



IGCC NEWS LETTER

October-December 2009

Edition

<http://www.gclme.org>



ANGOLA - BENIN - CAMEROON - CONGO R - COTE D'IVOIRE - D.R. CONGO - EQUATORIAL GUINEA - GABON - GHANA - GUINEA - GUINEA-BISSAU - LIBERIA - NIGERIA - SAO TOME E PRINCIPE - SIERRA LEONE - TOGO

GCLME suggests decantation basin for Togo

The Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem project (GCLME) has suggested to the Government of Togo the use of a system of decantation basins for a national phosphate factory in Kpeme, 30 kilometres northeast of Lome, the nation's capital.



Officials from GCLME and Togo's Ministry of Environment inspect national phosphate plant in Kpeme.

The suggestion was made after officials of the GCLME and Togo's Ministry of Environment inspected the factory, and then reviewed options for treatment of the plant's phosphate wastewater. They took samples of raw waste for analysis.

GCLME provides consultancy services for the evaluation of options of Togo's National Demonstration Project. The optimal option for the prevention of phosphate waste disposal into the Guinea Gulf - which is a transboundary environmental problem affecting Togo and neighbouring Benin, Ghana and Nigeria - will be developed into a bankable proposal which the Government of Togo can use to mobilize funds.

In Togo, GCLME will also support the government's efforts to investigate the feasibility to reuse phosphate sludge and if found practical to attract more companies and other partners in this effort.

In Togo, GCLME will also support the government's

efforts to attract more companies and other partners to reuse phosphate sludge. The GCLME team - composed of its Regional Coordinator/Executive Secretary, Dr. Stephen Donkor; its environment scientist, Dr. Jacques Abe; and its fisheries officer, Mr. Oumarou Njifonji - also paid a courtesy visit to Togo's deputy minister of the environment, Mr. Essowe Ouro-Djeri. The minister told the visiting delegation that the demonstration project to control leachate pollution from the phosphate mines around the lagoon was important because the mineral remained the country's main source of income, providing according to some unconfirmed estimates almost 4 per cent of national gross domestic product.



However, the emptying of phosphate wastewater and other pollutants into the coastal waters poses a constant threat to the lives and livelihoods, not only of the country's fisher-folk and coastal dwellers, but also those of neighbouring countries. This impact is visible from aircraft flying along the coast on cloudless days when the effluent gives a green tinge to the sea colour.

Mr. Ouro-Djeri said the transboundary nature of the problem had lead Togo and neighbouring Benin to form a committee to discuss the problem. The GCLME delegation also met officials of the Centre de Gestion Intégrée du Littoral et de l'Environnement - which forms part of the University of Benin. The centre wishes to reinforce collaboration with the Ministry of the Environment and the GCLME.



Tel : +233-21781225/21781226

Email: gclme@gclme.org

PMB: CT 324 Accra, Ghana





Phosphate sludge emptied into the Atlantic Ocean off Lome

IGCC/GCLME willing to serve as implementing body for GIS facility

The Interim Guinea Current Commission/GCLME is ready to serve as the implementing body of the geographical information system (GIS) component of the African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development programme, funded by the African Union and the European Union.

The assurance was given to Dr. Johnson Boanuh, director of environment at the 15-member Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) by a visiting delegation of the Regional Coordination Unit of the GCLME project. This followed Dr. Boanuh's request for GCLME to become a technical arm of ECOWAS.

During their meeting, Dr. Boanuh and the head of the Forestry Department, Mr. D. Samuel, briefed the visiting delegation on development of the ECOWAS Environment Policy, which contains an Environmental Action Plan.

Members of the visiting delegation to the ECOWAS headquarters in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, were Dr. Stephen Maxwell Donkor and Dr. Jacques Abe. They also met with the coordinators of the GCLME's two Regional Activity Centres in Nigeria. In their meeting with the Regional Activity Centre coordinators, the delegation was briefed on the achievements of the Environment Information Management System (EIMS) and on pollution monitoring activities in the south-eastern town of Oweri. There were also general discussions on the work plans and activities of the centres.

The GCLME delegation also met the permanent secretary of the Federal Ministry of Environment, Mrs. Safiya

She expressed satisfaction with the support UNIDO had been providing to Nigeria. However, she asked the agency to extend this to the forestation project of Nigeria's degraded mangrove swamps and to the establishment of national parks in the country. In turn, the delegation briefed the members of the Nigerian Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC), which manages GCLME activities nationally, on how to fund and run the GCLME project at the national level.



Dr. Stephen Maxwell Donkor, Regional Coordinator/Executive Secretary GCLME, with reporters after meeting the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Environment Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Safiya Mohammed.

Vulnerability impact assessment related to climate change was also widely discussed and the assistant director of the Climate Change Unit of the Federal Ministry of Environment, Dr. S. Adejuwon, spoke of the need for synergy among all projects of the Global Environment Facility.

Fisheries personnel trained on Zooplankton, fish and marine resources identification, taxonomy

Sixteen participants from 10 GCLME countries underwent training 5 to 9 October in zooplankton, fish and marine resources identification and taxonomy.

The training workshop in Angola was aimed at enabling fishery experts from the GCLME region to share ideas and experiences in this area of study. The workshop also aimed to encourage countries in the region to use appropriate methodologies for data collection and conservation in their fish stomach content studies.

At the end of the training, a methodology manual for stomach content analyses was disseminated to all participants.

The GCLME considers an understanding of the feeding ecology of fish as a must for a greater grasp of how trophic interactions work. These interactions have been neglected in the past and are likely one of the major causes of overexploitation of the fisheries' resources worldwide. Stomach contents were collected in Angola and Cameroon, both GCLME countries, with the aim of promoting this understanding in the region. This first workshop on the feeding behaviours of marine resources in the GCLME region came after the analysis of stomach contents collected off Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Nigeria, São Tomé e Príncipe and organized by the GCLME Fisheries Regional Activity Centre – at the Instituto Nacional de Investigação Pesqueira, Luanda, Angola, in 2006 and 2007.

Experts suggest priority activities to back workshop outcomes

Experts from 13 of the 16 GCLME countries have proposed priority activities as a follow-up to the main outcomes of a 6-day training workshop on the formulation and implementation of fisheries management plans for the region.

The experts met from 2 to 7 November 2009 in Douala, Cameroon, and recommended:

- Convening a meeting of major shrimp-producing countries in the region (Angola, Cameroon, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) to find solutions to issues relate to shrimp fishery.
- Assisting Benin, Togo, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire to complete work and adopt subregional approaches for resolving the adverse effects of using beach seines in that eco-region.
- Strengthening institutional arrangements in the management of small pelagic fish (*Sardinella* spp) in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Republic of Congo, and Gabon.
- Assisting countries to develop and implement country-specific action plans to ensure the implementation, as appropriate, of the contents of the transboundary management frameworks developed at the workshop.
- Providing assistance to enable the completion of the harmonization of legislation and approaches to the utilization of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance-Vessel Monitoring Systems in Benin, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, Sao Tome e Principe and Togo, as this would contribute to better

enforcement of management measures.

- Strengthening collaboration with subregional fisheries bodies in the area, as well as with the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization's Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic Fisheries, for the effective implementation of management advice or decisions.
- Taking steps to boost collaboration with projects dealing with ecosystem-based regional actions and in particular the FAO/NORAD EAF-NANSEN project, with a view to avoiding duplication, to create synergies and for cost-effectiveness.

The objectives of the workshop were to improve understanding of the status of the resources in the Guinea Current region; enhance knowledge on the principles of developing management plans; improve skills in developing plans; and strengthen collaboration among countries in the management of resources.

The main outcomes were a better appreciation of the importance of management frameworks and of the constraints in formulating them; improving collaboration among and between GCLME countries; and the elaboration of the subregional management frameworks developed on:

- o **Shrimp fisheries:** Framework for the Management of the Shrimp Fishery in the GCLME Region (Angola, Cameroon, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone)
- o **Demersal finfish:** Framework for the Management of Sciaenidae and Sparidae Fishery Communities in the GCLME Region
- o **Four subregional small pelagic:** Management Framework for Small Pelagic fishery of 1) Central Gulf of Guinea (Nigeria, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome e Principe); 2) Western Gulf of Guinea (shared stocks among Benin, Togo, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire); 3) Northern Gulf of Guinea region (shared stocks among Bissau Guinea, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia); and 4) The Action Plan for the Conservation and Management of the Shared *Sardinella* Resources of Angola, Congo, DRC and Gabon was updated.

Eight GCLME states end four-year survey of coastal waters

Eight GCLME countries have completed a four-year survey of the water quality of their coasts, lagoons, estuaries and bays which will enable them to assess the state of pollution and health, especially in relation to the quantity and distribution of living resources within their ecosystems.

Essentially, survey of the coastal waters, lagoons, estuaries and bays involve:

- Collection and analysis of water, sediment and fish samples for pathogens, and contaminants
- Collection and analysis of plankton (zooplankton and phytoplankton) samples for species identification and quantification, and make deductions about carrying capacity of the water bodies
- Collection of data and information (including catch statistics) on the fisheries resources of the water bodies and drainage basins

The national institutions of Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Guinea, São Tomé e Príncipe and Sierra Leone - which boast well-equipped research laboratories for marine environmental and living resources data collection and analysis - were contracted to execute the survey, completed in December.

Coordinators learn to prepare National Action Plans in GCLME countries

National coordinators of the 16 GCLME countries have completed courses in how to prepare National Action Plans, which are vital for achieving the goals of the GCLME Strategic Action Programme.



National coordinators at the end of their training workshop.

The regional training workshop organized for them 1 to 4 December, at the Ghana Science and Technology Policy Research Institute, in Accra, was designed to enhance their coordination abilities and provide better services. The training provided the coordinators with:

- Guidelines for the development of the Action Plans, including steps for stakeholder consultations at national level
- A standard format for the formulation of priority project proposals, agreed with the national coordinators for the development of Action Plans
- A timeline for the development of Action Plans and priority projects in the 16 countries

The Action Plans will set-out the specific activities and priority projects in accordance with national legislation, policy and investments that each country needs to implement in harmony with other nations to achieve the goals of the Strategic Action Programme for the GCLME.

The Strategic Programme is a negotiated policy document under the aegis of the Interim Guinea Current Commission. The programme describes policy, legal and institutional reforms and investments needed to tackle the priority problems of a transboundary nature identified in the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis of the Guinea Current Region.

The Action Plans and priority projects identified in them will constitute the major input for the partnership conference to be organized in October 2010, in Cameroon.

New UNIDO representative calls on Ghana environment minister



The newly-appointed UNIDO resident representative to Ghana and Togo, Dr. Frank Bartels paid a courtesy call on 24 February to the Minister for Environment, Science and

Technology, Hon. Sherry Ayittey. Members of the UNIDO team included the special adviser to the Director General, Mr. Akmel Akpa; the outgoing resident representative, Mr. Francois d'Adesky; Dr. Stephen Maxwell Donkor; the environment scientist of the GCLME project, Dr. Jacques Abe; and the administrative officer of the GCLME, Mr. Napoleon Gbolonyo. Some of the issues discussed were:

- Co-financing agreement on the GCLME accommodation
- Role of the minister as chairman of the GCLME ministerial meeting
- The transition of GCLME project to (I)GCC
- UNIDO to assist Ghana in tackling environmental issues and
- Establishment of a Cleaner Production Centre in Ghana

UPCOMING EVENTS

April – Launching of National Action Plan workshops in the GCLME countries

30 June - 1 July – Seventh Meeting of the Regional Steering Committee. Venue: Accra, Ghana

2 July – Second Meeting of the Committee of Ministers. The Accra meeting will consider proposals for the transformation of the Interim Guinea Current Commission into a fully-fledged intergovernmental body.

October – GCLME Partnership Conference