

Ecoflash **Special Edition 2008**

Newsletter for the Network of Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA)
Ecoflash est le bulletin d'information du Réseau pour l'Environnement et le Développement Durable en Afrique (REDDA)

Special issue on major environment issues, trends and emerging issues in Western Africa

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Editorial

Dear readers,

This is another special issue of our newsletter after the one on sustainable transport. The following is devoted to the major environment issues, trends and emerging issues in Western Africa.

Indeed, this special issue is edited in the framework of the Africa Environment Information Network (AEIN) project implemented in collaboration with UNEP in West Africa.

The purpose of the AEIN initiative is to build capacity for integrated environmental assessment and reporting at the national level. It is important to indicate that the AEIN is supposed to support the AEO process.

The said special edition addresses major environmental issues in West Africa, namely the Urbanization and Environmental Degradation and the Invasive aquatic species.

In addition, you will also have news of your Network through the NESDA News section: the training workshop on the education for sustainable development organised in Cotonou, Benin from 03 to 05 may 2007; the first regional meeting on Management of domestic waste in urban and peri-urban areas in Central and West Africa; the “Africa Environment Outlook 2 (AEO2)” report launched by NESDA in collaboration with UNEP on 21st December 2007 at “hotel du Port” in Cotonou, Benin.

Don't also forget to read the “Profile” section. The said section describes the African Network of Environmental Journalists (ANEJ).

Finally, we invite you to join your voice to 800 Journalists who focused during a two-day forum on environment advocacy in Nouakchott.

See you soon, by God's grace!
Prof Pascal HOUENOU
Coordinator

NESDA Issues

The Africa Environment Information network (AEIN): Phase 2 launch

The AEIN initiative is designed as a capacity building programme that aims to harness and enhance access to information and knowledge to support the management of Africa's environmental resources as assets for sustainable development. A key objective of the initiative is to "build capacity for establishing the essential data foundation needed to support country-level sustainable development initiatives, focusing on the environmental aspects". The initiative is implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in collaboration with the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA) as the Collaborating Centre (CC) for West Africa.

During 2003 and 2004 the emphasis was on phase one (I) with a focus on the preparation of comprehensive country-specific implementation strategies, tools and network development.

From 2 to 4 October 2006 in Nairobi, meeting has been held to review the phase one (I) and to launch phase two (II) at the national, sub-regional and regional level.

For the phase 2, additional countries have been involved in the process. Regarding the West Africa sub region, five additional (Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Benin and Gambia) countries have been added to the pilot countries.

The following are the main activities of the phase 2 at the sub-regional level:

- Provide support to national AEIN expert team
- Facilitate capacity building activities related to AEIN and AEO implementation
- Facilitate synergy between AEIN and other data and information initiatives undertaken in West Africa region.
- Prepare fact sheets on major environmental issues in West Africa Sub-Region and publish on the sub-region AEIN
- Facilitate the Development of the sub-regional component of the Africa Network of Environment Journalists (ANEJ)
- Prepare an inventory and a comprehensive listing on the environmental data and indicators
- Organise the sub-regional launch of the Africa Environment Outlook report-2 (AEO-2)

Training workshop on the education for sustainable development

From 03 to 05 may 2007, the training workshop on the education for sustainable development entitled “*Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in Africa Universities (MESA)*” has been organised in Cotonou, Benin from 03 to 05 may 2007 by NESDA, in collaboration with UNESCO, UNEP, IDRC .

The first regional meeting on “Management of domestic waste in urban and peri-urban areas in Central and West Africa

The first regional meeting on “*Management of domestic waste in urban and peri-urban areas in Central and West Africa within the framework of the NEPAD by the “ECOHEALTH Approach”* held from 17th to 22nd December 2007 in Cotonou, Benin was organised by NESDA, in collaboration with IDRC, participants have been trained on IEAR by Mr. Etien Ndah, member of the data working group. Participants found the training very useful and expressed wish to pursue this training for more information.

Regional review meeting of the Atlas of Africa’s Changing Environment and the Africa Environment Outlook-3 Inception meeting

NESDA has attended to the joint Regional review meeting of the Atlas of Africa’s Changing Environment and the Africa Environment Outlook-3 Inception held in Cairo from 30 July to 2 August 2007.

The respectively objectives of the both meeting were the following:

- Regional review meeting of the Atlas of Africa’s Changing Environment
 - Review the draft Atlas of Africa’s Changing Environment to ensure the accuracy and validity of information in the draft;
 - Make recommendations for alternative analysis where necessary;
 - Receive a brief training on 3 D visualization tool application for remotely sensed data;
 - Review the country profiles on environmental compliance with the MDG 7 and validate the quantitative information on the indicators.

- Africa Environment Outlook-3 Inception meeting

The purpose of the meeting was to prepare a comprehensive scope for the third edition of the AEO report. The focus was on identifying the key thematic areas and issues to be focused on in the report, base the current regional and global debates in the field of environment.

Sub-regional launch of the Africa Environment Outlook report-2 (AEO-2)

For the launch of the AEO-2 report in West Africa, NESDA has selected the first regional meeting on “Management of domestic wastes in urban and peri- urban areas in Central and West Africa within the framework of the NEPAD by the "ECOSANTE Approach" which has been held from 17th to 22nd December 2007 in Cotonou, Benin.

The “**Africa Environment Outlook 2 (AEO2)**” report has been launched by NESDA on 21st December 2007 at Port hotel in Cotonou, Benin

The report has been officially launched by Ms Bernadette Glehouenou Dossou, the representative of the Minister of “Environnement et de la Protection de la Nature” of Benin.

Before closing the ceremony, opportunity was given to journalists through a press conference to ask questions on the report.

The CD and clippings of the said ceremony are available at NESDA secretariat.



From left to the right we have respectively (Dr Ernest DABIRE, IDRC representative; Ms Bernadette Glehouenou Dossou - Minister of Environment of Benin representative; Prof. Pascal HOUENOU, NESDA Coordinator and Omar BALDE, SYNEPAD representative.

On the Web

The Creative Gallery on Sustainability Communications

UNEP is presenting the first international online database of corporate and public advertising campaigns specifically dedicated to sustainability issues and classified by sustainability themes. The *Creative Gallery on Sustainability Communications*

www.unep.fr/sustain/advertising/ads.htm) is the result of a thorough selection, which started with the viewing of over 40,000 ads. The campaigns highlighted in this Gallery address sustainability issues through various themes, tones, types of media and strategies. Some reflect companies' public commitment towards social and environmental issues. Others feature awareness campaigns from public authorities. Some aim to favour the purchase of green products and services, others strive to change citizens' or consumers' attitudes. The Gallery also compiles case studies taken from existing UNEP publications like [Communicating Sustainability](#) and [Talk the Walk](#).

This Creative Gallery is also designed to aid and promote the area of research, education and information relating to the marketing, advertising and communication business.

For more information, contact

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Profile

[African Network of Environmental Journalists \(ANEJ\)](#)

History

ANEJ was conceived in the first workshop for African Environmental Journalists that was held at the UN Headquarters in Nairobi, on 26-28 November 2002.

18 Journalists attended the workshop from Radio, Television and Newspaper houses in Mauritania, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, the Seychelles, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Mission

African Network of Environmental Journalists' mission is to promote public understanding of environmental issues in Africa by improving the quality, accuracy, and intensity of environmental reporting. This is clearly noticed in our motto, which is "The Voice of the African Environment" Towards achieving this status, ANEJ has cultivated a Network culture among African Environmental journalists from all states of Africa, to share information and disseminate with more visibility and doggedness.

ANEJ also provides critical support to journalists of all media in their efforts to cover complex issues of the environment responsibly.

Objectives

The principal objectives of the African Network of Environmental Journalists are:

- To mainstream environmental journalism in Africa;
- To enhance the capacity of African journalists to deal with existing and emerging environmental challenges;
- To disseminate relevant information on environmental issues in Africa;
- To promote web journalism on environment and sustainable development in Africa;
- To influence decision making processes with regard to environmental policies in Africa;
- To disseminate information on the activities implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme and other relevant institutions, organizations and governments.

For more information, please visit the following site:

<http://www.africannej.com/index.cfm?pageID=9>

Country briefs

Africa Environment Information Network (AEIN): The Gambia's start-up workshop

The Start-up Workshop was the starting of the AEIN activities in the Country. The Gambia workshop was held at the Corinthia Atlantic Hotel in Banjul on Tuesday 5th and Wednesday 6th June 2007 respectively.

The overall aim of the workshop was to introduce the AEIN concept to the stakeholders and deliberate on other key aspects of the AEIN implementation in The Gambia such as its institutional framework and also the state of the environment reporting process in the country.

The focus of the workshop was the National Environment Outlook reporting process and the implementation framework for AEIN in The Gambia.

Thus the key objectives of the workshop were to:

1. get a consensus on the content and format of *National Environmental Outlook* report
2. get a consensus on the implementation framework for AEIN in the Gambia.

The opening ceremony was chaired by Mr Bubu Pateh Jallow, the Permanent Secretary, Department of State for Forestry and Environment. The highlights were speeches by Mr. Momodou B.Sarr, the Executive Director of National Environment Agency, a Representative from the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa (NESDA) and finally the opening speech by the Honorable Edward Singhateh, Secretary of State for Forestry and Environment.

Advocacy

Journalists focus on environment advocacy in Nouakchott

Journalists from around the world met in Nouakchott, Mauritania from 24 to 25 February 2008 with the goal of raising awareness among decision makers on the urgent need for a continental environment policy in Africa.

Some 800 journalists from 47 countries participated in the two-day forum, the second conference of the African Network of Environment Journalists, jointly organized by Mauritania, Mali, Rwanda and the European Union.

The focus of the forum was on the following theme "Africa in the face of challenges to the environment" .

While opening the conference, the Prime Minister said "Mauritania faces several challenges in the field of environment, namely desertification, issues related to the marine environment, pollution, urbanization, and negative effects linked to oil exploration."

He stressed the importance of the role of journalists in the area of advocacy for a coherent environment policy that can be implemented throughout the continent.

For more information, please visit the following sites:

<http://www.ijnnet.org/Bulletin/20080303-1.html>

<http://www.panapress.com/newslatf.asp?code=eng035368&dte=25/02/2008>

Focus on

State, trends and emerging issues in Africa

Urbanization and Environmental Degradation

The effects of rapid urbanization on environmental sustainability are seen as the main concern by environmental groups. Overcrowded, environmentally stressed megacities are the new destination of the world's poor: "[by] 2015, there will be 33 mega-cities, 27

of them in the developing world. Although cities themselves occupy only two per cent of the world's land, they have a major environmental impact on a much wider area.

In West Africa's rural and urban areas are facing a decreasing economic and agricultural carrying capacity. In this context, the resources and the use of the land, including water, become a crucial factor in sustainability. Agriculture, pasture, fishing and hunting have to compete with the need for land in mining exploitation, construction and other infrastructural development. Rapidly urbanizing areas have the administrative centres as well as the most industrial and commercial activity but they depend on rural areas for food sustenance. Unfortunately, land use in West Africa is hostage to climatic conditions, with the overabundance or the lack of rainfall determining the type and organization of land exploitation. Agricultural production is unreliable. With rapid urbanization, there is increased competition for targeted spaces and a continuing decline in rural agricultural production. If no positive action is taken, human insecurity will increase.



Business as usual: the reality of rapidly urbanizing West Africa (source: UNOWA 2007)

Table1. West Africa's current demographic indicators

Country	Surface Area (in km ²)	Total Pop (in millions) (2006)	Pop. Density (persons per km ²)	Projected pop for 2050 (in millions)	% Avg. pop. growth rate (2005-2010)	% Urban population (2005)	% Urban growth rate (2005-2010)	Total fertility rate (2006)	Pop/harable & permanent crop land	% Access to improved drinking water	GNI per capita PPP\$ (2004)
Benin	112,622	8.7	77	22.1	3.0	40	4.0	5.56	1.4	68	1,120
Burkina Faso	267,950	13.6	51	39.1	2.9	18	5.1	6.45	2.3	51	1,220
Cape Verde *	4,033										
Côte d'Ivoire	320,783	18.5	57	34.0	1.2	45	2.7	4.64	1.2	84	1,390
Gambia	10,689	1.6	150	3.1	2.3	54	3.9	4.35	3.5	82	1,900
Ghana	238,538	22.6	94	40.6	1.9	48	3.4	4.00	1.8	79	2,280
Guinea	245,857	9.6	39	23.0	2.2	33	3.6	5.64	4.2	51	2,130
Guinea Bissau	36,123	1.6	44	5.3	2.9	30	3.2	7.10	2.2	59	690
Liberia **	99,065	3.4	34	10.7	2.9	58	4.1	6.80	3.5	62	
Mali	1,240,198	13.9	11	42.0	2.9	30	4.7	6.69	2.1	48	980
Mauritania	1,035,000	3.2	3	7.5	2.7	40	3.3	5.57	3.0	56	2,050
Niger	1,186,408	14.4	12	50.2	3.3	17	4.4	7.64	0.8	46	830
Nigeria	923,768	134.4	145	258.1	2.1	48	3.7	5.49	1.2	60	930
Senegal	196,722	11.9	60	23.1	2.3	42	2.9	4.63	3.2	72	1,720
Sierra Leone	71,740	5.7	79	13.8	2.1	41	3.8	6.50	4.8	57	790
Togo	56,785	6.3	111	13.5	2.5	40	4.3	4.98	1.3	51	1,690
ALL WA	6,046,281	269.8		587.0	2.3	42	3.7	5.50		62	1,409
World total or average		6,540.3 billion		9,075.9 billion	1.1	49	2.0	2.58		83	8,760 range =39,710 -620

* Figures for Cape Verde calculated into overall sub-regional statistics

** GNI figure not available for Liberia

Source: UNOWA(2007) Urbanization and Insecurity in West Africa - Population Movements Mega Cities and Regional Stability.

<http://www.un.org/unowa/unowa/studies/urbani>

Les mécanismes de compensation pour la conservation de la biodiversité

La réalisation d'un projet de développement, d'infrastructure et/ou d'exploitation des ressources biologiques génère des dommages sur la diversité biologique. Le développeur du projet a l'obligation de prendre des mesures pour les résorber par des mesures réparatrices ou de réduction d'impact. Il ne s'agit pas d'un paiement pour les dommages causés à la diversité biologique, ni d'un transfert de fonds pour les mesures de réduction d'impact ou de restauration stipulées dans les évaluations d'impact environnementales. La compensation pour la diversité biologique (biodiversity offsets en anglais) est un mécanisme complémentaire aux mesures déjà existantes et ne concerne que le dommage résiduel sur la biodiversité. La perte nette de biodiversité a alors un coût que le développeur du projet va introduire dans son calcul économique. Le paiement qui s'en suit, est réinvesti dans la conservation de la diversité biologique pour le financement de la conservation sur des zones équivalentes en termes de fonctions écologiques ou des zones avec une plus grande richesse en biodiversité.

Le concept de base du mécanisme de compensation est le gain net ou la non-perte globale (no net loss, en anglais). Cela signifie que toute perte de diversité biologique dans un écosystème ou habitat donné est compensée au moins de manière équivalente sur un autre site.

Source : *Article paru dans la Lettre Evaluation du mois de juillet 2005*, Mécanisme de compensation pour la conservation de la diversité biologique : état des lieux et analyse pour sa viabilité en France (Lettre Evaluation - juillet 2005)

<http://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/Mecanisme-de-compensation-pour-la.html> (Accédé le 26 février 2008)

Contact : [Sarah HERNANDEZ](#)

Etat et tendances de l'environnement en Afrique

L'Egypte pourrait perdre 14 % de sa superficie en raison de l'élévation du niveau de la mer, provoquant de fait la migration du tiers de sa population. Alexandrie sous les eaux, ce serait une perte considérable, tant pour le patrimoine mondial que pour l'économie touristique de la région. L'augmentation de la salinité du Nil pourrait accroître la perte de terres agricoles.

Les invasions de sauterelles qui ont ravagé ces dernières années de nombreuses récoltes en Tanzanie, en Somalie et en Éthiopie pourraient devenir plus fréquentes et s'étendre à d'autres pays.

Le désert du Sahara sera plus chaud mais pas davantage humide, ce qui pourrait menacer les organismes proches de leur seuil limite de tolérance à la chaleur.

Les célèbres neiges éternelles du mont Kilimandjaro pourraient disparaître. 80 % environ des glaces qui existaient en 1912 ont déjà fondu. Cette disparition définitive assécherait les rivières et les cours d'eau alimentés par la fonte régulière des neiges de la montagne

Source : <http://www.ekwo.org/saletemps.php3> (accédé en décembre 2007)

Invasive aquatic species in West Africa

Although exotic aquatic weeds have been reported to be present in Africa since the end of the nineteenth century (Tackholm and Drar, 1950), they started infesting massively African freshwater bodies during the early 1950s (Mitchell *et al.*, 1990) and rapidly spread in many countries. The growth of these weeds is extremely fast and this allows them to develop huge infestations in areas where they had not been reported only a few years earlier. These plants invaded lakes, ponds, rivers, canals and agricultural fields, becoming noxious weeds.

Floating aquatic weeds such as Water Hyacinth, Water Lettuce and Water Fern are a hazard to water bodies in West Africa, where they invaded inland waters of various countries in the early 1980s.

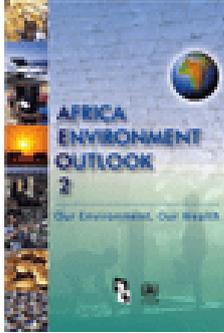
All countries of West Africa are concerned by issues of floating aquatic weeds. These plants invaded lakes, ponds, rivers, canals and agricultural fields, becoming noxious weeds. The damage to the environment and the economy is enormous, having a disrupting impact on agriculture, fisheries, production of electricity, transportation, health, means of sustenance, living conditions and social structure

FAO has conducted numerous initiatives in Africa during the past ten years to control aquatic weeds. Projects have been conducted at regional and national level.

Infestation of Water Fern in Senegal River, BEFORE (Top) and AFTER (Bottom) release Of *Cyrtobagous salviniae* (Source: FAO)

Source: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/006/Y4270F/y4270f05.htm> (accessed on 25 February 2008)

Publications



Africa Environment Outlook -2 (AEO-2): Our Environment, Our Wealth

The Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) reporting process was initiated in 2000 by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN). The first report, AEO-1, was launched during AMCEN's 9th session in Kampala in July 2002.

The main focus of the AEO-2 report is on sustainable livelihoods and the environment. The report profiles Africa's environmental resources as assets for the continent's development. It highlights the potential of the region's natural resource base to support the development agenda of NEPAD and sustain human livelihoods

More information at: http://www.unep.org/dewa/africa/aeo2_launch/index.asp

Announcements

Dear members and friends of the NESDA,

We wish to remind you that this newsletter is yours and we wish you to contribute to its production in terms of articles, pictures, portraits, briefs, and anything you think that can be of special interest. You can send as many information as you have, with your formal authorization to reproduce your article, your pictures, etc. in our Newsletter EcoFlash and on our Web Site, since the newsletter will be available on-line.

Please provide us with your detailed address, telephone and fax numbers to enable us up-date our mailing lists.

We thank you in advance for your collaboration and let us join our efforts to make NESDA the African Network for Environment and Sustainable Development in Africa.

Environmental Quote

Même si les évolutions climatiques sont désormais inéluctables, il est indispensable, pour en limiter la portée, que nos économies se réforment profondément et s'engagent vers une réduction des émissions carbonées comme les scientifiques nous le recommandent.

Le Prince Albert II de Monaco-Ouverture de la session extraordinaire du conseil d'administration du PNUE le 20 février 2008

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Venue	Organizer
26-27 Mar 2008	Atelier National Ecosanté, (Gestion des déchets ménagers en Afrique de l'Ouest et du centre)	Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire	REDDA / CRDI/ UAA
31 Mar - 04 Apr 2008	Bangkok Climate Change Talks 2008- AWG-LCA 1 and AWG-KP 5	Bangkok, Thailand	UNFCCC
21-24 Avril 2008	Atelier Régional Ecosanté (Gestion des déchets en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre)	Ouagadougou,	REDDA / CRDI / UAC
24-26 Avril 2008	Atelier de Mobilisation des ressources	Ouagadougou	CRDI / COPES
12-16 May 2008	Convention on Biological Diversity/ COP-MOP	Bonn, Germany	CBD
15 -17 mai 2008	VIe Conférence des OING et des OSC	Caraquet, Canada	OIF
19-30 May 2008	Convention on Biological Diversity/ COP 9	Bonn, Germany	CBD
14-15 Mai 2008	Assemblées Annuelles du Groupe de la BAD	Maputo, Mozambique	BAD
05 Juin 2008	Journée Mondiale de l'Environnement	Partout dans le monde	
7-9 June 2008	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment Twelfth session Meeting of the expert group	Johannesburg, RSA	UNEP / AMCEN
17 Juin 2008	Journée Internationale de la lutte contre la Désertification et la sécheresse	Partout dans le monde	
02 Octobre 2008	Journée Internationale de la non-violence	Partout dans le monde	
06 Octobre 2008	Journée Mondiale de l'habitat	Partout dans le monde	

01-12 Dec 2008	COP 14, CMP 4 and sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies	Poznań, Poland	UNFCCC

Please note that information contained in this calendar is collected from different sources including web sites.

We are not responsible for any changes of date, venue and other changes.