Wetland capacity-building cooperation between Mali and Ghana

11 October 2005

Ghana
Mali

Wetland managers and decision-makers from Mali end study tour in Ghana

An 18-member delegation from Mali ended a five-day study tour in Ghana (29 August - 3 September, 2005). The purpose of the visit was to share experiences on the management of wetlands in Ghana and to strengthen subregional cooperation in the protection of wetlands. The team also discussed with their Ghanaian counterparts the way forward for the implementation of the respective Wetland Policy/Strategy of the two countries.

The team visited the offices of the Ramsar Administrative Authority in Ghana - Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission and Center for African Wetlands (CAW) in Accra and the Amansure Conservation Integrated Development (ACID) Project within the Amanzure Wetlands, which has been proposed for designation as Ghana’s 7th Ramsar Site.

Mr. Andrew Adjei Yeboah, Deputy Minister for Lands, Forestry and Mines, welcoming the team to Ghana said wetland ecosystems are part of any nation's natural wealth and therefore "we have to ensure a long-term ecological viability of our wetlands".

Mr. Andrew Adjei Yeboah reminded the wetland managers of the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which touched on the Wetland Strategy for Africa. "The strategy aims to maintain and/or improve the ecological integrity of wetland ecosystems so as to enhance the contribution of wetlands in the economic and social development of Africa". He said the NEPAD Wetland Strategy and Action Plan for Africa and Ghana's own National Wetlands Conservation Strategy shared common principles that the success of wetland conservation and wise use would enable a good supply of clean water, facilitate sanitation and reduce poverty.

Mr Adjei-Yeboah said Ghana's Wetlands Conservation Strategy sought to incorporate wetland management into the day-to-day activities of government, local authorities, communities and individuals within the broader context of environmental management. He expressed optimism that through learning, sharing of experience and information wetland managers of both Ghana and Mali would be able to exercise a high sense of technical competence in managing their respective wetland resources. "We will also be able to assist our local communities living in and around wetland areas to harmoniously use our wetland resources to generate enough income to improve upon their standard of living and thereby reduce their poverty levels", he added.

He called on both countries to encourage development activities that were compatible with the maintenance of wetland ecosystems to provide continuous benefits to communities living within those areas. The Minister expressed the hope that the visit would serve as the beginning of more fruitful exchanges and cooperation to support the conservation and wise use of the wetlands in Ghana and Mali.

Prof. Amadou Diallo, leader of the team and Advisor to the Minister of Environment of Mali, said there was the need to foster collaboration between the two countries on the management of wetlands. "We know Ghana has more experience in wetland management, hence our choice of Ghana for collaboration," he said.

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Ghana’s Deputy Minister for Lands, Forestry & Mines, Hon. Adjei Yeboah Interacting with visiting Malians in his office at the Ministry, Accra

Malian delegation leader and Advisor to Minister of Environment, Prof. Amadou Diallo responding to the Hon. Deputy Minister, with them is the Acting Chief Director of the Ministry, Mr. Akufo.
Mr. Charles C. Amankwah, Wetlands Coordinator, briefing delegation on route to a wetland site.

Interactions with the Malian 1st Consular, Dianguina Yaya Doucoure, during brief visit to the Office of the Malian Embassy in Accra
A group photograph with Prof. Chris Gordon (Standing on lawn, 4th from left) at Centre for African Wetlands (CAW), University of Ghana, Legon.

Mr. Parker McKeaown of Ghana Wildlife Society (GWS) briefing the group on the Amanzuri Conservation Integrated Development (ACID) Project.
A section of the group arriving at Nzulezo, the 'village on stilts'

Awulae Annor Adjaye III, Traditional Chief & member of Ghana's National Wetland Committee (seated 3rd from right), and other traditional leaders with the visiting Malian Team
End of tour cocktail party at the Swiss Hall of the Ghana Wildlife Society, Accra, Ghana.

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