



IGCC NEWSLETTER



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NEWS OF THE INTERIM GUINEA CURRENT COMMISSION

GUINEA CURRENT COMMISSION LME PROJECT EXTENSION APPROVED

The IGCC/Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem has received approval from its Steering Committee for a final “no-cost extension” of Strategic Action Plan Development (SAP) phase of the project that serves

tasks needed to transform the Interim Guinea Current Commission (IGCC), which oversees the project, to a permanent Guinea Current Commission and develop the SAP Implementation Project which will provide support for the transition to a country-owned,

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**Guinea Current Commission
LME Project Extension
Approved**

**African Caucus Of Large
Marine Ecosystem (LME)
Institutions Formalized**

**Productivity Demo Project
Makes Headway**

**GEF Funding For SAP
Implementation Possible,
Duda Says**

**Interim Guinea Current
Commission Member States
Agree To Harmonize Use Of Oil
Spill Dispersants Use In The
Guinea Current Large Marine
Ecosystem**



Photo: Yao Modenou/IGCC GCLME

*Eighth Steering Committee approves extension
of the GCLME project.*

16 countries in coastal West and Central Africa.

Approval for the extension came at the end of the Committee's 8th meeting held in Accra, Ghana, 17 and 18 May. Extension was required to complete

independent and permanent Commission for the management of the marine and coastal resources of the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem. The SAP development project will now close operationally by 30 April 2012.



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Regarding the establishment of the Guinea Current Commission, the Steering Committee asked IGCC member states to consult nationally by 1 September 2011 on two options and documents proposed by the United Nations support agencies and make recommendations to the IGCC Ministerial Committee for its realization. The proposed options are to establish the permanent Commission as an independent body under a separate international legal agreement linked to Abidjan Convention by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU); or set it up as a permanent independent body linked to the Abidjan Convention by a protocol. Both options will be based on the ecosystem approach to the management on the marine and coastal resources and its membership limited to the 16 Guinea Current Commission Countries.

Several presentations were made at the meeting. These included the state of environment in the GCLME region; a report on the partnership conference for project investments held in February; a progress report on the establishment of the Guinea Current Commission; and on the GCLME project implementation. Presentations were also made on the status of demonstration projects such as the mangrove restoration project in Nigeria; the Integrated Coastal Area Management effort in Cameroon; and the Marine Protected Area project in Benin; the regional productivity centres such as the Regional Activity Centre for Productivity and Biodiversity at University of Ghana, and the Environmental Information Management Systems (EIMS) at the University of Lagos.

The chief director of the Ministry for Environment, Science and Technology, Mr George Scott, welcomed delegates on behalf of his minister. He told them that the Osu Declaration of the Committee of Ministers "must serve as a clear guide" for the dual transitional processes of the Interim Guinea Current Commission to a permanent Guinea Current Commission and from the SAP Development project to the SAP Implementation project with support of GEF.

"My colleagues and I expect swift and timely implementation of the processes presented to us during the second ministerial meeting and discussed," he said. "In the process I appeal to all our partners to walk their talk by keeping the member states' interests as the first and only consideration in their support."

Speaking later, the senior adviser international waters for the Global Environment Fund, Mr Alfred Duda, told the meeting that the GCLME region could gain substantial funding from other sources.

"Research shows that salt marshes, mangroves, sea grass beds and kelp help



Delegates to the 8th Steering Committee Meeting

trap more raw carbon to the planet than tropical forests," he said, "and look at all the billions and billions that are being thrown at forests. They should be thrown at you," he told delegates.

Noting that GCLME countries had worked with all three GEF agencies (UNDP/UNEP/UNIDO) in the past, he urged the delegates to do likewise with a fourth: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The FAO, he said, could help in rebuilding the fisheries that might be depleted or overutilized.

"This will be the first project in GEF to have four GEF agencies working to their comparative advantage, and that's difficult but that's really the essence to development assistance coherence," he said.

He also told delegates that all international waters projects needed to consider the issues of climate variability: for example in the GCLME area storms on coasts, sea level rise and the resulting salt water intrusion into coastal ground water supplies. Such projects, he said, could benefit from GEF funding but first, countries needed to set up permanent institutions such as the Guinea Current Commission to ensure sustainability.

"This is fundamental to the International Waters focal area," he said.

He urged the delegates to focus on ratifying new or revising existing legal regional agreements and set targets and commitments to action.

He added that sewerage treatment was a critical issue on which countries needed to focus. He said also that GCLME needed to work with UNIDO in mitigating oil spills

in the region, adding that industries "must commit to their prevention".

In his presentation, the Executive Secretary and Regional Coordinator of the IGCC/GCLME, Dr Stephen Donkor, set out the milestones in the life of the GCLME project, the activities that had been carried out as well as those under way. These related to the recovery of depleted fish stocks; the restoration of degraded habitats; the reduction of land and sea-based pollution; creation of an ecosystem-wide assessment and management framework for environmental and living resource administration; and establishment of a regional consultative mechanism for transboundary management of the GCLME in the form of a permanent Guinea Current Commission as decided by the Ministerial Committee in their Osu Declaration of 2010.

Speaking on the state of the environment, Professor Emmanuel Adjao said that since the inception of the GCLME project governments and the general public was becoming increasingly aware of the value of sea products and the importance of sound management. As a result, he said, management of nature reserves and marine protected areas, pilot demonstration projects had received high priority at the national and regional levels.

Governments had also introduced policies and regional protocols to govern the coastal and marine environment. However, he said, better enforcement of regulations were needed if sustainable gains in environmental protection, rebuilding stocks and maximizing long-term benefits of good and services were to be maintained.

PRODUCTIVITY DEMO PROJECT MAKES HEADWAY

Set up to evaluate productivity as regards the carrying capacity for living marine resources in the GCLME area, the Regional Activity Centre for Productivity and Biodiversity, hosted at the University of Ghana, Legon, has made significant advances in line with the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem Project aimed at addressing ecosystem well being.

During his presentation to the 8th Steering Committee meeting on the Centre's activities its coordinator, Dr George Wiafe, told delegates that knowledge of productivity patterns was vital in order to establish the present and predict future availability of living marine resources for economic and food security. Development of this capacity is being undertaken because of the decline of water quality of coastal water bodies;

the depletion of fishery resources and loss of marine biodiversity; the physical degradation, alteration and modification of habitats/ecosystems; coastal erosion; the presence of toxic chemicals and oil spills; as well as in the invasion of exotic species from ballast water and land-based sources.

Dr. Wiafe told delegates that since its establishment in 2007, the centre had trained scientists in the GCLME region in analyses; had disseminated scientific information on productivity; and evaluated national strengths as well as the needs in productivity assessment.

Having developed high-level capacity to carry out productivity monitoring, Dr. Wiafe said the facility should serve as a centre of excellence and help strengthen capacity of other personnel in the region. The results from the region-wide productivity assessment currently serves as a baseline for future surveys in the

region. Significant findings support the assertion of impact of climate change contributing to decline in small pelagics, especially during the upwelling period of July to September. The decline in abundance of herrings during the period was partly attributed to low numbers of the main food source for the herrings, Calanoides carinatus, the dominant zooplankton species which is very sensitive to increasing temperature of the oceans.

The centre has recommended that CPR monitoring be reactivated to cover wider natural extent of GCLME; that the proliferation in the region of harmful algal bloom be monitored and to ensure early warning; and that support for basic biological research of secondary producers (feeding, breeding, habitat preferences, behaviour, sediment analyses) be provided.

		
<p>1. RV <i>Fridtjof Nansen</i> used to collect zooplankton and benthic samples as part of the fish trawl survey</p>	<p>2. Scientist looking at macro benthic samples</p>	<p>3. Scientist collecting macro zooplankton with 330 micron mesh net</p>
		
<p>4. Technicians rigging CPR cassette prior to deployment</p>	<p>5. Application of suite of remote sensing data to complement productivity studies</p>	<p>6. Near-real time remote sensing data are received via a C-band dish at the Productivity Centre (in collaboration with EAMNet)</p>

*Photos: From presentation made by G Wiafe
Activities of the GCLME Regional Demo Project on Productivity/ G Wiafe*

AFRICAN CAUCUS OF LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM (LME) INSTITUTIONS FORMALIZED

In a watershed moment, the Caucus of African LMEs was formalized for the first time on 16 May to provide a platform for closer cooperation and for the discussion of common concerns, and how these could be addressed.

The meeting also agreed to form a working group to prepare a document expressing the benefits that the EAF-Nansen project brings to Africa and why it must be extended.

The meeting approved that efforts should

Other decisions and recommendations are:

- The Caucus should be active in preparation for the COP 17 in Durban in conjunction with others partners to ensure that

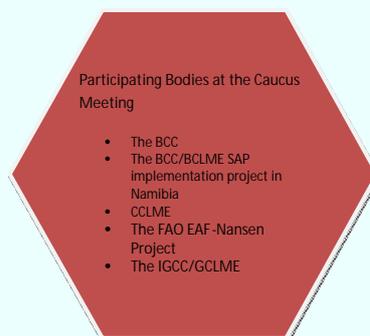


Caucus of African LMEs formalized

One of several recommendations made at the meeting was that LMEs should share their annual work plans to enable them identify activities that could be undertaken jointly, especially in capacity-building. The measure is expected to enhance synergies among the LMEs. They are also expected to share experiences and best practices: for example, the Benguela Current Commission (BCC) with the implementation of the SAP and the IGCC with the development of National Action Plans. Currently, the IGCC and BCC plan to jointly help Angola to develop its National Action Plan for priority investment projects on ecosystem development.

Another suggestion was for the Caucus to accept offers from science centres worldwide, such as NOAA, to obtain remote sensing data required for the management of LMEs.

be made to solicit research vessels to serve African LMEs. In this respect, the BCC agreed to lead the working group, made up of all of Africa's LMEs, that will study this possibility. The report of the working group will be presented to the Caucus, in July 2011 during the annual LME Consultative Forum in Paris, France.



issues of fisheries and aquaculture are raised at the Conference

- The Caucus should start discussions on positive issues or messages that could be included in the agenda of the Rio+20 meeting in 2012
- LMEs should provide brief progress reports to continental bodies such as the African Union, the continent's foremost political body, and NEPAD, a technical body of the Union
- The BCC, headed by Executive Secretary Hashali Hamukuaya, was designated to chair the Caucus for one year, to ensure institutional stability, after which the chairmanship would rotate among LMEs
- A briefing was to be given to the Steering Committee members are to be briefed on the lessons learnt from the development of the Benguela Current Commission.

GEF FUNDING FOR SAP IMPLEMENTATION POSSIBLE, DUDA SAYS

One of the requirements to complete the transition of the Interim Commission to a permanent commission is implementation of the GCLME Strategic Action Plan (SAP), a negotiated document that describes policy, legal and institutional actions and investments to attend to regional priority problems on the marine environment.

Now that the development of the SAP is completed, its implementation depends on finalization of a project identification form (PIF), which the meeting urged the United Nations agencies executing and implementing the GCLME project to complete in draft by September 1, 2011 and finalize for submission to GEF in the first quarter of 2012. In this respect, the Committee urged countries to begin exploring and developing co-financing opportunities to support the PIF and report to the IGCC Executive Secretariat.

Earlier, addressing the Steering Committee meeting, the senior adviser International Waters for the Global Environment Fund, Dr Alfred Duda, said implementation of the SAP should focus on the results and outcomes to which country commitments to actions would lead. SAP implementation, he added, would fit under the second GEF 5 strategic objective for International waters which is “to catalyze multi-state cooperation to rebuild marine fisheries and reduce pollution of coast and LMEs while considering climatic variability and change.”

The SAP and the NAPs should be used, he said, to build the project to tend to transboundary concerns. Then, he added, GEF would add an incremental cost to the existing baseline programmes by each country, their development partners, and by the GEF agencies with which GCLME countries wish to work on resolving these concerns.

“If there is agreement among countries on a new road ahead with commitments to ecosystem-based approaches to solve the

identified priority transboundary concerns and a legal institution that makes those commitments happen, then I am optimistic we can provide GEF funding for your SAP implementation project,” Alfred Duda, said at the Committee meeting.

At their meeting on 19 and 20 May to consider SAP implementation, the four GEF United Nations agencies proposed components and outcomes for the project. The five components were:

1. Strengthened policy and governance framework for ecosystem management
2. A Knowledge base for ecosystem management of the GCLME through the use of the LME modular approach for productivity, fish and fisheries, pollution and ecosystem health and socioeconomic information with emphasis on transboundary issues
3. Reduction of stress in GCLME
4. Awareness and capacity-building of GCLME stakeholders
5. Project management in GCLME sustained

From these, scores of outputs are expected. For example, from the first component subset dealing with the establishment of the GCC, legal instruments of the GCC will be adopted as will the commission's operational guidance; the commission will be established and its institutional capacity will be strengthened; and financial mechanisms will be in place to sustain GCC operations. The United Nations Development Project (UNDP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) are to form the supporting group of Implementing Agencies for GEF funding for the SAP Implementation Project.



Photo: Yao Modenou/IGCC GCLME

L-R Dr. Alfred Duda, Mr. G.K. Scott, Dr. Stephan Maxwell Donkor and Mr. Christian Susan at the Eighth Steering Committee of the GCLME project.

INTERIM GUINEA CURRENT COMMISSION MEMBER STATES AGREE TO HARMONIZE USE OF OIL SPILL DISPERSANTS USE IN THE GUINEA CURRENT LARGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM

West and Central African members of the Interim Guinea Current Commission (IGCC) /Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) project have agreed on ways to start developing a regional policy on the use of chemical dispersants to tackle oil spills in the Guinea Current region.

“For those who don't have a national policy, this meeting will help them craft a policy. We will also provide them useful

background documents,” Dr Thomas Coolbaugh, chairman for the Global Initiative for West and Central Africa (GI WACAF) said on 24 June at the end of the three-day workshop.

The meeting's 49 delegates recommended that all countries should have a clear national policy describing the conditions of utilization of dispersants and draw up a pre-determined list of approved dispersants.

Delegates at the meeting were asked to send the list of approved dispersants validated by their countries to GI WACAF, one month before the organizations regional biennial conference 10-14 October in Lagos, Nigeria. GI WACAF will harmonize the list of dispersants available for use within the territorial waters of the region. The wrong use of chemical dispersants can cause massive damage to the environment that is being cleaned.

Information regarding national policies, stockpiles of dispersants and equipment availability shall be posted to the GI WACAF website for the use of member countries.

Another suggestion was that Net Environment Benefit Analysis “must be taken into consideration” in the geographical location and timely use of dispersants. This form of analysis ranks the net environmental gain in green services or other ecological properties arrived at through actions. It can be used to decide management options, including the mitigation of chemical contaminant.

The meeting also proposed that GI WACAF focal points create a correspondence group in order to look into forming a regional approach to oil spill and approved dispersants. The group will comprise these focal points and consultants.

The three-day workshop was organized by the Interim Guinea Current Commission (IGCC) in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) under an agreement with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), as executing agency for GCLME project. It drew participants from maritime organizations, and related institutions from all the GCLME member countries, ministries, departments, agencies, oil firms (Shell, Total, Chevron, Perenco), the private sector and others identified by the International Maritime Organization, as well as all member states of the IGCC.



Photo: Yao Modenou/IGCC GCLME

Group photograph of the regional policy on the use of chemical dispersants

Quick Reference: RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Delegates agree on the rational use of dispersants in the context of oil spill response.
2. The use of dispersants shall take into considerations Net Environmental Benefit Analysis (NEBA), geographical location and timeliness.
3. All countries should have a clear national policy describing the conditions of utilization of dispersants and a predetermine list of approved dispersants.
4. On international, regional and subregional cooperation, information regarding national policies, stockpiles of dispersants and equipment availability shall be posted to the GI WACAF website for the use of member countries.
5. It is also being proposed that we (GI WACAF focal points) create a correspondent group (focal points, consultants) in order to explore the possibilities of having a Regional Approach particularly with regard to oil spill and approved dispersants.
6. Harmonization of list of dispersants available for use within the territorial waters of the region. To be done by GI WACAF.
7. Delegates should send the list of approved dispersants validated by their countries to GI WACAF, one month before the October's [2011]conference

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