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Father of Large Marine Ecosystem receives Göteborg Award

Fisheries Oceanographer Kenneth Sherman and conservationist Randall Arauz received worldwide acclaim 17 November as joint winners of the 2010 [Göteborg Award for Sustainable Development](#). It is in recognition of their “exceptional contributions” in finding solutions for sustainable use of oceans.



Pristagare 2010: Anna Danielsson

Oceanographer Kenneth Sherman receiving the Göteborg Award for Sustainable Development 17 November 2010.

“The award is a sort of stamp of approval for the Large Marine Ecosystem [LME] projects and practitioners around the world. It is a most welcome recognition by the folks in Göteborg of LME efforts underway,” Sherman told the [Interim Guinea Current Commission](#) recently, on being named for the award.

He also said the more important dimension of the award was that it recognised the Large Marine Ecosystem method of marine resource management as a “needed approach”. He added, “It’s one that is being advanced by a growing number of people and a growing numbers of countries.”

The executive secretary of the Interim Guinea Current Commission and regional coordinator of the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem project, Dr. Stephen Donkor, said: “Ken winning this award caps an illustrious career in the conservation of marine resources on the global scale.”

Sherman and Arauz will share the one-million Swedish Krona award (approx US \$148,516) equally, which they received in the Swedish city of Göteborg, in the presence of Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden. This is the 11th time the prize has been awarded. The city and several businesses founded it in 1999 to stimulate “further development and recognize strategic work in sustainable development, nationally and internationally”.

Sherman has spent his life's work advancing the idea of a coordinated and sustainable use of marine resources and environments. His most renowned success has been the development of the Large Marine

Ecosystem concept, which he pioneered in the 1980s with University of Rhode Island colleague Lewis Alexander.

West African countries endorse fisheries action plan under ACP II programme

West African countries have validated a regional action plan to bolster fishing and associated activities in the region, under a programme funded by the European Union.

The endorsement was the outcome of the two-day Regional ACP FISH II (Western Africa Region) workshop in Accra, Ghana, which ended 21 October.

The activities from national governments had been consolidated into a Regional Action Plan under two programme estimates. These estimates were classified under the five broad policy objectives of the ACP FISH II programme. These are

- improved fisheries policies and management plans at the regional and national levels;
- Strengthening capabilities of monitoring, control and surveillance of small pelagic,
- enhanced national and regional research strategies,
- improved business support and private sector investment,
- increased knowledge sharing, management and trade.

Some of the activities that were validated included the management of protected areas, management of inland fisheries resources, fisheries research, strengthening institutions and aquaculture development.

“These policies align well with, the GCLME Strategic Action Programme which underlines the need for cooperation between [GCLME](#)/ the Interim Guinea Current Commission and [ACP Fish II](#),” Mohamed Seisay, the GCLME Fisheries Expert, said.

Participating countries of the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem were Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo. Those outside the GCLME region were Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal.

GCLME at Canary Current's inception workshop

The [Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem](#) has said it recognizes the need to draw on the experience of other similar regional bodies, among them the GCLME, in order to improve service delivery to its seven member states.

This was one of the outcomes of the CCLME's first Steering Committee meeting that took place 1-5 November in Dakar, capital of Senegal. GCLME was invited to the inception workshop and participated as an observer in the first steering committee of the project.



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The Interim Guinea Current Commission/GCLME Fisheries Expert, Dr. Mohamed Seisay, represented the Executive Secretary/Regional Coordinator of IGCC/GCLME, Dr. Stephen Donkor.

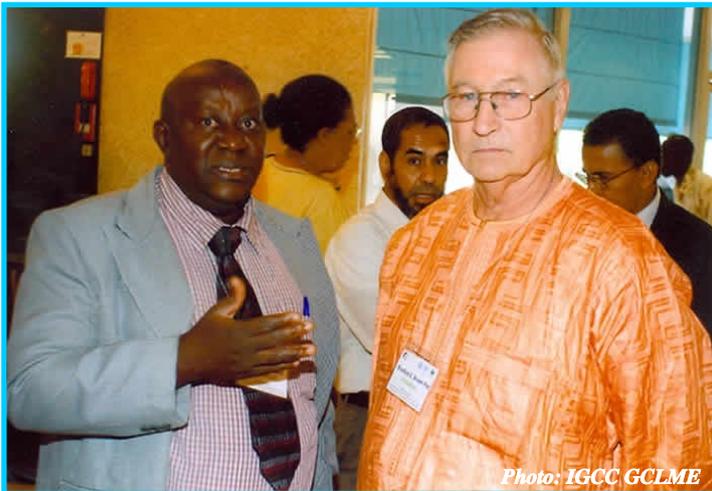


Photo: IGCC GCLME

L-R: GCLME Fisheries Expert Dr. Mohamed Seisay and LME Consultant Dr. Brad Brown.

The Steering Committee also said it would invite other projects and regional organizations to its meetings as observers and engage them in further collaboration. In this regard, and in view of its experience, the GCLME offered to help the CCLME prepare its Trans-boundary Diagnostic Analysis and its Strategic Action Programme. GCLME also offered to collaborate with the CCLME with respect to information-sharing, as Guinea-Bissau and Guinea are members of both organizations.

The IGCC/GCLME also offered to host a meeting in 2011 of LMEs, notably of the Canary, Benguela, Somali and Agulhas currents. This meeting is also to include other regional groupings such as the [West Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission](#), the Fisheries Commission for the West Central Gulf of Guinea, and the [Subregional Fisheries Commission](#). Others are the [United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization \(FAO\)](#), the [Fisheries Committee for East Central Atlantic](#), the [FAO Nansen Project](#). The chair of the CCLME Steering Committee welcomed the idea.

The Steering Committee meeting enable GCLME to discuss aspects of collaboration with the Sub-regional Fisheries Commission. In addition, Dr. Seisay met formally with the LME consultant, Dr. Brad Brown, for extensive discussions on the status of fisheries component of the GCLME/IGCC. They reviewed the application of the 2009 Douala meeting decisions regarding the monitoring of the implementation status of fisheries management plans for shrimp, demersal, sciaenidae, sparidae and the small pelagic fisheries. The implementation strategy of the workshop was on 'Promoting Sustainable and Equitable Fisheries Access Arrangements in the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem Countries. Other issues discussed were the upcoming workshops on ecosystem productivity and ecosystem modelling using Ecopath with Ecosim software, which took place in Accra 13-17 November.

Members of the CCLME - Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Mauritania, Morocco and Senegal - were present at the meeting. Other international organizations such as the [United Nations Environment Programme](#), the [World Bank](#), the [West African Regional Fisheries Programme](#), the [International Union for the Conservation of Nature](#), and the [Abidjan Convention](#) were also present.

Ghana marine productivity facility urged to serve as centre of excellence

The IGCC/GCLME Regional Activity Centre for Marine Productivity and Biodiversity, at the [University of Ghana](#), serves as a

centre of excellence that would help boost capacity of other scientists and strengthen in the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem region, scientists concluded during three day regional productivity workshop, 24-26 November 2010, Accra, Ghana. This was one of seven recommendations made at a regional productivity (planktons and benthos) workshop held at the university in Accra, 24-26 November. The Productivity Centre, hosted at the university's [Department of Oceanography and Fisheries](#), Ghana, has demonstrated high-level of expertise.



Photo: Yao Modenou/IGCC GCLME

It is one of five centres worldwide with the capability to carry out continuous plankton recorder surveys. Other recommendations by the workshop were:

- that the responsible institutions in the GCLME countries should endeavour to be bilingual to foster communication and integration with the region
- to develop a memorandum of understanding between productivity centre and national laboratories in the GCLME countries
- that a strategy, in the form of management plan, be developed for countries to coordinate with the Centre in Accra
- that countries be provided with raw data collected during the surveys to enhance the analytical capacity of the national scientists
- that either the Centre or someone tasked, or national focal points should carry out in-depth assessment of country needs with respect to productivity assessment, and make recommendations on how to meet these needs
- that focal points be identified for each country. In view of the inauguration of the Working Group by the GCLME fisheries expert, Dr. Mohamed Seisay, participants became focal points for their respective countries. In addition, they could identify other persons in their countries to this function

The workshop focused on the findings of the five-year plan of activities, drawn up by the national productivity experts of the GCLME countries. The 13 participants discussed how marine productivity could be assessed, protected and sustained in the GCLME countries. Most of the scientists present were fisheries experts, oceanographers, plankton and benthos specialists, and those focusing on remote sensing on primary production.

Productivity is one of the key ecosystem modules which have been identified as relevant and indispensable, in terms of primary productivity, for the maintenance of healthy marine ecosystems. Therefore, scientists say that development of capacities in the IGCC/GCLME countries for assessment methodologies of productivity is of the utmost importance.

The overarching goal of the IGCC/GCLME project is to halt the depletion of living marine resources and the degradation of coastal habitats for the social and economic benefit of the 16 countries adjacent to the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem.

“One unique element of the GCLME is that it has introduced benthic fauna (organisms) assessment as part of the productivity component of its LME studies,” Dr. George Wiafe, the National Coordinator of the IGCC/GCLME Productivity and Biodiversity Centre, said. Dr. George Wiafe is a plankton and remote sensing scientist at the University of Ghana and coordinates research activity in the GCLME. Under the 5-modular approach in the LME concept, the benthos is not assessed. However, the GCLME included this aspect to the project because it will provide the region with valuable information on food source for demersal fish.

Scientists ready to apply ecosystem based-management to fisheries

Scientists who ended on 17 December a five-day regional training workshop on ecosystem modelling approach to the management of fisheries resources said they were satisfied with what they learnt and would apply these advanced holistic methods in their home countries.

“The training has been very good. It has provided us with a new way of assessing fish stocks holistically,” Samantha Osei, an assistant fisheries officer at the Marine Fisheries Research Division, Ghana, said.



Photo: Yao Modenou/IGCC GCLME

Participants at the Ecosystem Modeling workshop in Accra, Ghana, 17 December.

The 17 fisheries scientists were from all the 16 countries participating in the GCLME project. The project is primarily designed to develop and implement measures or activities that would protect the region's marine ecosystem from pollution, resource over-exploitation and damage to coastal habitats.

“This Ecosystem training workshop aligned very well with the project's goal of restoration and protection of marine living resources,” Dr. Mohamed Seisay, a GCLME fisheries expert, said.

The Accra workshop aimed at boosting the capacities of the GCLME countries to use an ecosystem approach in managing marine resources sustainably. These resources are vital to the economic life of the 16 GCLME countries. Some 150 million people along the littoral of this region – from Guinea-Bissau to Angola - depend directly on the ocean, mangrove forests and wetlands for relatively cheap sources of animal protein, employment and income. Apart from fisheries, the region holds great potential for earnings through recreational activities and tourism.

However, inadequate fisheries management practices and environmental degradation have, hitherto, largely hindered these potentials. This training workshop was designed to shore up such national and regional management capabilities to reverse environmental degradation and loss of fish stocks. This is one of the strategic tasks of the [Interim Guinea Current Commission](#) under its Large Marine Ecosystem project. In part, it works toward achieving this task by building human resource and institutional capacity in the region for ecosystem modelling of their marine ecosystem using the [Ecopath with Ecosim](#) (EwE) suite of models.

The workshop focused on model construction using data from individual GCLME countries initially and later the whole of the GCLME marine coastal waters as a single entity. Thus, data generated by GCLME activities have for the first time been utilized in modelling for rational management of the resources. These include biomass and length frequency data from the Dr. Fridtjof Nansen survey ship; productivity data from Regional Productivity and Biodiversity Centre at the University of Ghana; and diet data from the GCLME Regional Fisheries Centre, Angola.

Each participant learnt to use the Ecosystem model, Ecopath with Ecosim and constructed a model using their country's fisheries, environmental, socio-economic and governance data. Then the model was tested for its applicability. Participants also learnt how to identify the kind of data required from national institutions for application of Ecopath to the national or regional [Economic Exclusive Zones](#), an area extending 200 nautical miles into the sea from a country's coastline.

The participants were also introduced to the importance of a time-dynamic simulation, using the Ecosim method, to test biological and sociological economic policy. They also explored the capabilities of the spatial-dynamic simulation using Ecospace; and explored the possibilities of using existing data within the GCLME countries to apply the EwE suits of models. In fact, this was the first ecosystem modelling integrating all surveys (across all ecosystems) done in the GCLME.

“The Participants have done a tremendous job and the commitment from all countries has been outstanding,” said Dr. [Villy Christensen](#), the international EwE consultant from the University of British Columbia and the lead facilitator of the workshop.

He was supported by the IGCC fisheries expert, Dr. Mohamed Seisay and Dr. Ching Villaneuva, a senior research scientist in fisheries sciences, Laboratoire Ressources Halieutiques, Ifremer, France.

Your garbage, their business: network formed to manage trash

Ghanaian businesses and the government formed a network on 21 October to coordinate the collection, disposal of and recycling a variety of industrial and household waste that continue to endanger millions of Ghanaians.

“It [the network] will serve as a forum for specialists in the waste sector to share their ideas with government, researchers and academia,” Cindy Badoe, a deputy director at Ghana's [Environmental Protection Agency](#), said.

The businesses undertook to apply several measures in confronting the country's garbage blight. These include establishment of a data sheet for waste tracking; sorting waste at source; conducting an environmental impact assessment on every kind of waste to be managed; and adoption of sustainable technologies to improve waste management. Another is the development of standards through joint and multiagency research and development. Various businesses were given the task of providing leadership in launching these and other undertakings as trials. For example, Ghana's National Plastic Waste

Management Programme and Cote d'Ivoire's Enterprise Ivoirienne d'Aide en Assainissement will lead in organizing the sorting waste at source. This will involve providing coloured bins for the segregation of two categories of waste, initially: biodegradable and non-biodegradable matter.



Pollution hot spot in Accra

Management of solid waste, especially household and plastics is one of the major problems plaguing administrators in Ghana's towns and cities. Littering, an acute problem, goes unchecked. Badoe added that laws against the practice are not enforced. Much of rubbish eventually ends up in open gutters and choking drains.

"This leads to flooding, the presence of rodents and disease," she said.

Although largely formed from domestic companies, the non-Ghanaian firms invited to the meeting from Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Togo, Congo DRC, Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone are associated members. They are expected to help form similar networks in their countries while maintaining ties with the pioneering group in Ghana. The overall goal is to establish a regional Network of Waste Management businesses from Guinea-Bissau to Angola which constitutes the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem.

This regional network is the outcome of the three-day meeting that was organized by [UNIDO](#) in Ghana and attended by 26 participants. The meeting brought together the [Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology](#), the Environmental Protection Agency, the [Council for Scientific and Industrial Research](#), [South Tongu District Assembly](#) and UNIDO. Private businesses were Qualioplast, National Plastic Waste Management Programme, Blowplast, Cyclus Elimina Plastic Recycling Limited, Barry Callibeaut Company, Tema Steel Company and Zeal Environmental Technologies. Others were Zoomlion Ghana limited, Cocoa processing Company, Give Wood Company Limited, Modern Wood Company Limited, Ghana Agro Food Company, Tilbury Environmental Group. The non-Ghanaian participants included SITRAD Congo Assainissement (Brazzaville), Centre de controle et de Surveillance de la Pollution Marine (Congo DR), Enterprise Ivoirienne d'Aide en Assainissement (Cote d'Ivoire), EMOC Nigeria, and the Freetown Waste Management Company (Sierra Leone).

One of the major goals of the Guinea Current Commission is to curtail pollution of the large Marine Ecosystem by the 16 member countries and restore degraded coastal habitats.

GCLME exhibits at 7th African Development Forum

GCLME Participated in an exhibition on the margins of the [Seventh African Development Forum](#) on Sustainable Development, thus providing greater visibility of the region.

The objective of the 10-15 October forum in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, was to raise awareness and mobilize effective commitment of all stakeholder and partners, at all levels, to thrust climate change concerns into the mainstream of development policies, strategies, programmes and practices in Africa.



Photo: IGCC GCLME

The Interim Guinea Current Commission's exhibit at 7th African Development Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The IGCC/GCLME's presence at the exhibition showcased the collective efforts of the 16 governments in the GCLME region to protect their LMEs from pollution, resource over-exploitation and the destruction of coastal habitats. In this way, IGCC showed that 16 countries are, indeed, being acting in concert to achieve the objective of the African Development Forum (as is relevant to the GCLME). In this respect, the greatest noticeable manifestation of climate change in the GCLME region is the effect of rising sea levels on coastal communities.

IGCC/GCLME occupied a booth where it exhibited an assortment of its published books and pamphlets. It also screened DVD video on the GCLME project and the LMEs of all regions in general. As well as fielded questions from the visiting public.