



MAIN BIODIVERSITY RELATED ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

ABIDJAN CONVENTION AREA

BY

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- This presentation is a brief update on the main biodiversity related activities and achievements undertaken in the Abidjan Convention area.
- These activities were mostly undertaken by the Convention partners

ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS

- Preparation of a Conservation Strategy for the West African Manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*) throughout its range for 21 countries (2006).

It was initiated by the Convention Secretariat in partnership with Wetlands International in Dakar, with the support from UNEP Regional Seas Programme and SIDA and the collaboration of PRCM (Regional Conservation Programme of Coastal and Marine Areas in West Africa).

There is a growing body of evidence documenting the decline of the West African Manatee, which has been precipitated by 3 main factors:

- Loss of habitat, resulting from both climate change and human pressures;
- Incidental capture in fishing nets;
- Traditional hunting and commercial poaching activities.

Main objectives for the conservation strategy of the West African Manatee are:

- Improve policies and legislation for its protection and strengthen their implementation;
- Improve studies on the West African Manatee and use information for its conservation management;
- Reduce pressures through the restoration and safeguarding of its habitats;
- Promote the West African Manatee and its ecological and cultural values through targeted communication, education and public awareness.

ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS

- Report on Mangroves of Western and Central Africa (2007)
A report produced for UNEP-DEPI under UNEP Biodiversity Related Projects in Africa

This report provides a profile for 19 countries of the region from Mauritania south to Angola. It presents new information on the distribution of these habitats and highlights the importance of mangroves of west and central Africa in the regional and global context. It serves to illustrate the benefits human communities derive from the wide range of goods and services provided by mangroves, which valued at up to US\$ 900 000 per year.

There are strong concerns about the management coordination and effectiveness of protected areas with mangroves.

Four key drivers have been identified as the principal factors influencing mangrove change in West Africa:

- Population growth
- Economic and political trends
- Climate change
- Change in upstream habitats

ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS

- PRCM (Regional Conservation Programme of West Africa Coastal and Marine Area): Phase I 2004-2008

It is an initiative of IUCN, FIBA (Fondation Internationale du Banc d'Arguin or International Foundation of Arguin Bank), WWF, Wetlands International in partnership with the Sub-Regional Commission for Fisheries. It concerns 7 countries in the Convention area (Mauritania, Senegal, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea and Sierra Leone)

- Support to the creation and co-management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
 - Support to the creation of MPAs, as a tool for fishery management and to protect critical habitats : 9 MPAs were created
 - Strengthening participative management capacities for good governance in the Network of MPAs in West Africa (Initiative RAMPAO)
 - A network of West Africa's MPAs was formally set up (Charter, Status, Secretariat, meetings....)
 - A regional training for the implementation of social communication plans
 - Exchange visits organized for actors and managers of MPAs
 - A socio-economic study conducted for Niimi National Park in the Gambia
 - Mapping of Mangroves for Diawling National Park in Senegal
 - Support to NGOs and Municipalities for sustainable management of coastal zone and biodiversity in Cape Verde
 - Control access to Natural resources and surveillance: training of surveillance agents and acquisition of equipments, a guidebook for surveillance agents
 - Strengthening of Participative management in Urok Islands (Bijagos Archipelago Biosphere Reserve) in Guinea Bissau.

ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS

➤ Conservation of Species and habitats

Activities concern major emblematic marine and coastal species, namely, sharks, marine turtles, colonial birds, manatees, monk seals and small cetaceans

■ Skates and Sharks

- A guidebook on identification of major shark and skate species in tropical eastern Atlantic
- National Action plan for sharks
- A sub-regional action plan for conservation and management of shark population
- A film on shark fishing in collaboration with the NGO Oceanium

■ Marine turtles

- A communication and public awareness programme in Joal-Fadiouth area (Senegal)
- A training on identification techniques, recognition of tracks on beaches and nets counting for 5 countries in collaboration with NGO Natura 2000
- A Regional Unit for Marine Turtles of the Atlantique Coast of Africa (URTOMA) put in place in SINEPAD premises
- An Action plan for conservation of Marine Turtles in West Africa

■ Water birds

- 9 training programmes for 57 technicians to monitor Bird populations
- A guidebook for otolithe identification
- A manuel of monitoring of nesting colonies

ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS

- Manatee
 - National reports on manatee
 - Strategy for manatee conservation
 - Distribution map
 - 2 posters on threats and cultural value of manatee

- Monk seals: half of the total world population is in Mauritania (Peninsula of Cap Blanc)
 - A reserve along 6 km coastline was created
 - A emergency plan implemented by the NGO CBD-Habitat, in collaboration with Mauritanian Authorities and with the support of Bonn Convention
 - Public awareness activities, training for students and fishermen
 - A brochure on responsible fishery
 - A web site (www.monachus.es)
 - A seal observing network put into place

- Small cetaceans
 - An outline on a strategy of conservation
 - A training of technicians on biology monitoring of cetaceans
 - A national catalog of Mauritania cetaceans

ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS

➤ Fishery Management

- Support to fishery and marine environment co-management initiatives: put into place a system for resource exploitation in consultation with all stakeholders
- Strengthening of capacities for fishery agreement negotiations and fishery partnerships
- A web site (www.accordsdepeche.com) on fishery agreement and fishery management
- Participative management of shellfish for women in the Delta of Saloum in Senegal and the Archipelago of Bijagos

➤ Sustainable Tourism

- Development of ecotourism reception capacity of the National Park of Arguin Bank in Mauritania
- Ecotourism development project in the Biosphere Reserve of Saloum Delta in Senegal

ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS

- Benguela Current LME (www.bclme.org)

To assist Angola, Namibia and South Africa to assess and manage the marine resources of the LME in an integrated manner.

- Three Activity Centres established:

- The living Marine Resources Activity centre in Swakopmund, Namibia;
- The biodiversity, Ecosystem Health and Pollution Activity Centre in Luanda, Angola; and
- The Environmental Variability and Predictability Activity Centre in Cape Town, South Africa.

- 75 projects designed to address transboundary environmental problems and contribute to the integrated and sustainable management of BCLME were funded:

- A cluster of projects testing the cumulative of offshore marine diamond mining on the ecosystem. They will pull together the results from several previous studies and make clear recommendations to the Governments of South Africa and Namibia about impacts that diamond mining may have on the environment over extended period of time.
- A cluster of projects assessing and mapping the biodiversity of the estuarine, coastal, nearshore and offshore environment of the BCLME, and identifying suitable sites for aquaculture. The ultimate goal of these projects is to produce a strategic planning tool that is capable of providing advice on the protection of sensitive areas and vulnerable species, as well as identifying possible sites for marine protected areas and aquaculture installations
- The Benguela Current Commission established to implement an ecosystem approach to ocean governance in the region

ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS

- Guinea Current LME (www.gclme.org)

It is 'Combating Living Resources Depletion and Coastal Area Degradation in the GCLME through Ecosystem-based Regional Actions'

- There has been numerous studies in the area:
 - Variability of physical environmental process in the Gulf of Guinea and implication for fisheries recruitment
 - An overview of fishery resources and fishery research in the Gulf of Guinea
 - Environmental pollution in the Gulf of Guinea: A regional approach
 - A sixteen-country mobilization for sustainable fisheries in the Guinea Current LME
 - Improving the quality of Coastal Waters in the Gulf of Guinea LME through Mangrove Restoration
 - GCLME Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and SAP
- Several Fishery surveys have been conducted
- Elaboration of a new LBSA Protocol was initiated
- An interim Guinea Current Commission was brought into force in 2006

ACTIVITIES/ACHIEVEMENTS

- Canary Current LME

It is 'to reverse the degradation of the Canary Current LME caused by over-fishing, habitat modification and change in water quality by adoption of an ecosystem-based management approach'

A preliminary TDA was developed with a focus on depleted fisheries and on habitat, associated biodiversity and water quality critical to fisheries

CHALLENGES

- Pressures, due mostly to population growth in coastal areas, unplanned development for coastal area, over-exploitation of marine and coastal resources, pollution, illegal fishing, climate change, ..., have considerably increased and led to the erosion of biodiversity and to the degradation of natural habitats in marine and coastal areas.
- There is not enough dialogue with partners implementing relevant initiatives, projects and programmes in the region. There is a need to be engaged more actively with them.
- In many countries in the region, the marine and coastal sector is often not very 'visible' in development policies. There is a need for relevant UN Agencies with their partners to push for this visibility.



THANK YOU

FOR YOUR ATTENTION