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Past and Future

The publication of this issue of WAMER Info, the last for 2008 and the first for 2009 provides us with an opportunity to take stock of our progress and set our sights on the future. Not just because it's the end of a year and the start of a new one but also because many of our projects are winding up while new ones are getting started. In a nutshell, things are going well. The WAMER programme continues to grow and gain the trust and respect of our programmatic and financial partners. Phase II of PRCM Phase II (2008-2011) continues to provide support for several of our ongoing initiatives (e.g. marine turtles, fisheries management, strengthening civil society...) while new frontiers are opening up- like tackling the environmental and social challenges linked to the development of off shore oil and gas reserves. WWF WAMER has also extended its network of partnerships to work with the University of Rhode Island (USA) on a USAID funded programme to help develop sustainable fisheries management in Saloum River Delta; with ADEPA (an ecoregional NGO) for the reinforcement of the capacities of Professional Fishers' Associations and fisheries-oriented NGOs; with Enda Tiers Monde to push for improved fisheries policies and adaptation to climate change; and with the CSRP (Subregional Fisheries Commission) and the IUCN to help WAMER country governments to develop and negotiate better fisheries access agreement with Europe and Asia. Our presence in the ecoregion continues to expand as the ICAM (Integrated Coastal Areas Management) project in The Gambia has been funded; our first Programme Officer for Mauritania (Mohamed Vall) is our focal point in Nouakchott where he will be tackling fisheries and environmental policy issues; we are assisting the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Institute in Guinea Bissau (IBAP) to develop long term funding options. Further afield, some of our regional programmes are supporting conservation efforts in Sierra Leone which has recently joined the PRCM family. The WAMER mandate has also been broadened to cover WWF's Niger Basin fresh water programme based in Niamey. Adapting to these changes has meant the recruitment of new staff and internal restructuring- all of which bodes well for 2009 and beyond. From all of us here in WAMER to all of you wherever you may be, may 2009 bring you happiness and satisfaction.

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INTERNAL LIFE IN WAMER

Arrivals

The WAMER programme has reinforced our staff with the recruitment of Mr. Papa Ndiogou Ndiaye, an accounts and finance expert and Mrs. Fatou Ndour as secretary/receptionists. Our Fisheries Department has also been expanded with the recruitment of biologist and researcher, Dr. Vaque Ndiaye, who contribute his expertise to the USAID funded Wula Nafaa fisheries project being coordinated by IRG (a US based environmental consultancy firm) and the technical and policy expertise of Mr. Alassane Dieng. Pape, Fatou, and Alassane will be based in Dakar and Vaque will be working from Foundiougne, a small town in the delta of the Saloum River in Senegal.



Papa Ndiogou Ndiaye



Alassane Dieng

WAMER settles in in Mauritania.

Fatou Ndour



WAMER now has a permanent presence in Mauritania with the recruitment of Mouhamed Vall, Fisheries and Environmental Programme Officer, thanks to support from WWF Netherlands. Mohamed is working closely with both the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Fisheries as well as with IMROP, the Mauritanian marine research institution, and the Coordination Unit of PRCM (Regional Programme for Marine and Coastal Conservation in West Africa), a coalition between WWF, IUCN, Wetlands International, and FIBA, a French NGO, and the Subregional Fisheries Commission (CSRP). The project will reinforce sustainable fisheries in Mauritania by working with government to strengthen fisheries policies and with the Banc d'Arguin National Park, the largest protected area in West Africa and also a key reproduction and nursery zone for commercial fisheries and marine biodiversity. He is also actively engaged Mauritanian on international partners to development projects to address other aspects of coastal and marine conservation and sustainable use issues of national and regional importance.



Media Training

As part of the WAMER training programme, the staff benefited from an intense training workshop aimed at adding more power and to our work with the Press - especially TV- to pass WWF’s conservation and sustainable use messages. The Media play a key role in educating the public, ensuring that environmental and development issue are well understood by civil society and government, and providing a transparent forum for dialogue.

MS Project Training

In order to continually improve WAMER performance, staff have been trained in the use of Microsoft Project, a versatile computer-based project planning and monitoring tool which aims to enhance project management. The initial two day workshop will be followed later this year with level two training .



CAMPAINING

WWF WAMER clarifies the debate between the Senegalese Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Fisheries (Ministry of Maritime Economy) over administrative and technical supervision of the AMP. The intense media campaign included press releases, publicized stakeholder interviews and a field visit to the WAMER supported Marine Protected Area in Joal Fadiouth all of which encouraged the Senegalese government to take a final decision. The Head of the Cabinet of the Ministry of Maritime Economy announced the formation of a Marine Protected Areas Directorate within his Ministry at the recent General Assembly of GREP the environmental press NGO. The announcement followed a marine protected areas (MPA) co-management workshop which brought together MPA managers, fisheries managers, and MPA management committees during which the participants voiced serious concerns about several issues including MPA funding and the impediments to operations linked the confusion within government between the two ministries.

In The Field

Marine Protected Area in Senegal is now functional.

With 30.500 Euros invested for the installation of 11 buoys marking the physical demarcation of the Marine protected Area, WWF WAMER puts the final act which makes it functional. So, Joal Fadiouth MPA is now in a position to meet its objectives of conservation and sustainable management of sea resources. The physical demarcation of the MPA with 11 buoys was long expected by the inhabitants of Joal Fadiouth because it was the only missing element to make the MPA functional. In Fact , Joal Fadiouth MPA with the support of WWF WAMER, the commitment of the local communities and the cooperation of local administration representatives, had already got a local management committee, a census of its existing species and habitats was made through baseline survey , its management plan already elaborated and its surveillance effective . The functionality of the MPA is such a great event to the point, the communities had to celebrate it on January 30 2009 and the Senegalese Fishery ministry also made the move to Joal Fadiouth to officially launch it. According to Dr Mamadou Diallo, WWF WAMER Species and Habitats Manager “ The buoys have been installed following the wishes of the local management committee that divide the MPA in two areas: from the coastline to 4 kilometers in the sea, this area is closed to all fishing and the other area beyond the 4 kilometers only sustainable fishing is authorized there. With such a divide, there will be a better surveillance, better management of the sea resources, of the habitats to the great happiness of the communities who depend on fishing for their livelihood.” WWF WAMER is also committed to find alternatives to fishermen like purse seiners whose activities are now forbidden in the limits of the MPA; Discussions have already started with the association of purse seiners to see the modalities” Joal Fadiouth covers an area of 174 square kilometers.



PARTNERHIPS

Awards Ceremony for Dakar's Clean Beach contest

WWF WAMER WWF WAMER and the Senegalese NGO GREP (Group Research Environment and Press) are helping people to help themselves through the first contest for the title “Cleanest Beach in Dakar”. The contest galvanized 8 communities and mobilized hundreds of citizens. The beaches of Dakar are polluted and present serious dangers to human health and wellbeing as well as to marine fauna and flora. Pollution comes from both industrial (waste water and chemicals) and urban sources (rubbish and other solid wastes). The first Plage Propre (Clean Beach) award was won by the community of Hann which surprised many observers since the Hann beach was considered Dakar's most polluted. But with determination and the mobilization of local citizens, the transformation was remarkable. In fact, one of the selection criteria for the prize was the civic commitment and mobilization. The award ceremony was held on the beach and chaired by the Minister of State for the Environment much to the pleasure of local residents.





International Seminar on the “Whales Eat Fish” controversy, May 8-9, 2008 in Dakar.

Dakar was the backdrop for the presentation of a study addressing the “Whales Eat Fish” controversy which has prompted some countries to vote against whale conservation at the International Whaling Commission for fear whales compete with people for food. The study, discussed during a two day workshop, focused on preliminary findings which clearly indicated that whales were not a threat to fisheries. Organized by Lenfest Ocean program in partnership with the WWF WAMER, this workshop brought together many participants from the West African Marine Ecoregion and was chaired by the Senegalese Minister for Maritime Economy. The results of this study were also presented in Santiago with Chile during the 60th annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission.

The PRCM at the CBD in Germany.

A delegation of WWF WAMER as a member of PRCM and WWF International took part in the ninth Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 9) in Bonn from the 16-30 May, 2008. This important conservation meeting provided an opportunity for PRCM promote its West African programme through a special side event and fundraising dinner and a PRCM stand. was organized and a fundraising dinner offered to the partners of the PRCM, a stand also were held by the PRCM during the last three days of the Conference of the parts. Before the COP, A vril 2008, the PRCM also succeeded in preparing CBD National Focal Points of the ecoregion’s countries to prepare national agendas and harmonize their positions at the regional level.

WWF Germany in WWF WAMER

WWF Germany has been providing support for WAMER’s Species and Habitat programme for several years and is looking at possibilities to broaden and deepen its links with the West African Ecoregion. As a prelude to their hosting of the 2008 WAMER Day in October, Alfred Schumm (Head of Marine Programme) and Uwe Johannsen (Marine Conservation Director) visited the ecoregion with a view to expanding the scope of their support. Over the course of the week 16-21 June, the team met with WAMER staff (including Senegal, Cape Verde, Mauritania, and The Gambia), several of our PRCM partners, and government officials. They visited field projects in Senegal (Cayar, Joal-Fadiouth, Popenguine) and The Gambia (ICAM), where they also met with the Minister of Environment. Before leaving the region, plans for WAMER Day, a biennial opportunity to discuss the WAMER programme to European NOs, EPO, and various donors, were finalized. It was an exhausting week but well worth the effort. Alfred and Uwe got an in-depth view of how WAMER’s “people centered” approach to conservation works, speak with beneficiaries at all levels, and contribute to making the WAMER programme even stronger.



Partnership with the local actors

Establishing partnerships with local partners is a cornerstone of the WAMER programme as they provide access to important skills and experience and help to ensure the sustainability of conservation gains. Over the course of 2008, WWF WAMER signed partnership agreements with the Comité de Pêche de Cayar (Cayar fisheries management committee), the association Sukaly Yarakh (“rejuveniation”) of Hann (Dakar) and FENAGIE Pêche, a national association of Senegalese professional artisanal fishers. The objective of the partnerships is to strengthen WAMER’s and our partners’ efforts to protect marine and coastal biodiversity and to improve marine resources management

Improving Fisheries Access Agreement in Guinea and Cape Verde

WWF WAMER, in collaboration with the Subregional Fisheries Commission (CSRP) and IUCN led a regional workshop for fisheries professionals to introduce a new methodology to evaluate fisheries agreements with distant water fleets. The meeting, which brought together a broad spectrum of fisheries specialists from across the ecoregion, was held in Cape Verde in April was chaired by the Cape Verdean Minister for State, Transport and the Sea. As a follow-up two national evaluation workshops were organized in August 2008 in the Cape Verde and Guinea to test this methodology and assist the States to prepare for the next round of negotiations with the European Union.





WAMER Settles into The Saloum

WWF WAMER has been contracted by IRG, and American consulting company, to implement the fisheries management component of Wula Nafaa, a USAID funded natural resource management programme. The programme will be headquartered in Foudiougne, Senegal, a town in the delta of the Saloum River. Dr. Vaque Ndiye is coordinator of the project which was designed as a new phase of an earlier project that focused primarily on forest resource use. The official launching of the project took place the project coordinator. WAMER's has been recruited to coordinate WWF's is WAMER's Programme Officer has been recruited on January 15, 2009 in Fatick under the auspices of the Minister of State for Environment, Mr Djibo Kâ. The Wula Nafaa project is designed along three axes: Nature, Wealth, and Empowerment and will be run from the grass roots level focusing on improving the standard of living of rural communities while maintaining ecological productivity



An Alliance for Sustainable Fishing.

The Ministry of Maritime Economy and WWF WAMER have organized two meetings to scale up fisheries contributions to GOANA, a government programme which aims to substantially increase food production in Senegal. Two stages are envisaged: the creation of a national alliance of fisheries actors and the development of an action plan and the search for financing for the implementation and the establishment and implementation of an action plan.



FOCUS

What does “Co-management” mean?

Since their creation by Presidential decree, most MPSs have faced operational challenges- often linked to misunderstandings about the meaning of term “co-management”. In order to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders, WWF organized a training programme which brought together MPA managers, the Fisheries Division, and community-based MPA management committees. What does Co-management mean? What’s at stake? Which are be basic principles?

Characteristics of co-management:

- Pluralistic (calling on the participation of diverse stakeholders)
- A political and cultural process (seeking a democratic approach and ensuring social justice with respect to managing natural resources);
- Complexity (long, sometimes confusing, changing e.g. the case of pilot projects within the GIRMAc programme);
- Management reflects community priorities (assurance that management responds to conservation and development needs);
- Full access to information (transparnecy) (equatible, negotiable, and confidence building) ;

Co-management principles :

- To recognize the various values, various interests and different concerns related to the management of the MPA;
- To be open to various types of rights with respect to the MPA beyond those which are legally recognized (private property and governmental mandate, for example);
- To seek transparency and equity in management;
- To allow the civil society to assume increasingly significant roles and responsibilities.
- To take advantage of synergies and complementarities based on the skills and added values of the different stakeholders;
- To include rights and responsibilities in the context MPA management;
- To recognize that the process is often more important than short-term results;
- To learn by doing: management strategies are constantly updated and improved based on experience.



Key Concepts :

Adaptive management “A management approach which recognizes on the one hand that information about ecosystem functions and management responses to cope with change are often incomplete. “

Pluralism : a situation in which autonomous, dependent, or interdependent groups interact freely to resolve natural resource management problems based on the recognition of different points of view, different interests, and different rights.

Governance:: a set of mechanisms whereby public and private individuals and institutions manage their shared priorities

Conflict management: a process which promotes dialogue and negotiation to resolve disagreements in a constructive rather than destructive way.

Social communication: a mechanism which creates and identity within a community. It assumes the exchange of information which aims to enrich shared experiences frequently in order to respond to changes. moyen visant à l'établissement d'une identité de vues au sein d'une communauté humaine





PUBLICATION

Field Guide to Cetaceans.

Manual for the evaluation of the impacts of fisheries access agreements

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