussion prompts should be better formulated.

Others believed those sessions revealed that the portfolio has reached a baseline level of knowledge, knowledge which still proved useful and significant to "new" participants at this portfolio-wide meeting.

Further suggested improvements include: more guidance and tutoring for presenters, striking proper balance between getting broad participation and stronger technical content and depth. Participants also desired that future IW conferences be multilingual, offer work group sessions dedicated to project managers management and reporting issues, and provide more time for participant-driven workshops.

The video documentary of the Cape Town conference is featured on-line along with other conference outputs at <http://www.iwlearn.net/iwc2007>. Projects and partners are welcome to contact the IW:LEARN team at any time: [iwlearn@unep.org](mailto:iwlearn@unep.org)

## IW:LEARN Transforms in 2008

For eight years, the IW:LEARN Secretariat (PCU) has been managed by a team including UNOPS' Mish Hamid, Janot Mendler de Suarez and Dann Sklarew. In fourth quarter 2008, the Secretariat will complete its gradual transition from Washington to Nairobi, with our UNEP-based team, led by Sean Khan, taking the lead thereafter. The UNEP team will sustain certain IW:LEARN services – [iwlearn.net](http://iwlearn.net), web-based information sharing, website hosting and training – through 2009. The GEF's IW Task Force members are working to simultaneously mainstream other successful IW:LEARN services into their agencies' respective contributions to the GEF community. The IWTF and UNOPS team now seek your feedback on the IW:LEARN project as a whole, and the services it has offered, including for example, the various training workshops, experience note publication, stakeholder learning exchange support, portfolio meetings like the IW Conference. Your feedback on which of these various services should be sustained is sought. Please email your insights to [feedback@iwlearn.org](mailto:feedback@iwlearn.org). Thank you.

## New Africa MSP continued from page 3

(2) Systems thinking and climate change: So far, lakes, rivers and groundwater are being dealt with separately when they are in fact all part of the same system. This component aims at: (i) improving knowledge of and linkages to address water systems cohesively; (ii) articulating an African position on groundwater and adaptation to be presented at the 5th World Water Forum; (iii) strengthen lake monitoring through twinning activities between the African and North American great lakes.

(3) Financial sustainability and investment: So far investment has only materialized in a few basins in Africa, and a limited number of basin organizations can be sustained without the injection of donor funding. The purpose of this component is to help shift towards increased investments in infrastructure and concerted actions on the ground. It will do so by (i) supporting the identification of win-win solutions for benefit sharing; (ii) facilitating exchanges and lessons learnt with basins that are on track towards financial sustainability and (iii) increasing the involvement of finance ministries and strengthening the business and financial planning dimensions of transboundary water resource management.

The GEF has funded one dozen multi-country African freshwater basin projects through foundational-type initial work worth US\$ 90 million.

The MSP is expected to contribute to achieving MDGs and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation as well as water sector reform. In particular, this MSP will help ensure that successful experiences in benefit sharing are replicated, that legal reforms support investments and that intersectoral coordination supports poverty reduction efforts in sectors underpinned by the use of water resources. This MSP has been designed to complement the Petersburg Process Africa Transboundary Basin Roundtable, thus reflecting the priorities and concerns of African governments and stakeholders.

Key partners include: UNDP, UNESCO, UNU-INWEH, InWEnt, SIWI, GWP, CSIR, the SADC parliamentary forum, and PALDIF.

For more information on this project please contact Mirey Atallah ([mirey.atallah@undp.org](mailto:mirey.atallah@undp.org))

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a deliberately incremental approach to establishing a permanent regional transboundary waters commission.

The project's Regional Coordination Unit served to entrench this regional approach and to reinforce regional cohesion in project implementation. Willingness on the part of countries to adopt standardized approaches to the assessment of the GCLME and the introduction of common regulatory measures, even if preliminary, confirmed a common recognition of the necessity to manage their shared resource, the GCLME, through joint assessment and co-operative management actions.

Commitment demonstrated by the sixteen countries during the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) process was salutary. Political support of Ministers responsible for sectors like the Environment and Fisheries, Agriculture, Industries, Transport, Finance, Economic Planning, Health, Energy Resources, and so forth, was exceptional. Increasing awareness and participation at senior levels to the process, especially with regard to opportunities for regional collaboration, is very instructive and bodes well for future cooperation during SAP negotiations.

C o u n t r i e s enthusiastically contributed to the work of the Regional Steering Committee and the Regional Scientific/Technical Advisory Groups – and to establishment of National Inter-Sectoral/Inter-Ministerial Committees, National Expert Groups and other structures for regional networking. Such is further evidence of their commitment to the objectives of the project. Participating nations clearly had a shared interest in finding solutions to a number of common and pressing environmental and resource management issues. In all cases, this translated into substantial in kind contributions as well as direct financial allocations, boding well for the future of cooperation in the Guinea Current region.

## Black Sea Final Seminar

The UNDP/GEF Black Sea Ecosystem Recovery Project announces its Final Seminar, which will be held in Istanbul, Turkey, on the 14 and 15 of February 2008. The objective of this Seminar is to present and get feed-back on the key achievements, lessons learned and follow-up of the 15-year GEF intervention in the Black Sea region including the current UNDP/GEF Project. The GEF IW Portfolio can expect key outputs from the meeting and project to be widely available via <http://www.bserp.org> and <http://www.iwlearn.net>.

For more information about the Interim Guinea Current Commission please visit <http://www.gclme.org>, or contact Chika Ukwe ([c.ukwe@unido.org](mailto:c.ukwe@unido.org)) or Chidi Ibe ([c.ibe@gclme.org](mailto:c.ibe@gclme.org)).

## Reducing Nutrient Pollution Efficiently and Effectively

What lessons emerged from the latest regional conference on nutrient reduction? Presentations highlighted increasingly common solutions on both actual reduction and monitoring that can improve efficiency and reduce costs. These included, among others, use of constructed treatment wetlands and the use of forecasting by proxies to complement actual measurements. Conference participants stressed the need for more integrated approaches, i.e. across institutions, basin-wide and between upstream and downstream political units. Discussion also centered on local awareness and the importance of demonstrating impact.

The 6th Regional Conference on Nutrient Pollution Control in the Black Sea - Danube Basin took place from October 23rd - 25th, 2007 in Ankara, Turkey, hosted jointly by the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment. It also received financing from and was jointly organized by the World Bank and United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Participants included government representatives, implementing and executing agency staff and project representatives, in particular representing the UNDP and World Bank's portfolio of GEF funded projects under the Danube - Black Sea Basin Strategic Partnership. Projects also attended from outside the region to contribute their experiences including in particular, the Mediterranean Sea Strategic Partnership and the Baltic Sea LME.

As with past conferences, the objective of this conference was to review regional experiences in bringing about effective and low-cost nutrient reduction and management, to achieve non-point source nutrient pollution control. This year, the intention was to focus critically on how these efforts can be more fully integrated into on-going programs of land and water management. The conference

also provided a forum for sharing ideas, experiences and lessons learned amongst a broad spectrum of stakeholders. Lastly, a more tacit purpose included gathering project representatives from the Strategic Partnership to share management practices and plan its remaining years.

Discussion of country experiences and lessons-learned covered animal waste management, wetland restoration, treatment wetlands and advanced systems, like biogas. On water quality level monitoring and reporting, presentations covered all levels (soil, ground and surface water and even marine), with the question of what practitioners can gather. Some participants stressed that activities must maintain linkages to government strategy.

Project personnel should more effectively link results to national strategies. Implementers should be able to produce data that interventions actually improve lives. They suggested that the solution could lie in modeling and approximation schemes.

On new initiatives and replication strategy, the new

Mediterranean Sea Strategic Partnership indicated that much of its program builds on the lessons of the Black Sea Danube SP. The Mediterranean program includes innovations like project replication teams, designed to determine and disseminate information on more easily implemented solutions.



*Participants regard a manure injector. --Photo Courtesy IW:LEARN*

Information and documents (agenda, participants, presentations, proceedings and conclusions) emerging from the conference can be downloaded from: <http://www.iwlearn.net/nutrientreduction>. For further information on the World Bank Nutrient Reduction Investment fund's 12 projects in the Black Sea - Danube basin, as well as the conference series, please contact Jit Srivastava ([jsrivastava@worldbank.org](mailto:jsrivastava@worldbank.org)).

## Upcoming Events

11 Feb. 2008 - 15 Feb. 2008

### LAC REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON ENVIRONMENTAL FLOWS

Foz de Iguacu, Brazil

[http://www.iwlearn.net/abt\\_iwlearn/events](http://www.iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn/events)

14 Feb. 2008 - 15 Feb. 2008

### BLACK SEA FINAL SEMINAR

Istanbul, Turkey

<http://www.bserp.org>

03 Apr. 2008 - 05 Apr. 2008

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ASIA WORKSHOP

Hanoi, Vietnam

<http://www.iwlearn.net/participation>

03 Apr. 2008 - 05 Apr. 2008

### PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEMS WORKSHOP FOR LME AND FRESHWATER ECOSYSTEM PROJECTS IN ASIA/PACIFIC REGION

Hanoi, Vietnam

[http://www.iwlearn.net/abt\\_iwlearn/events](http://www.iwlearn.net/abt_iwlearn/events)

07 Apr. 2008 - 12 Apr. 2008

### GLOBAL FORUM ON OCEANS, COASTS AND ISLANDS

Hanoi, Vietnam

<http://www.globaloceans.org>

25 May 2008 - 28 May 2008

### 3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MANAGING SHARED AQUIFER RESOURCES

Tripoli, Libya

[http://www.unesco.org/water/ihp/isarm\\_tripoli\\_2008.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/water/ihp/isarm_tripoli_2008.pdf)

23 Jun. 2008 - 27 Jun. 2008

### 4th CARRIBEAN ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Grande Anse, GRENADA

<http://www.cehi.org.lc>

24 Jun. 2008 - 28 Jun. 2008

### GROUNDWATER AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN AFRICA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Kampala, Uganda

<http://www.gwclim.org/>

07 Jul. 2008 - 11 Jul. 2008

### 11th INTERNATIONAL CORAL REEF SYMPOSIUM

Ft. Lauderdale, FL, USA

[http://www.icriforum.org/event\\_detail.cfm?CID=226](http://www.icriforum.org/event_detail.cfm?CID=226)

## UNEP Launches E-Bulletin!

The aim of the e-Bulletin service is to encourage greater communication and collaboration between colleagues. It represents an ideal means for widely sharing highlights and news about your project - at the moment our readership is over 900 practitioners. The e-Bulletin also aims to become a multi-language circular, so we would especially like to include non-English articles to ensure that news across the entire GEF IW portfolio is distributed.

Contingent on success of the e-Bulletin, IW:LEARN also expects to integrate IW Bridges content into the e-Bulletin format over the coming year.

To receive the latest e-Bulletin (Nov/Dec issue) please contact us at [iwlearn@unep.org](mailto:iwlearn@unep.org). The e-Bulletin archives can be accessed here: <http://www.iwlearn.net/websitetoolkit/e-bulletin/e-bulletin/>

If you wish to submit an article, news or comments for the next e-Bulletin, visit: <http://www.iwlearn.net/websitetoolkit/e-bulletin/e-bulletin-feedback>.

### Engineered Wetlands continued from page 5

For further details and guidance on how to replicate this demonstration, access the full IW Experience Note at <http://www.iwlearn.net/experience>. To see a video about the wetlands please visit: <http://www.waterfair.org/attachment.spring?attachment=551>. To see a description of the project and activity at: <http://www.waterfair.org/content.spring?contentItem=472>. For more information on similar projects please visit: <http://www.iwlearn.net/constructedwetlands>.

Otherwise please contact Mirey Atallah ([mirey.atallah@undp.org](mailto:mirey.atallah@undp.org)), Dr. Dia El Din El Quosy ([lmewp@menanet.net](mailto:lmewp@menanet.net)) or Dr. Mohamed Bayoumi ([mohamed.bayoumi@undp.org](mailto:mohamed.bayoumi@undp.org)).

## Global Oceans Forum

The 4th Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands: Advancing Ecosystem Management and Integrated Coastal and Ocean Management by 2010 in the Context of Climate Change will be held in Hanoi, Vietnam from 7-11 April 2008. The Conference will mobilize high-level policy attention, topical working groups, papers, presentations to provide a review of progress achieved (or lack thereof) in advancing integrated management. For more information please go to the Global Forum website at <http://www.globaloceans.org/> or contact Ms. Shelby Hockenberry at [smhocken@udel.edu](mailto:smhocken@udel.edu).



## 2008 IW:LEARN ACTIVITIES PLANNED

### IW EVENTS/TRAININGS

- ◆ LAC Regional Workshop on Environmental Flows (in Foz de Iguacu; with IUCN and Itaipu Binacional)
- ◆ 3rd Regional Public Participation Workshop (in Hanoi; with ELI)
- ◆ Payment for Ecosystems Workshop (in Hanoi; with IUCN)
- ◆ Targeted Workshop on Public Participation in SE Europe (in SE Europe; with GWP-Med and EU)
- ◆ Athens Declaration-Petersberg Process II - South-eastern European Public Participation Roundtable (in Sofia, with GWP-Med, World Bank, the governments of Germany and Greece)
- ◆ Coral Reef Symposium (in Ft. Lauderdale, FL; with ReefBase and the World Bank)
- ◆ 4-7 Stakeholder Learning Exchanges, all regions

### IW OUTREACH

- ◆ Publish at least twelve IW Experience Notes
- ◆ Publish E-Bulletin and Bridges newsletters

## RECENT HIGHLIGHTS 2007

- √ IW:LEARN/UNDP/D-List Inter-project stakeholder exchange on internet-based Community of Practice Platforms (in Bratislava; with UNDP)
- √ Athens Declaration-Petersberg Process II - South-eastern European Groundwater Roundtable (in Slovenia, with GWP-Med, World Bank, the German and Greek governments)
- √ Information Management Workshop (in Beijing, China)
- √ 6th Petersberg Roundtable on TWM in Africa (in Bonn, Germany; with GEF, UNDP, InWent)
- √ 2nd Pan-Africa TWRM Workshop on Public Participation Workshop (in Maseru, Lesotho; with ELI, InWent and ACWR)
- √ Regional Conference on Nutrient Reduction (in Ankara, Turkey; with World Bank and UNDP)
- √ 10 IW:LEARN experience notes published to <http://www.iwlearn.net/experience>
- √ Constructed Wetlands Community of Practice Launched <http://www.iwlearn.net/constructedwetlands>

## News from the IW Community



Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends  
in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand



### Third Mayors' Round-Table Meeting and Third Regional Scientific Conference

The Third Mayors' Round-Table and Third Regional Scientific Conference of the South China Sea Project were convened in Bangkok, Thailand from 26-30th November 2007. The Mayors' Round-Table provided provincial governors, mayors, and technical managers and staff from the project's network of 23 demonstration sites and pilot activities with an opportunity to exchange experiences and examples of good practice in coastal habitat management. An NGO forum was convened in conjunction with the event to explore the involvement of the GEF Small Grants Programme in the implementation of the regional Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea.

The Scientific Conference provided all members of the South China Sea project network an opportunity to collegially review and assess the project's overall progress, accomplishments and output to date; and to share their respective implementation experiences, concerns and issues. The meetings benefited greatly from the support of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center's audio-visual unit in the production of daily video highlights for presentation during the meetings. All videos and other outputs from the events can be accessed by visiting: [http://www.unepscs.org/Meetings/Mayors\\_Roundtable\\_Regional\\_Scientific\\_Conference/SCS\\_Scientific\\_Conference\\_Highlights.html](http://www.unepscs.org/Meetings/Mayors_Roundtable_Regional_Scientific_Conference/SCS_Scientific_Conference_Highlights.html)

*IW:LEARN aims to strengthen International Waters Management (IWM) by facilitating structured learning and information sharing among stakeholders.*

For more information:

<http://www.iwlearn.net>, Email: [info@iwlearn.org](mailto:info@iwlearn.org)

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