



Context

The Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem – encompassing the inland coastal zone and coastal waters from Guinea Bissau to Angola – faces challenging issues involving water pollution, habitat degradation, fisheries depletion, loss of biological diversity, coastal erosion, public health and sanitation. Between 1995 and 1999, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded a project to address these problems in six countries: Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo. At the end of the project, the participating countries called for the initiation of an expanded project to include 10 new countries situated within the natural limits of the ecosystem.

Strategy

In recognition of the interest expressed by coastal countries, UNIDO, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and with funds from the GEF, developed a strategic action programme for the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem. The programme aims, not only to halt, but also reverse the deteriorating condition of the coastal areas with focus on productivity, fish and fisheries, pollution and ecosystem health, socio-economics and good-governance. Scientific and technical support is also provided by the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Participating countries are Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo.

Current results

- Water-related transboundary environmental issues and problems have been identified and quantified with root causes and impacts in the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
- A Strategic Action Plan and National Action Plans have been developed
- 9 demonstration projects implemented
- An Interim Guinea Current Commission established in 2006 and institutional structures improved to address priority regional

issues for conducting effective regional interventions

- Improved legal/management structures for addressing priority issues, including a protocol on land-based activities
- National strategic action plans developed and endorsed with accompanying sustainable financing plan based on regional commitment and consensus
- National and regional data and information acquisitions, exchange and management systems enforced to support decision-making
- Regional Coordination Unit established to ensure effective coordination of programme activities

Impact/Outlook

The project has brought together sixteen neighboring countries, covering the entire coastline of the Guinea Current. The countries are now collectively addressing the transboundary environmental issues of the region, opting for an integrated and sustainable ecosystem-based approach to manage and restore marine and coastal resources. The nine demonstration projects executed by UNIDO serve as a basis for replication in the region. The Guinea Current Commission (GCC) will gradually take over the responsibility for the project implementation and the participating countries are expected to progressively take over the responsibility of covering the operational costs.

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At a glance:

Goal: Sustainable management of the Guinea Current

MDG: 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger, 7. Environmental Sustainability

Thematic area:

Environment and Energy

Donors: Global Environment Facility (GEF), national governments in the region

Partners: UNDP, UNEP, NEPAD, NOAA

Budget: USD 21,000,000

Status: ongoing

Duration: 2004 – 2012

