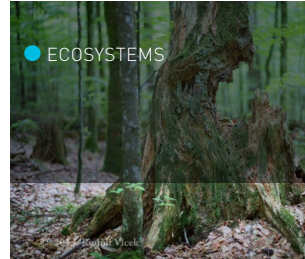




UN ENVIRONMENT NEWSLETTER

AFRICA OFFICE

JULY-AUG 2018



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TACKLING ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS IN NIGERIA



UN Environment is working with communities in the northern city of Kaduna to reduce environmental risks.

A bustling metropolis of about 1.5 million people, Kaduna's urban centre is located along the Kaduna River. It is a thriving commercial hub famous for its textile and garment industries, which have been in existence since the colonial era. Among other industries, the city hosts refineries and petrochemical facilities, vehicle assembly lines, fertilizer processing companies, breweries, and defense units.

While many of these industries offer crucial income opportunities to locals, they also have far-reaching negative health and socio-economic implications for the community. For instance, frequent air pollution and toxic effluents threaten the neighbouring communities and their environment. These hazards are also compounded by drought, erosion, land degradation, rainstorms, windstorms, fires, pipeline vandalism, floods, and pest invasion.

About 60 kilometers south of the Kaduna International airport lies the Kaduna Refining and Petrochemical Company. The refinery, which became operational in the 1980s, is situated near the Mararaban Rido community, which comprises of about 1,500 households.

Between February and June 2018, UN Environment and Nigeria's Minna-based Federal University of Technology/Centre for Disaster Risk Management and Development Studies carried out a study on how the communities around the refinery respond to natural and man-made hazards and emergencies. The assessment was conducted within the framework of the Awareness and Preparedness for Emergency at Local Level (APELL) initiative, designed by UN Environment.

"The disposal of industrial effluent into the surrounding environment has given rise to heavily localized pollution and seriously threatens the environment," concluded the study. "There is also evidence that local communities are suffering from a variety of health problems that could be a direct or indirect result of the consumption of various forms of water." The survey established that while 84.1 per cent of respondents had experienced at least one major hazard, the majority, or 74.7 per cent, had never been informed on preparedness.

Following the study, various government agencies, learning institutions and community leaders from the Mararaban Rido community agreed to form countrywide community emergency awareness committees. The stakeholders involved are the National Emergency Management Agency;

TACKLING ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS IN NIGERIA

the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps; the National Environmental Standards Regulatory and Enforcement Agency; the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency; and community leaders from youth, women, and religious groups, retired soldiers, and police officers.

The mandate of these committees is to coordinate risk identification and assessment, hazard mapping, prioritization and community resilience. They will initially focus on fires, epidemics, and floods.

“We, the members of the community, are happy because we are now being educated through the APELL training. We are no longer endangering ourselves through some of our daily activities. We no longer use charcoal to cook indoors with windows closed. We have ceased to drink unsafe water and we are not spraying our farms with harmful chemicals. We are also disposing waste at designated sites. We are therefore grateful to the organizers of the training,” said Mr Samuel Yerima, head of the Rido Kidunu community after a workshop held in June 2018.

The APELL process, initiated in 1988, builds cohesive and resilient communities in the face of technological or natural hazards which cause environmental emergencies. This is has been carried out by raising awareness and agreement on roles and responsibilities of all community stakeholders in potential preparedness and response measures.



As the leading global environment authority, UN Environment developed in 2015 the Second Edition of the APELL Handbook. The handbook highlights the importance of an integrated multi-hazard approach at the local level and emphasizes the importance of multi-stakeholder and all-of-society engagement.

REVAMPING THE MAYOMBE TRANSBOUNDARY FOREST INITIATIVE



The Mayombe forest has the largest distribution of a variety of unique flora and fauna, including species of global importance such as the central chimpanzee, the western lowland gorilla, the forest elephant and many other species.

Despite its ecological importance, the southern part of Mayombe forest, has been subjected to decades of intensive degradation, through the

unsustainable use of natural resources. Communities around the forest rely on subsistence farming, small-scale husbandry, logging, poaching and fishing for their livelihood. The forest gets very little protection, which results in long-standing transboundary issues.

Angola, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Gabon renewed their commitment to revitalize the Mayombe Forest Transboundary Initiative. The Mayombe forest forms the southern-western margin of the Congo Basin's tropical rainforest. It is shared between the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Angola, Congo and Gabon.

Since 2008, UN Environment and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) have supported Angola, Congo, and DR Congo to develop a cooperation agreement for the management of the Mayombe forest transboundary ecosystem. These efforts culminated in the development and approval of a transboundary management plan in 2013. During the 22nd United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN Environment brought together the parties involved to discuss the revitalization of the initiative.

"The desire to preserve a healthy environment for future generations is worthy. We have the responsibility to do so collectively and with the political

will affirmed with our partners," said Jacques Denis TSANGA, President of the African Ministerial Conference of the Environment, Minister of Water and Forests in charge of Environment and Sustainable Development of Gabon, and Chair of the committee of Ministers on the Mayombe Forest Initiative.

Pursuant to the recommendations of this first meeting, the four countries met again at the Global Environment Facility Council meeting held in Vietnam in July 2018 and agreed to:

- officially admit Gabon to the Initiative
- grant observer status to the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC)
- task UN Environment with the revision of the current Memorandum of Understanding which will allow the admittance of Gabon and COMIFAC
- allocate part of their Global Environment Facility STAR allocation towards the sustainable management of the Mayombe Forest Initiative
- launch the revitalization of the initiative with the admission of Gabon in February 2019

"At a moment when the Congo Basin has the same attention as the Amazon, we can only appreciate the convening power of UN Environment, which has managed to move us efficiently towards this huge step," stated Mr. Tsanga.

STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL LAW IN AFRICA

Judges from forty-five countries attended the 2nd Regional Symposium on Greening the Judiciaries in Africa hosted by Mozambique to discuss how to strengthen adjudication of environmental disputes in Africa.

The symposium aimed at establishing Sustainable Green Judiciaries across the continent through empowering judicial training institutions. The forty-two judges were from Africa and other three from Brazil, Sri Lanka and France.

The Kenyan Chief Justice, David Maraga, said: "This symposium is extremely important so that we can take action through proper sensitization so that our lower courts can appreciate the implications." The chief justices agreed to support sustainable judicial training programmes on environmental matters in their countries. They also agreed to include environmental matters in their Regional Chief Justices Forum as well as the Regional Magistrates Forum.

Participating in the symposium were also judicial educators, heads of judicial education institutions, representatives of judicial systems from France, Brazil, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka.

Participants seized this opportunity to launch the Africa Judicial Educators Network on Environmental Law which is designed to improve the knowledge and skills of Judges, Magistrates and other relevant officials in the justice chain in the application of environmental law. This network will provide opportunities for exchanging information, create partnerships for collaboration, strengthen capacity, and provide research and analysis on environmental adjudication, court practices, and environmental rule of law.



A regional curriculum and manuals on environmental law for Judges and Magistrates was also launched at the symposium. The participants further requested for the development of green bench books on environmental cases and adjudication that covers best practices in Africa.

Judicial Education Institutions were encouraged to develop within two years, environmental law training programmes for Judges and Magistrates considering the areas such as foundation of environmental law and procedural aspects in adjudication of environmental disputes.





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STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL LAW IN AFRICA



Commitments were made from Brazil, Morocco, France and the Institut de la Francophonie pour le development durable in supporting Lusophone and Francophone judiciaries in rolling out what was agreed upon. Other development partners that voiced their interest in supporting Mozambique in environment law matters included the Swiss and Swedish Governments through their Embassies in Maputo.

The Burundi Chief Justice, François NKEZABAHIZI said, "I commend this symposium and let's embrace the Maputo declaration. After training, we should exchange experiences and identify solutions to inspire our judiciaries."

The symposium was supported by the UN Environment, Institut de la Francophonie pour le development durable, UN Office for Drug and Crime, Austrian Government, Swiss Government, International Fund for Animal Welfare and the International Commission of Jurists.

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AFRICA IS ON THE RIGHT PATH TO ERADICATE PLASTICS



The ongoing global movement for eliminating plastics is gaining momentum in Africa. Several countries are now taking steps to eliminate the production and distribution of single-use plastics, some adopting a total ban on the production and use of plastic bags. Cameroon, Egypt, Eritrea, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Tanzania have taken the lead, others, like Botswana and Ethiopia, are following suit.

UN Environment and its partners are working closely with African governments to establish policies and create programmes that are geared towards a plastic-free continent. The campaign Beat Plastic Pollution has mobilized the continent to come together and clean up plastics in land and water ecosystems. The campaign also encourages governments to adopt the initiative and come up with regulations to curb plastic pollution.

World Environment Day, celebrated on 5 June, heightened the urgency to rid Africa of plastics. Scores of people from across the continent participated in the day's activities, which resulted in the collection of thousands of plastic bottles and tens of thousands of plastic bags.

The Clean Seas campaign, also advocated by UN Environment, has further mobilized governments to remain proactive in the fight against plastic pollution. In June, additional African countries such as Benin, Cote D'Ivoire and Nigeria signed the pledge to eliminate plastic waste from their water ecosystems.



PARTNERS IN BEATING PLASTIC



Partnerships with governments, private sector companies and the general public are key to eliminate plastic pollution.

In Kenya for example, UN Environment has partnered with Safaricom and the National Environment Management Agency to establish an end-to-end plastic waste management programme. The partnership will lead to the creation of a working group that brings together stakeholders, mostly manufacturers, waste collectors and plastic waste recyclers, to formulate a comprehensive solution to hard plastic waste.

In South Africa, citizens have been mobilized through campaigns such as Bring Your Own Bag, which encourages people to reduce the use of disposable plastic bags. Many retail outlets and restaurants in the country have taken a stance to stop distributing single-use plastic bags.

In Chemba Town, Tanzania, a group of young people turned plastic waste to their advantage with an innovative solution: they collected plastic bags and repurposed them into mattresses. Mr Mohamed Semdoe, District Environmental Management Officer for Chemba District Council, explains:

“Ten youth were employed during the production of mattresses in different stages: collection, sterilization, making of covers, and packaging.”

These are only a few examples of the strides being taken across Africa to rid the continent of plastic waste and turn these environmental challenges into opportunities. The momentum driving these environmentally-conscious projects is picking up and will continue to develop with increased awareness about plastics, implementation of policies on environmental conservation and sustainability, as well as the channeling of resources that go into environmental research and innovative solutions.

UN Environment continues to play a key role in advocating for sound plastic waste management and environmental conservation, and in encouraging collaborative efforts and synergies to beat plastic pollution in Africa and beyond.

AFRO ROOTS ARTIST ROCKY DAWUNI DESIGNATED AS REGIONAL UN GOODWILL AMBASSADOR



Rocky Dawuni was designated as UN Goodwill Ambassador for Africa region at the conclusion of the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) at UN Environment headquarters, Nairobi, Kenya on 30 August 2018.

A celebrated global performer with a decade-long career, Rocky is an avid humanitarian and environmentalist, lending his voice to amplify issues of poverty, environmental degradation, water and sanitation issues and women's rights.

"There is so much positive energy in Africa and many opportunities to protect and restore the environment across the continent," Dawuni said. "And music is a powerful force that brings people together and inspires action. I want to work with communities and help them share their successes and encourage them to keep moving forward to make the future brighter for generations to come."

As a Regional UN Goodwill Ambassador, Rocky is uniquely positioned to generate considerable support and publicity amongst his audience for UN Environment's messages and goals through engaging, organizing, and leading activities specifically targeted to his audience.

"Dawuni's eloquence, cultural diplomacy and successful melding of music and activism have led him to become a passionate spokesperson for various global causes," said Erik Solheim, UN Environment Executive Director. "We are delighted to share the stage with another Goodwill Ambassador, Suzanna Awiyo, who, like Rocky, is a passionate humanitarian and environmentalist", he added.

A galvanizing performer, Dawuni has shared the stage with Stevie Wonder, Peter Gabriel, Bono, Jason Mraz, Janelle Monae and John Legend, among many others. Named one of Africa's Top 10 global stars by CNN, he has showcased his talent at prestigious venues such as The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and The Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles.

United Nations Goodwill ambassadors volunteer their time, talent and passion to raise awareness of United Nations efforts to improve the lives of billions of people everywhere. Rocky Dawuni joins an illustrious line-up of UN Environment Goodwill Ambassadors including Don Cheadle, Gisele Bundchen and Ellie Goulding.



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INTERNATIONAL OZONE DAY: CELEBRATING SUCCESS



International Ozone Day celebrated annually on 16th September, will be a positive reminder of the steps that have been taken since the adoption of the Montreal Protocol.

The celebrations increase awareness of the journey that lies ahead in capping Ozone Depleting Substances (ODC) Emissions and reducing greenhouse gases.

With the adoption of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, more countries in Africa are ratifying the amendment to reduce hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) emissions. The Montreal Protocol has helped the earth's vital ozone layer recover from damage caused by chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and done more to phase out greenhouse gases than any other measure.

The ozone layer is the natural shield against the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays, which can cause severe health risks such as skins cancers, cataracts and other health complications. This damage to the ozone layer prompted governments to bring forth an environmental agreement to govern the production and use of harmful substances that damage the ozone.

The Kigali Amendment represents one of the most significant actions that governments have taken to limit the warming up of our planet for future generations, and to protect the climate at the global level.

The demand for air conditioning and refrigeration is constantly growing, particularly from developing countries. Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) are gases used worldwide in refrigeration, air-conditioning and foam applications, but they are being phased out since they deplete the ozone layer. HCFCs are both Ozone Depleting Substances and powerful greenhouse gases: the most commonly used HCFC is nearly 2,000 times more potent than carbon dioxide in terms of its global warming potential (GWP).

UN Environment supports African countries in making informed decisions regarding the adoption of appropriate alternative technologies as part of the ODC phase-out strategies. This support will be extended to the phase-down the HFCs in the coming years.

Training and capacity building are among the highest priorities for African countries, along with securing financing for the transition, and an informed choice of next generation technologies.

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E-WASTE MANAGEMENT: USING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO CREATING OPPORTUNITIES



Rapid changes in technology and falling prices has millions of tons of high-tech electronic devices becoming obsolete in the developed nations every year, making e-waste one of the top environmental challenges of the 21st century.

Electronic waste (E-waste) includes mobile phones, computers, personal stereos, fluorescent and incandescent light bulbs, as well as large household appliances such as television sets, refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners, etc.

E-waste management has become a major challenge facing many African countries due to lack of awareness, environmental legislation, and resources, including financial resources. Open dumping, burning and landfilling are the predominant disposal methods used in Africa, with the potential to have serious implications for human health and the environment.

Speaking at The Earth Innovation Forum held on September 5 in Tallinn, Estonia, Mr. Paolo Falcioni, the Director General of the Home Appliance Industry Sector in Europe, said, "5 million tonnes of electronic equipment in Europe is generated as e-waste. Out of the 5 million, 4 million tonnes of

the e-waste is recycled. 3.5 million out of the 4 million tonnes becomes secondary raw materials. The rest of the e-waste is not traced."

It is probable that this untraced waste ends up in Africa. An article published by the Environmental Health Perspectives shows that each month 100,000 used PCs arrive at the Nigerian port of Lagos alone. Ghana is also having a challenge managing the e-waste imported, which is dumped in landfills, the largest one being in Agbogbloshie, a commercial district near the center of Accra.

Modern electronics can contain up to 60 different chemical elements including base metals such as copper (Cu) and tin (Sn), special metals such as cobalt (Co), indium (In) and antimony (Sb), and precious metals like silver (Ag), gold (Au) and palladium (Pd). Although some chemicals present in electronic components are hazardous, many have economic value.

These precious metals such as gold can be extracted from waste mobile phones as each one contains an element of this precious metal. There is untapped potential for Africa in recycling mobile phone elements in this way with most of the projects being based in developed countries.





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E-WASTE MANAGEMENT: USING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO CREATING OPPORTUNITIES



Beside metals, waste mobile phones also contain other valuable materials such as plastics, glass and ceramics. There is a necessity for a circular economy which will utilize these waste materials to produce secondary raw materials that can be used as valuable inputs in different companies. This opens a great opportunity for innovation, increased productivity and economic growth.

The Ghanaian government has taken a significant step towards the proper management of e-waste. The construction of an integrated e-waste recycling facility, at Agbogbloshie, will commence in October this year. The project will create over 22,000 self-sustaining jobs for Ghanaian youth.

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Regional Consultative Meeting for Africa, UN Environment

Headquarters, Nairobi, Kenya: 15-16 September 2018

The objective of the two-day consultations is for the African Major Groups and Stakeholders to prepare their inputs for the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly.

International Ozone Day, Global: 16 September 2018.

The 2018 Ozone Day theme: "Keep Cool and Carry on: Montreal Protocol".

Seventh Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), UN Environment Headquarters, Nairobi, Kenya: 17-19 September 2018.

The Conference will consist of an expert group segment on 17 and 18 September 2018 while the Ministerial segment will be held on 19 September 2018. The Conference is organized under the overarching theme: "Turning environmental policies into action through innovative solutions".

1st Africa Environment Partnership Platform, UN Environment Headquarters, Nairobi, Kenya: 20 September 2018.

The theme for the 1st Africa Environment Partnership Platform is "50 years of Environmental Governance and Sustainability in Africa." This will review environmental management in Africa since the period when most African countries gained independence, as well as the period

in which the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (also known as Algiers Convention) was adopted.

SWITCH Africa Green Regional Networking Forum, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: 3-4 October 2018.

The theme of the Forum is: "Innovative solutions for Accelerating Africa's Transition towards an Inclusive Green Economy through Sustainable Consumption and Production practices". The Forum will bring together stakeholders to share lessons and experiences; build synergy and complementarity; and explore opportunities for scaling up and replicating successful interventions in the programme.

Third Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa, Libreville, Gabon: 9-12 October 2018

The Conference will offer governments and partners an opportunity and a platform to discuss challenges and opportunities to catalyze actions and stimulate policies and investments on the joint contribution of the health and environment sectors to sustainable development goals in Africa.

Africa Youth Conference, Nairobi, Kenya: 23-25 October 2018.

The theme of the Conference is: "Unleashing the potential of Youth in Africa- Prioritizing Investment in Youth Development in the past". The outcomes of this conference will form the basis to develop a strategy for the youth in Africa.



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