

AFRICAN MARINE ATLAS LAUNCHED

The first African Marine Atlas has been launched. It is a product of collaboration between the Ocean Data and Information Network for Africa - ODINAFRICA (coordinated by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO), the United Nations Environment Programme, and the African Coelecanth Project. The Atlas was officially launched on 23rd February, 2007 in Belgium.

NEPAD COSMAR has welcomed this and would use it to provide information directly to institutions and scientists for management decision making purposes

The Atlas provides important sources of information including maps, images, data and information to coastal resource managers, planners and decision makers involved in conservation and management of marine and coastal environment in Africa.

The Atlas will be of immense benefit to national institutions and a variety of users such as ocean environmentalists, park managers, scientific community, fishing cooperatives, tourists, and any other interested persons.

It has over 800 downloadable data products derived from the fields of marine geo-sphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, biosphere, geopolitical and the human socio-economic dimensions.

The Atlas shows gaps in knowledge and information base, where additional efforts may be directed. Further indicates areas of intense use

collation work was based on an extensive survey of coastal and marine data needs undertaken in early 2006 in all the countries participating in ODINAFRICA.

The Atlas was realized after nine months of intensive work by a team of 16 marine scientists and Geographical Information systems (GIS) experts from National Oceanographic Data Centres (NODC) in Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, and Tanzania. International ocean data experts provided key inputs in data analysis.

UNEP will develop a clearing house and information system on coastal and marine resources of Eastern Africa from



Members of the African Marine Atlas team at the IODE Project Office in Ostende Belgium

along the coastline requiring careful management and provides potential foresight on likely consequences of specific decisions. It will also provide guidance for recreational opportunities and tourist attractions.

Development of the atlas entailed collation of available geospatial dataset, information on the marine environment which is summarized into an African Marine Atlas suite. The

the regional atlas.

The Atlas can be accessed at <http://www.africanmarineatlas.net>

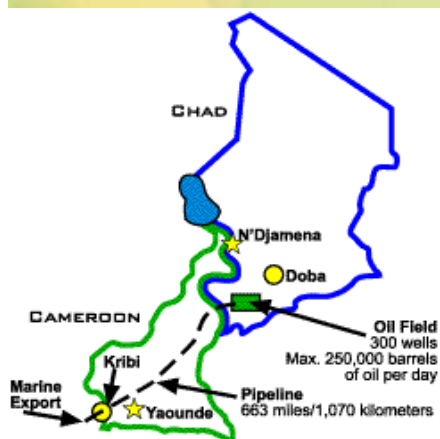
The website product is one of a set of Marine Atlas products that will include web data services, web mapping and an Atlas publication when completed.

For more information visit:-
<http://www.africanoceans.net>

CAMEROON OIL SPILL HANDLING RAISES CONCERN

The ability of the government of Cameroon to handle a major environmental disaster has been brought into question following their handling of an oil leakage along a major oil distribution line earlier in the year.

Environmentalists were particularly dismayed by the long delay in reporting the leak which occurred along the Kome – Kribi terminal, 11 kilometres offshore which is feared to have affected marine resources.



Map of the pipeline

It was not immediately clear how much oil leaked into the sea, for how long and what the environmental impact on livelihoods might be.

But two Cameroonian NGOs, the Centre for Environment and Development (CED) and the Network for the Fight Against Hunger, alleged that there was a delay in detecting the leakage and that the Cameroon Oil Transportation Company (COTCO) waited five days to inform the public at large about the problem.

The NGOs said the accident exposed weaknesses in Cameroon's ability to manage such a crisis and that authorities had yet to devise an emergency plan of action in the event of a major spill. Fishermen in the southern coastal town of Kribi expressed concerns about possible contamination following the leakage.



Lobe Waterfalls in Cameroon, one of the few places in the world where waterfalls drop directly into the ocean, are threatened by construction of the pipeline

"Our town lives on fishing and tourism. If more incidents like this or worse occur it is the economic future of the town that is threatened," Kribi Mayor Gregoire Mba Mba was reported saying.

COTCO, which built the Cameroon leg of the pipeline, however had assured the world that no impact on the environment had been detected

The 3.7 billion US dollars Chad-Cameroon pipeline brings oil from landlocked Chad through a 1,100 kilometres pipeline with 890 kilometres of it passing through Cameroon to the Atlantic Ocean.

The pipeline project was overseen by the World Bank, which demanded strict environmental and social standards, in part to prevent oil money from disappearing from government coffers.

The World Bank signed a new memorandum of understanding with Chad in July 2006 after the Chadian government demanded its original promise to put 90 percent of its share of oil revenues into development be reduced to 70 percent.

The members of the international consortium running the pipeline are ExxonMobil, Petronas of Malaysia and ChevronTexaco.

For more information visit:-
<http://www.africanoceans.net>

EDITORIAL

The successful completion of the first ever African Marine Atlas is a major step in the continued drive to seek better utilization of the continents vast resources.

It increases the available information on the combined wealth of the continent and will improve the sustainable exploitation of the resources to make them more readily available to its peoples.

We at COSMAR Newsletter extend our congratulation to the teams that undertook the extensive research and surveys to provide the data that was used in the compilation of the atlas.

It is yet another proof of the dedication of the team at ODINAFRICA and the collaborators at IOC of UNESCO and the Government of Flanders.

Presently, a scramble for investment opportunities in many African countries by the emerging economic giants like China and the former colonizers is reaching frenzied levels.

The atlas will ensure that profit seekers and development partners do not endanger the environment for posterity.

The Atlas is truly a great milestone for Africa and the World.

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For further information on the stories carried in this issue please visit:-

<http://www.africanoceans.net>

<http://www.nepadcosmar.org>



TSITSIKAMMA: TO FISH OR NOT TO FISH

Reports that the government of South Africa was considering opening up of the oldest Marine Protected Areas (MPA) for sport and subsistence fishing have put communities and conservationists at a variance.



Ms. Rejoice Mabudafhasi - South Africa's Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism

Although a decision has not yet been taken, a government spokesperson has already said that the matter will be opened up for public debate to ensure that all voices were heard.

The opposition as well as some marine scientists have voiced concern over the proposed move saying that it would be difficult to police and would inevitably harm the protected fish that live in the reefs.



Tsitsikamma National Park

The government however insists that the move is in line with its stated policies and will be effectively monitored.

Outcry followed revelations by Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Ms. Rejoice Mabudafhasi that the government had reached consensus with the local communities on how to utilize the resources prompting urgent parliamentary debate on the matter.

An estimated 10 kilometres comprising 13 percent of the Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area, is being considered for opening up to local anglers to fish for enjoyment and food.

"This action is being planned to proceed through the Marine Living Resources Act as a 'practical experiment' over a year, at which stage it will be reviewed." This was widely interpreted, and reported, as a formal go-ahead. Ms. Mabudafhasi also said the proposal would "break new grounds".

"Therefore, for the management plans that will be put in place shortly to be effective, we will all have to learn to play our parts responsibly. After the development of the management plan comes implementation of a system with benefits and responsibilities. It also would need rules to make it practical," she was quoted by the *Cape Argus*.

A task team set up to consider the proposal still had to look at technical issues such as who would be eligible to fish by virtue of being defined as a member of the local community.

Scientists have pointed out that the Tsitsikamma MPA is an extremely important nursery area that sustains the entire line fish industry of the Southern Cape.

They argue it will be impossible not to catch the resident reef fish, which are most highly endangered, and that because of the steep topography any fish caught will almost certainly die, because their swim bladders will be ruptured.

"This area plays a very important part in the regeneration of fish stocks, and allowing fishing in the area will have a negative long-term effect on local stocks," conservationists argue.

For more information visit:-
<http://www.africanoceans.net>

NEW MAPPING WEBSITE LAUNCHED



A new web site focusing on the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS), remote sensing and mapping to improve the sustainability of aquaculture and inland fisheries is now available.

GISFish is aimed at GIS practitioners and fisheries and aquaculture professionals in developing countries.

Information is accessed through searchable databases on applications published in the mainstream and gray literature. These include case studies, abstracts, and downloadable publications. The site offers online discussions, postings of on-going projects, training opportunities, data sources, tools and freeware, and news and events.

To access it go to <http://www.fao.org/fi/gisfish/index.jsp>

For more information visit:-
<http://www.africanoceans.net>

AQUACULTURE THE WAY FOR SOUTH AFRICA RURAL FOLKS

Aquaculture could provide South Africa's agrarian poor with a passport to better nutrition as well as better economic prospects.

The practice could help the region faced with erratic weather patterns with high potential of economic growth rate and food security according to a Food and Agriculture Organization backed programme.

"Aquaculture in Southern Africa is unfortunately still underdeveloped but there is good potential, as there are adequate inland water resources in most parts of the region," said Erik Hempel, team leader of the regional office of INFOPECHE.

INFOPECHE is an intergovernmental organization providing marketing information and a cooperation service for fishery products in Africa set up in 1985 as a United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) project.

Hempel pointed out that aquaculture could complement existing sources of income and food as well as provide alternatives to improvise communities of subsistence farmers in the region

Southern Africa has an estimated 20,000 small bodies of water, mostly reservoirs built to provide water for domestic use, watering cattle and irrigating crops.

Besides inland water resources, countries along the east coast of Africa, like Mozambique and South Africa, have the potential to develop shrimp farming, but Hempel said aquaculture along the west coast, which is "exposed to the elements, would

require a great deal of investment". Most efforts to kick-start fish farming for subsistence farmers have been stumped by lack of resources, skills and funding.



Lahsen Ababouch, Chief of the Fish Utilisation and Marketing Service at FAO

According to Lahsen Ababouch, Chief of the Fish Utilisation and Marketing Service at the FAO there were plans to replicate the South East Asian aquaculture experience and success in Africa.

According to the FAO's 'State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2006' (SOFIA) report Nigeria is the continental leader, with reported production of 44,000 tonnes of catfish, tilapia and other freshwater fish.



Photo Credit: Suzanne Poland/USAID

A group of small-scale farmers who operate a fish farm use a net to collect tilapia fingerlings in Mozambique.

Ababouch said there was a growing global demand for fish like tilapia and catfish, which are cost-effective

species and suitable for subsistence aquaculture.

Zambia has more than 6,000 small-scale fish farmers with over 13,000 fishponds. The Mozambican government built hatcheries and demonstration farms in the early 1960s. They renewed their interest in freshwater fish farming in the late 1970s as a means of supplying fish to the rural population.

*For more information visit:-
<http://www.africanoceans.net>*

ASCLME GETS PROGRAMME MANAGER

Dr. David Vousden has been appointed Programme Manager for the Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystem (ASCLME) programme.



Dr. David Vousden

Dr. Vousden, an international waters expert has substantial

working experience in the United Nations and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) where he has worked as consultant and adviser for over 11 years.

His appointment was made in April 2007 following interviews conducted by a five member panel representing the main partners in the project. Main partners are UNDP; UNOPS; GEF; and NEPAD COSMAR.

The ASCLME is a five year programme (2007-2011) financed by GEF and other international bodies to the tune of 30.6 million US dollars. Implementation of the programme is anticipated to begin anytime soon.

*For more information visit:-
<http://www.africanoceans.net>*



FIVE AFRICAN COUNTRIES WINS ELECTION TO UN COMMISSION

Five African countries including Cameroon, Ghana, Mauritius, Nigeria and Seychelles were elected to the UN Commission on Limits of Continental Shelf (CLCS) at the seventeenth meeting of States parties to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which took place in New York US, on 14 June and from 18-22 June 2007. With 149 states parties present and voting, candidates from the group of African States required two-thirds majority or 100 votes to be elected.

In the first round of voting, Mauritius and Nigeria easily led the African group with 143 and 129 votes respectively, with Ghana and Seychelles completing the pack with 124 votes each. Cameroon and Togo trailed with 99 votes each and had to go into four rounds of voting before Cameroon clinched the remaining one seat with 106 to Togo's 33 votes.

The commissioners elected from Africa are Dr. Larry Awosika of Nigeria; Dr. Emmanuel Kalngui from Cameroon; Dr. Isaac Oduro from Ghana; Dr. Michael Rosette from Seychelles and Dr. Indurlall Fagoonee from Mauritius. Dr. Awosika will be representing Nigeria for the third time in the Commission.

At the time of the conclusion of the elections, the President of the 17th Meeting of States Parties, Ambassador Rosemary Banks of the Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations, congratulated the 20 candidates that had already secured their place in the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf for a 5-year term from 2007-2012. They are Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, Mauritius, Seychelles, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Georgia, Romania, Russian Federation,

Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Australia, Ireland and Norway.

On the overall, parties at the meeting elected 21 members to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and considered, *inter alia*: the future arrangements regarding the allocation of seats on that Commission; the future arrangements regarding the equitable geographical distribution of members of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS); the report of ITLOS to the meeting of States parties for 2006; information reported by the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority; activities of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf; and budgetary matters.

For more information visit:-
<http://www.africanoceans.net>

SADC MEETS OVER FISHERIES

Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) officials met in Windhoek, Namibia in April 2007 for two days to scrutinize a draft strategy for the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Fisheries.



Kilus Nguvauva Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Marine - Namibia

The SADC Technical Committee Meeting was in realization by member states that harmonized policies to promote inland and marine aquaculture in the region

were lacking.

Although the fishing sector is a critical contributor to economies in terms of income generation, employment creation, poverty alleviation and general uplift living

standards, the potential contribution of the sector remained unexploited. "For the SADC Region to get the best out of the fisheries resources there is need to implement the SADC Protocol on Fisheries, which came into force on August 8, 2003," explained Namibia's Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources Kilus Nguvauva.

There is need to develop a plan for the implementation of a legal instrument common to marine and inland fisheries, and also to set up the broad lines of common fisheries policy," said Nguvauva.

"The Protocol has been ratified by ten member states, and time has come for its full implementation," added the Deputy Minister.

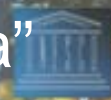
Potential in the fisheries sector has mainly been affected by insufficient human and institutional expertise in the handling and processing of fish, especially value addition.

Lack of concrete interventions to address the constraints faced by women in the sector also remains another challenge. Further, there has been a general concern over marine life having declined drastically over the past few years. Contributing factors to this high decline rate are largely pollution from port industries, spillages from shipping vessels, humans killing marine animals and the low levels of pelagic fish stocks on which these animals feed.

The delegates shared experiences on progress made by member states towards the implementation of this plan as well as identifying potential areas for project development in the fisheries sector.

Issues which needed policy decisions, were identified, after which the programme of work for consideration by the SADC senior officials and ministers was drawn up.

For more information visit:-
<http://www.africanoceans.net>



SWIOF PROGRAMME ON COURSE

Preparations for a programme that seeks to promote environmentally sustainable use of fish resources within the South Western Indian Ocean (SWIO) is nearing completion. The South Western Indian Ocean Fisheries Programme (SWIOFP) is now headed for the implementation stage pending the disbursal of funding.

The programme brings together Comoros, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa, and United Republic of Tanzania in the implementation of an ecosystem based approach to fisheries management in the Agulhas and Somali LMEs.



SWIOFP study area

far is the completion of negotiations and acceding to the project agreement by all the participating countries. The completion of this activity was succeeded by the finalization of the Project Appraisal Document (the GEF Project Document) for submission to the Bank's Board of Directors for approval.

It is anticipated that all approvals on the document by the World Bank will be finalized by end of June 2007 after which countries will have up to three months to meet the "Effectiveness" conditions of their Grant and Project Agreements.

Another main achievement of the project is the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the SWIOFP countries on implementation of the fisheries programme. A draft of the MOU document has been circulated to all participating countries for final comments. Finalization of the MOU will be a key accomplishment as it will have set the stage for the implementation of the programme.

At the same time, the SWIOF administration offices have been transferred from Mozambique to Kenya where the Programme Management Unit (PMU) will be based and an interim Regional Manager has been appointed to coordinate activities of the project.

Mr. Kaitira Ibrahim Katonda of Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute (TAFIRI) is the new Regional Manager for the programme. He has considerable experience in this field, having been involved in the Lake Victoria multinational programme.

One of the outstanding achievements of the project preparation process so

Preparation of the Project Implementation Manual (PIM), as required by all GEF-World Bank projects is in its final stages. The PIM will provide guidance to the PMU and project managers in the implementation of programme. It is designed to strengthen financial management, monitoring and evaluation. The final document will be available before the starting date of the project implementation.

For more information visit:-
<http://www.africanoceans.net>

UPCOMING EVENTS

GEF Biennial International Waters Conference, July 31 - August 3, 2007, Cape Town, South Africa

Anglophone African sub-regional workshop on the review of, and capacity-building for, the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity programme of work on protected areas, 13 -15 August 2007, Cape Town, South Africa

Workshop on the Coral Reef Indicators of Land-Based Pollution, 1 - 5 October 2007, Mombasa, Kenya

International Meeting on Technology of Seawater Intrusion into Coastal Aquifers (TIAC'07) and International Symposium on Coastal Aquifers and Desalination Plants (SIACODE'07), 16 - 19 October, 2007, Almeria, Spain

2nd International Sustainable Marine Fish Culture Conference and Workshop, 19 - 21 October 2007, Fort Pierce, Florida

The Fifth WIOMSA Scientific Symposium, 22 - 26 October 2007, Durban, South Africa

WIOMSA SCP training course - An introduction to Marine systematic Conservation Planning (SCP) for application in the Western Indian Ocean region. 27-31 October 2007, Durban, South Africa

The 8th International Conference on the Mediterranean Coastal Environment, is scheduled for 13 - 17 November 2007, Alexandria, Egypt.

Pacem in Maribus XXXII: Waves of Change - Women, Youth and the Sea - Partnering for the Protection of the Marine Environment 5 - 8 November, 2007, Attard, Malta

"Coasts and Oceans: Hope for Africa"



MADAGASCAR PROTECTS "SPECTACULAR" WETLANDS

The Government of Madagascar early this year extended state protection to one of its most spectacular and delicate ecosystems. In January 2007, President Marc Ravalomanana signed a decree that automatically covers the Mahavavy-Kinkony Wetlands into the scheme of protected areas. The Mahavavy-

Another wetland, Lake Alaotra in eastern Madagascar, was also granted similar protection.

The Mahavavy-Kinkony wetlands holds all of the wetland bird species found in western Madagascar, many of which are found nowhere else on earth. They represent key habitats for



Native aquatic turtle in Madagascar

Kinkony protected area covers almost 3,000 square kilometres of tropical wetlands, forests, savannas and caves and is considered as "crucial" for people, wildlife and birds by environmentalists. It is located in western Madagascar.

species like the critically endangered lemur, crowned sifaka, and the Madagascar big-headed turtle.

Finally, the Mahavavy-Kinkony Wetlands also are a vital resource to the Malagasy people for fishing, hunting and agriculture.

The declaration of protection was applauded by conservation experts who saw it as a milestone in the continuing attempts to protect the country's unique biodiversity which also offers a lifeline to the human population dependent on it.



Sakalava rail one of the critically endangered birds

The area's protection is part of President Ravalomanana's 'Durban Vision', whereby Madagascar will increase its total protected areas to six million hectares by 2008 - up from only 1.7 million hectares.

The 'Durban Vision' was announced by the Malagasy President in South Africa in 2003.

Environmentalists for long had lobbied for these wetlands to be protected.

The government granted the area a protected status for two years. This, according to Malagasy legislation, is a preliminary step before the area being granted permanent protection.

For more information visit:- <http://www.africanoceans.net>

FISHERIES BOOM IN ANGOLA

Angola is currently enjoying a fishing boom having tripled its continental catch from 5,000 in 2003 to 15,000 tonnes in 2006.

The Director General of the Artisanal Fisheries Development Institute (IPA), Dr. Agostinho Duarte Agostinho has attributed the substantial increase of catches to the acquisition of new fishing boats and the organizing of training courses for fishermen.

From the 18 provinces of the country, he said that the regions of Bengo with 800 tonnes per year, Kwanza Norte with 500 tonnes and Moxico with 2,000 tonnes per year, have highly contributed to the increase of catches in the continental shelf fisheries.

According to the Director, the process of registering data on the activities in the rest of the other provinces is still poor, a gap which has contributed the lack of enough information on the amount of catches in these regions.

In line with the government's programme to boost the continental shelf fisheries in the country, IPA is handing over boats and kits to fishermen, among other equipment. IPA has also been training fishermen and organizing them into co-operatives or associations.

In the framework of the programme to boost the continental fisheries, each province has received from IPA 120 kits of fishing nets, 10,000 fish-hooks, with the lines as well as material for repairing boats.

They also supplied communication and safety equipment for the fishermen.

For more information visit:- <http://www.africanoceans.net>



AFRICA'S BANKS STARTING TO RESPOND TO ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE CONCERNS

Seven out of ten banks in South Africa and three out of 12 banks in Nigeria are now factoring environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues into their credit risk assessment for corporate and consumer loans. The findings, by the United Nations Environment Programme's Finance Initiative (UNEP FI), highlight how wider, sustainability factors are beginning to penetrate the lending decisions of Africa's financial community albeit to varying degrees.

The development, mirroring those in other parts of the globe, is being fuelled by a variety of factors including "reputational risks" reflecting concerns by banks over being linked to an environmentally unfriendly or socially damaging project or activity. Other driving forces include the requirements of multilateral banks and lending bodies, such as the International Finance Corporation, the Dutch FMO and the African development Bank for local banks to meet ESG standards including the Equator Principles.

Both South Africa and Nigeria now also have an array of new environmental legislation which may have important ramifications and liability considerations for banks and lending institutions. The recent setting up of a sustainability index on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, the first in Africa, is also concentrating corporate financial minds in that country.

The findings, launched at the World Economic Forum meeting in Cape Town held in South Africa in June

2007, are contained in the report 'Banking on Value: A New Approach to Credit Risk in Africa' compiled by the UNEP FI African Task Force in partnership with the University of South Africa Center for Corporate Citizenship.



Mr Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director

The report also gives insights into how the different banks surveyed are dealing with the challenge of ESG.

Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP Executive Director who attended the meeting, said "Environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues are increasingly defining the lending policies of banks world-wide as they compete and operate in a globalized market of trans-national corporations and globally aware consumers. Africa's banks are also clearly recognizing these realities. It may be starting fastest in South Africa and Nigeria but I have no doubt this will become a Continent-wide phenomenon as Africa's economies grow and Africa's companies become increasingly regional and global players".

The 52 page report- produced under the guidance of Cas Coovadia, Managing Director of the Banking

Association of South Africa and Justin Smith, Head of Governance and Sustainability at Nedbank involved more than 25 financial institutions and key experts. Banks which took part were ABSA; Industrial Development Corporation; Barclays South Africa; Citigroup South Africa, Investec; Nedbank; Development Bank of South Africa; First National Bank; Standard Bank and Standard Chartered.

In Nigeria they were Access Bank; First Atlantic Bank; Chartered Bank; First Bank Nigeria; Citigroup Nigeria; Guaranty Trust Bank; Diamond; Nigerian Import Export; Eco Bank; United Bank of Africa; Fidelity Bank and Zenith.

"While interviews are limited to Nigeria and South Africa, we provide this study and its findings to assist financial institutions throughout the Continent in embedding ESG issues in their management structures and lending practices," said Messrs Coovadia and Smith.

For more information visit:- <http://www.africanococeans.net>

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