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ANGOLA - BENIN - CAMEROON - CONGO - CÔTE D'IVOIRE - DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO - EQUATORIAL GUINEA - GABON - GHANA - GUINEA - GUINEA BISSAU - LIBERIA - NIGERIA - SAO TOME & PRINCEPE - SIERRA LEONE - TOGO

Workshop on Marine Protected Areas: Calabar, Nigeria, 6-13 October.

Between 6 and 13 October, the IGCC Executive Secretary and GCLME Regional Director, Prof. Ibe was on mission to Calabar and Lagos, Nigeria where he presented a Workshop on Marine Protected Areas. The Workshop was widely attended by the University staff and students and officials/functionaries of the Cross River State Ministries of Environment and Forestry with whom the project has been collaborating on the establishment of Marine Protected Areas in the State.

It is to be recalled that in collaboration with the GCLME project, the State government issued a gazette in November declaring all Mangrove Forests in the State as Forests Reserves.

Prof. Ibe presented a series of lectures to staff and students of the Institute of Oceanography of the University of Calabar and highlighted the continuing role of the Institute as a Centre of Excellence for the GCLME and Coastal Tourism projects and as an anchor for the development of "Training Modules" for the rest of the GCLME Region.

He encouraged University/State Government to improve liaison with neighbouring Cameroon towards the establishment of a Regional Network of Marine Protected Areas.

EXPERT GROUP MEETINGS ON ARTESANAL FISHERIES CONFLICTS AND NITROGEN OVER-ENRICHMENT. VIENNA, 15-18 OCTOBER.

Between 13 and 22 October, the Executive Secretary/Regional Director was in Vienna, Austria to participate in 2 back to back Meetings on Industrial - Artesanal Fisheries Conflicts (15-16 October) and Nitrogen Over-enrichment (17-18 October).

Present at the Meetings were UN and Non UN organizations like GEF, UNDP, UNEP, FAO, WWF, US-NOAA, the Marine Stewardship Council and a host of Private Sector representatives like the International Fertilizer Group.

Prof. Ibe chaired the second day of the Meeting on the Fishing Industry and sustainable Fishery and took a lead role in

introducing the document on Partnership with the Agri-industry during the second EGM. He participated in both the discussions of the issues and in the ensuring revision of the draft proposals for two medium sized projects (MSP's) to be submitted to GEF for funding.

Side Meetings with UNEP Representative focused on the selection of sites for indepth investigation of anoxic condition in the GCLME caused by excess nitrogen loading. The GCLME was selected as a case study of environmental and health problems related to nitrogen overenrichment.

Prof. Ibe met with representatives from industries in a bid to secure enhanced participation in GCLME project/IGCC Activities as envisaged in the approved project document.

He discussed with the Project Manager, activities to be included in the 2008 Work Programme as well as elements for the Budget revision of 2007 requested by UNDP.

BICENTENNIAL COLLABORATION OF US-NOAA.

From 25 to 30 October, Prof. Ibe was in Boston, USA to participate in the 200th Anniversary Celebration of US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (US-NOAA) as Guest Speaker/Round Table Lead Discussant and Exhibitor. He delivered an invited lecture entitled "The IGCC - From Vision to Mission" at the Coastal Resources Center, Narragansett, Rhode Island to a large audience in the Center's Amphitheatre as part of the bi-centennial celebration of US-NOAA. This invitation was to highlight US-NOAA's strength and programmes in international collaborations.

Prof. Ibe participated in a Round Table discussion with invited guests including The Hydrographer of the US-Navy, the Director General of the South-East Fisheries Science Center of the US-NOAA and the Director of the Narragansett laboratory, Dr. Ken Sherman. The topic was "The Management of Large Marine Ecosystems worldwide". He presented best practices from the GCLME project and the Interim Guinea Current Commission.



CONFERENCE OF PARTIES OF THE ABIDJAN (COP8) AND NAIROBI (COP5) CONVENTION. JOHANNESBURG, 5-9 NOVEMBER

From 5 and 9 November, Prof. Ibe attended the Joint Conference of Parties of the Abidjan (COP8) and Nairobi (COP5) Convention which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The ES/RD contributed to the Technical segment through presentations highlighting the achievements of the GCLME project and its evolution to an Interim Guinea Current Commission. He also traced the path to full commission status by February 2008.

During the Ministerial Segment, 7 to 8 November, Prof. Ibe presented the new Protocol to the Abidjan Convention on Land Based activities affecting marine pollution in the Convention Area which was prepared by the IGCC Executive Secretariat in collaboration with the 22 member countries of the Convention for adoption in 2008.

He also presented the Trans-Boundary Diagnostic analysis Document to the Ministers. The acting Minister of Environment from Nigeria, Engr. Yahaya performed the official launching of the TDA document which has a Foreword contributed by the President of Ghana and Chair of the African Union, HE Mr. John Kuffuor.

The IGCC and BCC (Benguela Current Commission) were invited to play lead and catalyzing roles in the revitalization of the Abidjan Convention and the Execution of its work programme which mimic the GCLME project work programme.

The Ministers called on the Abidjan Convention Secretariat to adopt the Commissions (GCC and BCC) as their Execution Arms and to avoid duplication of work programmes.

IGCC in concert with UNEP and UNIDO will organize a meeting in early 2008 of all environmental projects within the Abidjan Convention Area for the revitalization of the Convention.

The Executive Secretary/Regional Director held formal discussions with the new Ministers of Environment of Benin and Congo Republic to agree on re-inforced in-country strategies for GCLME project implementation in their respective countries.

The Ministers called on the IGCC Executive Secretary to play a defining role and assist the countries of the Abidjan Convention in the ongoing negotiations for the extension of the Continental shelf to 350 miles.

COMMISSIONING OF THE REGIONAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION MANAGEMENT. OWERRI, NIGERIA.

A REGIONAL Centre of Excellence on Environmental Pollution Management that will provide technical guidance and expertise on pollution issues concerning such land-based activities as municipal, industrial and agricultural waste in all the 16 Guinea Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) countries of West and Central Africa was Commissioned in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria by the state Governor, Ikedi Ohakim on 28 November, 2007.

The centre is being promoted by the Interim Guinea Current Commission (IGCC) under supervision of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) - acting as Global Environment Fund (GEF) executing agency. It is a product of a partnership between the Government of Imo State and the Federal Ministry of Environment, Housing and Urban Development. The project is hosted by the Imo State Environmental Protection Agency (ISEPA).

A management committee has been constituted by UNIDO and the IGCC under the Chairmanship of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Petroleum and Environment. Members of the Committee are: Professor Ayite-Lo Ajavon, UNIDO International Consultant on Pollution and Professor of Atmospheric Chemistry at University of Lome, Togo; Captain Martin Niagne Dibi, Director Anti-Pollution Centre (CIAPOL), Cote D' Ivoire; Mr William Fomban Gana of Hydrac Oil Company Cameroon; a representative of the Federal Ministry of Environment, Housing and Urban Development; UNIDO Representative in Nigeria; a representative of the IGCC; Mr. Charles Okoro of SPDC representing the Oil Industry; and the Personal Assistant to the Imo State Governor on Petroleum and Environment.



The Perm. Sec. Ministry of Environment and Petroleum Affairs, Dr. Anurigwo addressing the participants.



Imo State Governor Ohakim commissioning the Regional Center of Excellence on Environmental Pollution Management.

"Through this partnership, the Centre will obtain reference materials and technical publications as well as participate in the regular global inter-calibration and inter-comparability exercises organized by the MEL-IAEA. The Centre, will, thus, benefit from the sharing of knowledge, experiences, best practices and lessons learned on methodologies and techniques for pollution management with other regional centres worldwide under the MEL-IAEA Network."

Governor Ohakim noted that the state government contributed over N40 million towards establishment of the centre. He lauded UNIDO for setting up the unit in Imo, which he said the state government would support, because the Environment features under its drive to create jobs for unemployed youth and engender tourism.



Dr. Ukwe making a speech.

Regional Training Course on "Integrated coastal Zone Management, Douala, Cameroon; 26-30 Nov. 2007.

Between 26 and 30 November, a Regional Training Course on "Integrated coastal Zone Management" was organized in Douala, Cameroon in collaboration with ICT-UNIDO, Trieste Italy. IGCC was represented by Dr. Jacques Abe. During the workshop, the achievements under the 5 broad Modules of the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem Project were presented. Also presented were activities of the Environmental Information Management System (EIMS) Center of the project by Dr. Peter Nwilo.

The ICAM Demonstration Project in Cameroon was presented by Dr. Folack and Prof. Tchawa. The main conclusions and recommendation should show the way for a better management of the coastal areas in this region. These orientations and clear proposals are needed for the implementation of the second phase of the demo project on the ground. Meanwhile, the current status of the coastal areas was well described and the main issues identified.

There were presentations by the GCLME countries present under the theme: Economic Valuation of Goods and Services of the Ecosystems: direct value, indirect value, stakeholders' analysis.

The country presentations started with Angola showing the Luanda city planning problems, pollution, coastal erosion, depletion of fish stocks and fisheries management initiatives. A PSP (Private Sector Participation) for waste management involving private sector already exists in Nigeria that can be a useful model for Angola. A new city is planned inland as political



A view of the Participants during the technical session.

capital to decentralize some activities and avoid population congestion.

The situation in Benin was presented by Mrs. Ichola Rihanath Olga. The coastal area contains more than 50% of the total country population. Fisheries management, coastal erosion, loss of biodiversity and water hyacinths constitute the main environments issues in Benin.

In Ghana, about 25% of the 21 million populations live in the coastal area and also the discovery of oil and gas offshore will increase population migration on the coastal area. Pollution, coastal erosion, and over fishing are the major environment problems. A sensitivity map was prepared to show the vulnerability of the coastal area. The EIA is now used for any investment on the coast. A CZIMP (1990) and NAP and CZ Management Plan (1998). All local communities have their Policy for Environment. Traditional practices are also used for Governance. Regional and sub-regional collaboration with the Abidjan Convention, ICCAT, GCLME and AU-STRC.

The Master Plan for Nigeria's ICAM: Cross sectoral and holistic approaches, strategies through ecological master plan and environmental assessment was presented by Dr. Obinna Chukwu. A National ICAM Committee and Technical subcommittees, State Committees, local government ICAM Committees and Programme Area Management Committees are already designated.



L-R are: Dr. Obinna Chukwu, - Reg. Exp., Coastal and Marine Pollution, Nig, Mr.R.S. Kuuzegh-Dir. MLGRDE, Ghana, Dr. E. Ajao-Dir. of NIOMR and Dr. P. Nwilo-Coordinator, EIMS Center, Nigeria.



Participants on a field trip to one of the sand mining sites in Douala.



A view of some sand miners at work.