

**Report on the Celebration of World Wetlands Day
Saturday, February 2, 2008**

Liberia a signatory to the Ramsar Convention and a nation of the World Global Village Joined other nations to celebrate World Wetlands Day which is been held February 2 of each year.

World Wetlands Day this year fell on a Saturday- a non working day in Liberia. Despite this fact, it was attended by various organizations and groups of the Liberian society including international organizations, government ministries/agencies, environmental ngos, etc.

The program was an in-door one. The presentations were made at the program. These presentations were much deliberation.



Stake-holders and interest groups in Liberia came together to observe world wetlands Day, despite the fact that this year's celebration fell on a Saturday, a non official working day in Liberia.



The Acting Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency, Prof Jerome Nyenkan (standing) welcomed all participants to the World Wetlands Celebration.

He underscored that wetlands are critical ecosystems that are fragile and need to be managed and use wisely, in so doing our wetlands will be healthy and sustainable. We in turn will be healthy. Indeed, “Healthy Wetlands Healthy People.”



Participants listened attentively as Mrs. Cecelia Kollie, National Focal Point of the Ramsar Convention, gave an overview of the convention at the celebration. She also mentioned Liberia's obligation under the convention, her achievement and the challenges which lie ahead.

The Executive Director, Mr. R. Siafa Sambolah of “Farmers Association to Conserve the Environment” (FACE).” A local Environmental NGO, did a documentary on Lake Piso Wetlands. This documentary took into account some of the topics of this year celebration, such as:

Water Availability

Water Pollution

Mental Well-being, amongst other



He said the available of water was very crucial for agriculture and drinking. Mr. Sambolah said it is important that we as a nation ensure that our wetlands are clean and healthy; this will yield a healthy people as our lives depend on our wetlands.

The availability of water will ensure the ecological services of our wetlands; (recharge And discharge) of ground water, habitats are ecologically fit for breeding, and fish count will increase etc. If care is not taken to ensure the availability of water its adverse effect will have a toll on population, health, well-being, food, etc.

He said water pollution only breeds poor health; make people susceptible to infectious diseases such as malaria, diarrhea, cholera, and skin irritation, (body rash, itch, etc.).

Mental Well-being: Director Sambolah said that wetlands have beautiful sceneries which open opportunities for tourism and recreational activities. He concluded that one can beat the heat of the day by resting under the cool of wetlands canopies.



Partial view of participants at the World Wetlands Day's celebration.



Mr. Jonathan Davies, Manager of Inspectorate Division. Of the Environmental Protection Agency talked on “Clean Water”. The availability of clean water is very important to the survival of man-kind. He numerated the many diseases that are contracted from polluted inland water, such as cholera, diarrhea, infections, etc.

He also underscored the effect of wetlands being used as dump sites. Some of the effects are: Wastes interfere with the normal functions of wetlands, such as the ability to retain water, hence there is flooding whenever it rains. Wetlands also lost their ability to filter and purify fresh water. He concluded that if nothing is done to restore these wetlands, they will eventually lose their ecosystem services.

After Mr. Jonathan Davies, presentation which brought the celebration to an end, Madam Eunice N. Dagbe, CEPA's Focal Point for the Government of Liberia through the Environmental Protection Agency admonished the participants to be ambassadors for the wetlands. They should preach and practice all what they have learned today for wise use and sustainable healthy wetlands. The result will be "Healthy Wetlands, Health People".

"HEALTH WETLANDS, HEALTHY PEOPLE"

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