

Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem Project

Project Characteristics:

- *Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis*
- *Strategic Action Programme*
- *Development of Project Brief*
- *Coastal Zone Management*
- *Consensus Building and High-Level Government Negotiations*

The globally significant Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) is bordered by 16 countries that are marked by poverty, high population growth rates and low industrialization levels: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo. Approximately 40% of the region's 300 million people (more than 1/2 of the population of the African continent) live in the coastal areas of the GCLME, many of whom are dependent on the lagoons, estuaries, creeks and inshore waters surrounding them for their sustenance and well being.

These coastal and marine areas including their upstream freshwater regions are at present affected by anthropogenic activities. The primary problems identified in the region include the overexploitation of fisheries resources, effects of land-based activities including industrial, agricultural, municipal and domestic sewage and oil and gas exploitation, habitat alteration and degradation and loss of biotic integrity.

The 16 countries working with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) developed the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) Project to identify and address environmental threats to the region.

Woods Hole Group was hired in 2003 to gain consensus on the region's needs and to finalize plans for halting and mitigating anthropogenic threats to the GCLME. David G. Aubrey, Ph.D., traveled to the region to meet with ministerial and government representatives to complete the project documents.

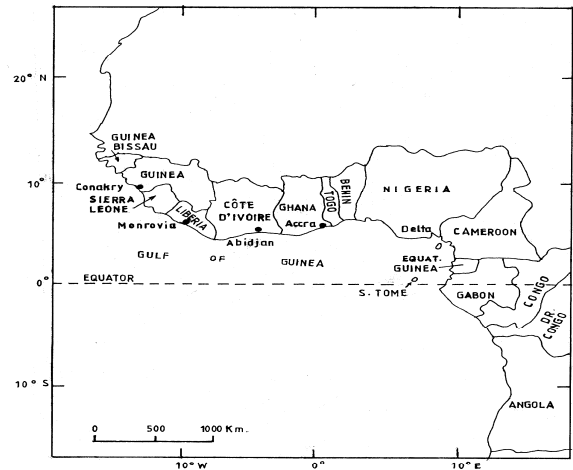


Figure 1: Map of Western Africa showing the Countries in the GCLME Area

Working with national leaders in the region and UNEP, UNDP and UNIDO, Woods Hole Group:

- Helped develop regional consensus on the priority transboundary environmental threats facing the region
- Completed a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and developed a Strategic Action Programme for the GCLME
- Developed plans to halt and remediate anthropogenic problems in the GCLME
- Presented the intervention plans and accompanying documents to regional leaders to gain consensus
- Worked with national leaders and experts in the region to draft a full Project Brief for the multi-year project

For many years Woods Hole Group has played a leading role in international environmental policy formulation and management.