

Following the dissolution of the Ministry of Environment and Science, the Environment portfolio was added to the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and a new Minister was appointed for the now Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment.

The Regional Director paid a courtesy visit to the newly appointed Minister, Hon. Stephen Asamoah Boateng (MP). The purpose of the visit was to brief the new Minister on the activities of the GCLME Project which now fall under the supervision of the new Ministry. He congratulated the Minister on his appointment and confirmation by Parliament as Minister for the newly created Ministry of Local Governments, Rural Development and Environment, Ghana.

While briefing the Minister, the Regional Director indicated the linkage of Local Government to the implementation of the project at the grassroots and presented electronic copies of GCLME Project Document, reports of the first and second Steering Committee Meetings and the First Tripartite and Review Meeting which was officially opened by the Minister. Also included in the documents presented were all the 14 editions of the GCLME project Newsletters, reports from the first phase of the project and the report on GOG-LME as well as the Ministerial Meeting held in 1998, in Accra.

The Regional Director informed the Minister of the forth-coming Ministerial Meeting of the project tentatively scheduled in Abuja from 21 - 22 September, 2006. The Meeting will endorse the formation of the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem Commission. He explained that the Ministerial Meeting will be preceded by a Technical Meeting of Directors of Fisheries and Environment from 19 - 20 September, 2006. He updated the Minister on the achievements of the project in Ghana which include the setting up of the Regional Marine Productivity Centre with state of the art equipment at the University of Ghana, Legon.

In response to the briefings, Hon. Boateng stressed the importance of the Project to both Ghana and the region. He promised to brief his Deputy Ministers so they can represent him fully whenever he is not available. He pledged his support and availability to the project at all times and also posited that the activities of the GCLME project would justify the merging of the Environment portfolio with that of the Local Government. He accepted the responsibility of his new role and promised to perform his duties with the support of the Regional Director, the RCU and his Technical Team at the Ministry and promised to continue to honour the obligations of his Ministry to the RCU on behalf of the Government of Ghana.

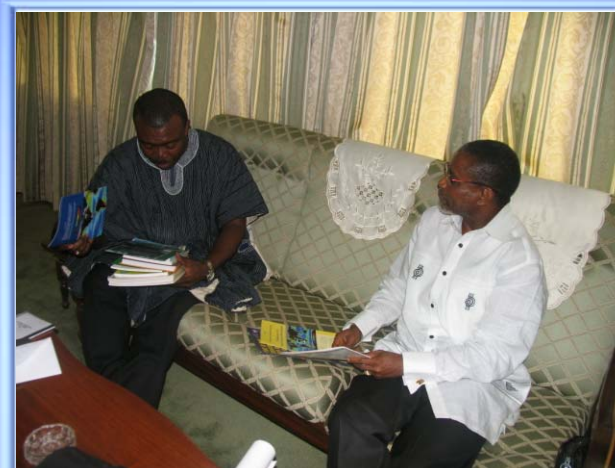
Courtesy Visit of the Regional Director to the Minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment, 20 June, 2006.

Hon. Asamoah Boateng welcoming the Regional Director to his office.



The Minister and the Regional Director in full dissemination during the visit.

The Hon. Minister appreciating some of the products of the Project.



11th Meeting of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) which was held in Brazaville, Congo: 22 - 26 May, 2006.

From 25 - 26, the Regional Director represented the Director General of UNIDO, Dr. Kandeh Yumkella at the 11th Meeting of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) which was held in Brazaville, Congo.

Personalities that attended the Conference included Ministers of Environment and Heads of Government Delegations, The AU Commissioner (Rural Economy & Agriculture), Ag. Executive Director of UNEP, Chief Executive of GEF, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, Heads of Delegations of NEPAD, UN AND Non-UN Agencies including NGOs and GCLME National Directors.

The Regional Director made a presentation in plenary entitled, "AMCEN AND NEPAD ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN- A VIEW FROM UNIDO" during which he conveyed the fraternal greetings of the UNIDO DG and his determination for a reinforced collaboration between UNIDO and AMCEN.

Together with the Nigerian Minister of Environment, he lobbied the Ministers and delegations from the GCLME countries in respect of their participation in the proposed first meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Environment and Fisheries to be hosted by Nigeria in Abuja. He stressed the importance of the meeting as it will endorse the expected transformation of the Project into a 16 country technical interim Guinea Current Commission.

Based on the presentation of the Regional Director, the Meeting recommended for the actions to be undertaken by the Regional Director:

- To follow up on prospective contacts made with different delegations during the meeting.
- To liaise with the UNIDO Representative in Nigeria in respect of the expected meeting between the DG and the Nigerian Minister of Environment during the DG's visit to Abuja this June.
- To draft a letter with the Project Manager for the signature of the DG acknowledging Decision 2 of the AMCEN BRAZAVILLE DECLARATION and expressing the readiness of UNIDO to strengthen its collaboration with AMCEN. The draft letter will also contain an invitation to the new AMCEN Chair to visit Vienna for talks with the DG.
- Together with the Project Manager, to stay in touch with the GCLME Ministers in the run up to the First Ministerial Meeting of the GCLME project whenever the dates are fixed to ensure their promised participation.

A Fish Trawl campaign using the research vessel, Dr. Fridtjof Nansen to survey the fishery resources in the Gulf of Guinea kicked off in



R-L: The Regional Director in a discussion with the GCLME National Director for DR Congo, Mr. Leonard MUAMBA-KANDA who assisted the Regional Director at the AMCEN Meeting.

Report on the 1st to 3rd leg of the Fish Trawl Survey using the RV Dr. Fridtjof Nansen Research Vessel.

April, 2006. The survey was in three phases. The first leg was for the period 20 April - 17 May 2006 and covered the waters of Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. The second leg was for the period 19 May - 7 June 2006 and covered the waters of Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Benin and Togo while the third leg which started from 9 June 2006 will end on 20 July 2006 covering the waters of Nigeria, Cameroon, Sao Tome & Principe, Gabon and Congo.

The objectives of the survey were as follows:

- To carry out an assessment of demersal and pelagic fishery resources off the western Gulf of Guinea through a combined bottom trawl and acoustic survey; and,
- To collect samples of Stomach, Benthos, Plankton and Oceanographic data

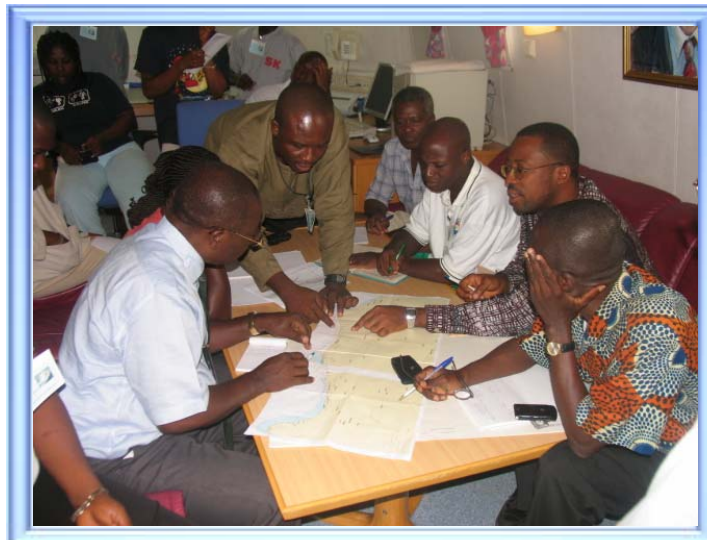
Each survey was preceded by a pre-survey meeting. The pre-survey meeting of the second leg was held on board the research vessel, Dr. Fridtjof Nansen on 19 May 2006 prior to the departure of the cruise which was made up of experts from the the four concerned countries, the Norwegian Cruise Leader, Mr. Sigborn Mehl, Coordinator of the Cruise, Mr. Samuel Quatey, the GCLME Plankton Consultant, Dr. George Wiafe and the GCLME Fisheries Expert, Dr. Theodore Djama.

The group deliberated on issues like: Sampling Station Maps, Format For Presentation of Data Collected During the survey, Fish Trawl Transects, Stomach Content Samples, Zooplankton Sampling and Plankton Sampling Stations.

The GCLME Fisheries Expert reiterated the importance of the survey and the need for the experts to strive to collect good data and information necessary for the assessment of the fishery resources. The Co-Cruise Leader reassured all of reliability of his team which has been working together in the sub-region with Dr. Fridtjof Nansen since 1999.

Pre-Survey Meeting of the second leg of fish Trawl Campaign held on the research vessel, Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, 19 May 2006.

L-R: Paul Bannerman, Co-Cruise Leader, Mr. Samuel Quatey, Cruise Coordinator, Sigborn Mehl, Cruise Leader discussing survey plan with scientists, Ms. Amelie Gbaguidi, Scientist from Benin, Dr. Theodore Djama, GCLME Fisheries Expert.



L-R: Dr. Theodore Djama, Ms. A. Gbaguidi, Dr. George Wiafe - GCLME Plankton Consultant explaining Plankton sampling procedure, Vaovi Acakpo-Adra from Togo, Koffi Dongo Kouassi from Cote d'Ivoire, Paul Bannerman & Mr. S. Quatey.



Group photograph of the scientific crew

Launching of the third leg of the GCLME/FAO/IMR Cruise, Douala, Cameroon; 24 June, 2006.



HE Dr. Aboubakar, Minister of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries climbing the stairs of the RV Dr. Fridtjof Nansen.



R-L: The FAO Representative, the Governor of the Littoral Province and an Inspector of MINEPIA.



Visit of the RV Dr. Fridtjof Nansen by the Minister, HE Dr. Aboubakar.

From 1 to 7 June, 2006, Dr. Theodore Djama, GCLME Fisheries Expert was on mission to Equatorial Guinea to meet with the National Authorities (Minister of Fisheries and Environment) to obtain authorization for the survey cruise on board the RV Dr Fridtjof Nansen to operate in the Equato-Guinean waters.

On a different mission to Douala, Cameroon, Dr. Djama reported that the launching of the third leg of the GCLME/FAO IMR Cruise on 24 June 2006 by the Minister of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries was successful.

From 25 to 29 June, 2006, the Regional Director was on mission to Abuja, Nigeria to assist in the planned meeting between the Director General of UNIDO, Dr. Kandeh Yumkella for the purpose of discussing the First meeting of Ministers responsible for the GCLME project scheduled to take place from 21-22 September, 2006 in Abuja, Nigeria.

Kelechi Ihemeje