CONSULTATION TO STRENGTHEN KNOWLEDGE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PRESSURES IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

Wednesday, 7 October, 2020

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Donatus Bapentire Angnuureng
IOC-UNESCO Consultant

Bio

- IOC-UNESCO Regional Consultant to support national consultations and strengthen knowledge on environmental pressures across the Gulf of Guinea
- **Profession:** Coastal Geomorphologist
- **Experience:** Ph.D in Environmental Physics
Background of MSP Consultations

- The coastal or marine space is exposed to various environmental pressures, which could affect MSP
- The adoption of marine spatial plans is increasing worldwide
- The adoption or implementation of these plans is incomplete in various countries

- The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (UNESCO-IOC) and the European Commission adopted in March 2017 a Joint Roadmap to accelerate maritime spatial planning processes worldwide.
- The International Forum for MSP (MSPforum) and the MSPglobal Initiative were established a year later.

- The results of the current webinar discussions will support the IOC-UNESCO Assembly to achieve the following objectives in the Gulf of Guinea
Objectives of session

The workshop will solicit expert knowledge to:

1. Provide information and new facts on coastal environmental challenges that affect marine spatial planning
2. Analyse the trends of these challenges with respect to historical information
3. Discuss national and regional institutional frameworks aimed at governing marine spatial planning
4. Identify best practices in managing environmental challenges at national and regional levels
5. Document lessons learnt in tackling the challenges associated with the implementation of marine spatial planning within the Gulf of Guinea
## Agenda

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Round table: In 1 or 2 minutes

In 2 minutes, please introduce yourself:

- Name
- Your country
- Background
- Experience
Presentation by experts on coastal environmental challenges affecting marine spatial planning

KONG MUKWELE Sheila
Senior Foreign Affairs Attaché
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Ministry of External Relations of Cameroon
I- GENERAL INTRODUCTION: PROBLEM STATEMENT

1- Coastal cities are known to be the most populated and the hub to the economic growth of their nations. Majority are port-cities with ongoing heavy maritime economic activities;

3- The International Marine Environmental Law, is establishing through the international community legal climate/ocean action plans (e.g. Marine Spatial Planning) to be implemented at the national level.

4- However, the transboundary nature of the coastal environment and the challenges thereto, is an impediment to an effective Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) by any individual State.

Source: Dr. ONGUENE, Oceanographer and Lecturer at the University of Douala, Cameroon. Images showing impacts of climate change in Kribi and Douala, two Cameroon’s coastal cities.
II- CHALLENGES OF COASTAL CITIES OF THE GULF OF GUINEA (CCGG)

1- CCGG contribute to the vitality of national and regional economies, and are home to marine ecosystem services such as fisheries, tourism and maritime transportation;

2- With 31 percent of its population living along the coastline, and generating 56% of total GDP (http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/10/21/west-africa-is-being-swallowed-by-the-sea-climate-change-ghana-benin/), CCGG are expected to experience Sea levels faster than the global average (West African Economic and Monetary Union, 2014).

4- Stressors such as the fast growing population (10 million/year : State of the World’s Cities Reports, 2010/11) and poor coastal urban planning are causing great concern to their sustainability.

The stressors are magnified by the impacts of climate change (CC) and ocean acidification...

- Sea level rise leading to overtopping and the destruction of low barrier beaches that limits coastal lagoons of cities such as Douala, Cotonou, Lagos and Dakar;

- Changes in precipitations which affect the rivers feeding these lagoons and risks of flooding for CCGG;

- These changes alter the physiology of fish species, reduce calcification rates in calcifying organisms and...
III- RESEARCH GAPS

1- Lack of acknowledgment and uses of MSP in existing national and local marine frameworks:

- The importance of MSP is still to be fully considered in actions towards the protection of coastal cities, particularly those of the Gulf of Guinea, against climate change impacts.
- The strategic role that MSP plays in the implementation of the 17 SDGs (SDG 14 in particular) is still absent in the decision-makers’ policy and regulatory instruments of our coastal cities.

2- CCGG need to cooperate at a regional level for more effectiveness in fight against climate change and ocean acidification:

- Effective implementation of MSP as a tool for the protection of the chain of CCGG will require collaborative efforts at the sub-regional level.
- For the protection of the cities from climate change and the implementation of SDG14, the strengthening of existing marine legal and institutional frameworks as well as the creation of multidimensional and multisector platforms of cooperation whereby all concerned stakeholders are involved becomes key.
The pressure of urbanisation, rapid and vast growth of their populations, and alarming impacts of CCGG are at high risks of more foreseen and unforeseen outbreak of crisis.

MSP has emerged as a major tool in the 21st century in the fight against potential impacts of CC and the associated rising sea levels in coastal areas, and other related consequences such as insecurity.

The complexity of ocean governance, even through MSP requires collective efforts for it to be efficient.

The protection of coastal cities using MSP would be effectively attained only through a common regional multisector and cross-borderer stakeholder involvement.

This work is carried basically through the inductive and deductive methods.
V- RESULTS

1- THE IMPORTANCE OF MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING TO CCGG

With the intensification of spatial squeeze in CCGG due to present and future impacts of CC, MSP, because of its integrated nature is proving to be the sustainable tool that these coastal cities would benefit from for obvious reasons:

- MSP will enable CCGG and their respective national governments to develop and implement an overall coordinated management plan based on ecosystem approach, while enhancing in the process the different activities, uses and services of their individual and common coastal zone;

- MSP is a framework for marine management, that allows all marine interests and stakeholders to be given due consideration, while solving the problem of overlapping of competence;

- MSP will enable these cities to effectively implement their rights and duties towards the sustainable exploitation and protection of their coastal areas as reflected in important global conventions, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Paris Agreement.
The complexity of the coastal environment of these cities, requires regional cooperation, as recommended by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS):

- The good governance of the coastal environment cannot be achieved by individual efforts of coastal cities or States, but rather by collective regional actions;

- The regional level of governance has proven to be a strategic lever for the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean, often taking action "closer, further and faster" than institutions at the international or national level;

- Regional cooperation will enhance the sustainability of CCGG by creating a platform of cooperation, coordination and harmonisation of all frameworks of all sectors and scales (e.g.: governments and academia);

- Regional cooperation offers the possibility for these cities to use the International Law principle of "mutual supportiveness" that is of key importance in the fight against CC and the guarantee of sustainable development;

- Hence, effective integrated marine action plan against climate change, such as MSP, requires cooperative efforts, because in the words of Albert Salman, Director General of Coastal & Marine Union – EUCC, "the more partners the better". 
VI- RECOMMENDATIONS

For the effective implementation of the found results of this study, the following policy recommendations would be useful:

- The establishment of strengthened collaboration platforms, which will involve all stakeholders: a “public-private partnership” regional cooperation that gives the frontline to regional sea bodies such as the Abidjan Convention’s Executive Secretariat;
- The creation of a regional consultative body for CCGG, wherein exchange of knowledge and monitoring of the MSP measures shall be carried out;
- The creation of strategic regional partnerships between local/national coastal governments and universities and research institutes would certainly help in attaining sustainable development, since academia are hubs of development and innovation;
2. David Hasan et al. (Eds.), Transboundary Marine Spatial Planning and International Law, Earthscan from Routledge, New York, 2015.
COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES AFFECTING THE GULF OF GUINEA

REGINA FOLORUNSHO (PhD)
NIGERIAN INSTITUTE FOR OCEANOGRAPHY AND MARINE RESEARCH
VICTORIA ISLAND, LAGOS.
THE GULF OF GUINEA COAST

The Gulf of Guinea coastal environment is one of the most treasured parts of the African continent. The coastline is quite substantial with many inlets, bays, beaches and harbors but affected by five major factors
Flooding (rainfall and/or storm surge),
Coastal Erosion,
Land slide,
Subsidence,
Earthquakes

- These hazards could creep, be slow and or fast in occurrence.
- Most conducive environment for its occurrence are bays, estuaries, delta areas and low-lying coast.
- Result from nature or and human interactions
The Nigerian and other Africa coastal geosyncline are composed of young sediments still undergoing the natural processes of dewatering and compaction.

Such processes result in subsidence and ultimate lowering of the coastal topography.

Erosion in Port Novo, Benin
Ref. courtesy: George Degbe

The question is: What is the rate of subsidence along the coast and also along the coastal zone?
Local seismicity at Mount Cameroon significantly increased in early 1993. Before then, an average of 10-12 events/month were recorded. The monthly number of seismic events increased to 20 in January-February 1993 and to 180 events in March (fig above).
OPTIONS FOR REDUCTION OF IMPACTS

- MITIGATE
- PREVENT
- ADAPT
Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. This is achieved through risk analysis, which results in information that provides a foundation for mitigation.

- Identification and quantification of the hazard that is present (Most times our research activities do not extend beyond our comfort zone to most vulnerable areas).
- Flood hazard mapping
- Analysis of reoccurrence probability for FLOODING
- Vulnerability Assessment for different coastal areas in Africa
- Early Warning System (Tide gauges)
Adaptation options require education, provision of infrastructures, enhancement of management skills and research to collate, analyze historical climate data and associated met ocean data.

If the sea is taking what belongs to man
Man will fight and reclaim it
If man has taken what belongs to the sea
The sea will fight and reclaim it

(Appeaning Addo. Cotonou, 2011)
RECOMMENDATION

- Improve relevant data collection and dissemination of products to users
- Identify and fill skills gaps
- Assess coastal vulnerability and implement set back lines along the coast
- Improve understanding of storm surges
- Implement an Early Warning System
- Institute regular meetings to assess progress
- Publish the results in the scientific literature
WAY FORWARD

• Several gaps in knowledge exist in terms of observations and research in relation to coastal hazards.

• Observational data and data access are prerequisites for adaptive management, yet many observational networks are shrinking and/or diminishing.

• There is a need to improve the understanding of our coastal environment at scales relevant to decision making (Flooding, erosion, storm surge)

• Implement an Early Warning System !!!

• ODINAFRICA Marine Atlas Project developed by the Ocean Data and Information Network for Africa (ODINAFRICA) February 2007 at the IOC Project Office for International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) in Ostend, Belgium.
• ODINAFRICA project over the years has provided many countries in Africa with capacity and facilities for an effective data and information collation, archiving and exchange.

• Many countries in the Gulf of Guinea have data and information centers which have collated national, international and historical data needed for putting in place a holistic approach for mitigating natural hazards.

• Research data and results should contribute to formulation and advice on resources management, policy issues and decision-making process.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION !!!
Presentation by experts on institutional capacity, tools and policy gaps
Presentation on good management practices and lessons learnt
Questions and discussion
Summary of presentations – Moderator

Closing remarks - UNESCO REPRESENTATIVE
Thanks to all Partners!

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