



MANAGING THE IMPACTS OF LAND-BASED POLLUTION, SHIPPING (AND OTHER AT-SEA ACTIVITIES) ON MARINE BIODIVERSITY IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

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ABOUT AFMESI

- AFMESI is a pan-African, non-governmental organization (NGO).
- Headquartered in Lagos state, Nigeria.
- Founded six years ago by, Dr. Felicia Chinwe Mogo, to support the sustainable use and restoration of marine ecosystems, as well as, the development of the Blue Economy sectors across our continent.
- Run by a dedicated office team and led by a diverse, Advisory Board of maritime experts representing different African countries.



ABOUT AFMESI CONT'D

- Our annual Symposia provide a medium for driving resolutions and their appropriate implementation tools to the benefit of coastal countries (and their landlocked neighbours) across Africa.
- Our website: www.afmesi.org



OUR PARTNERS



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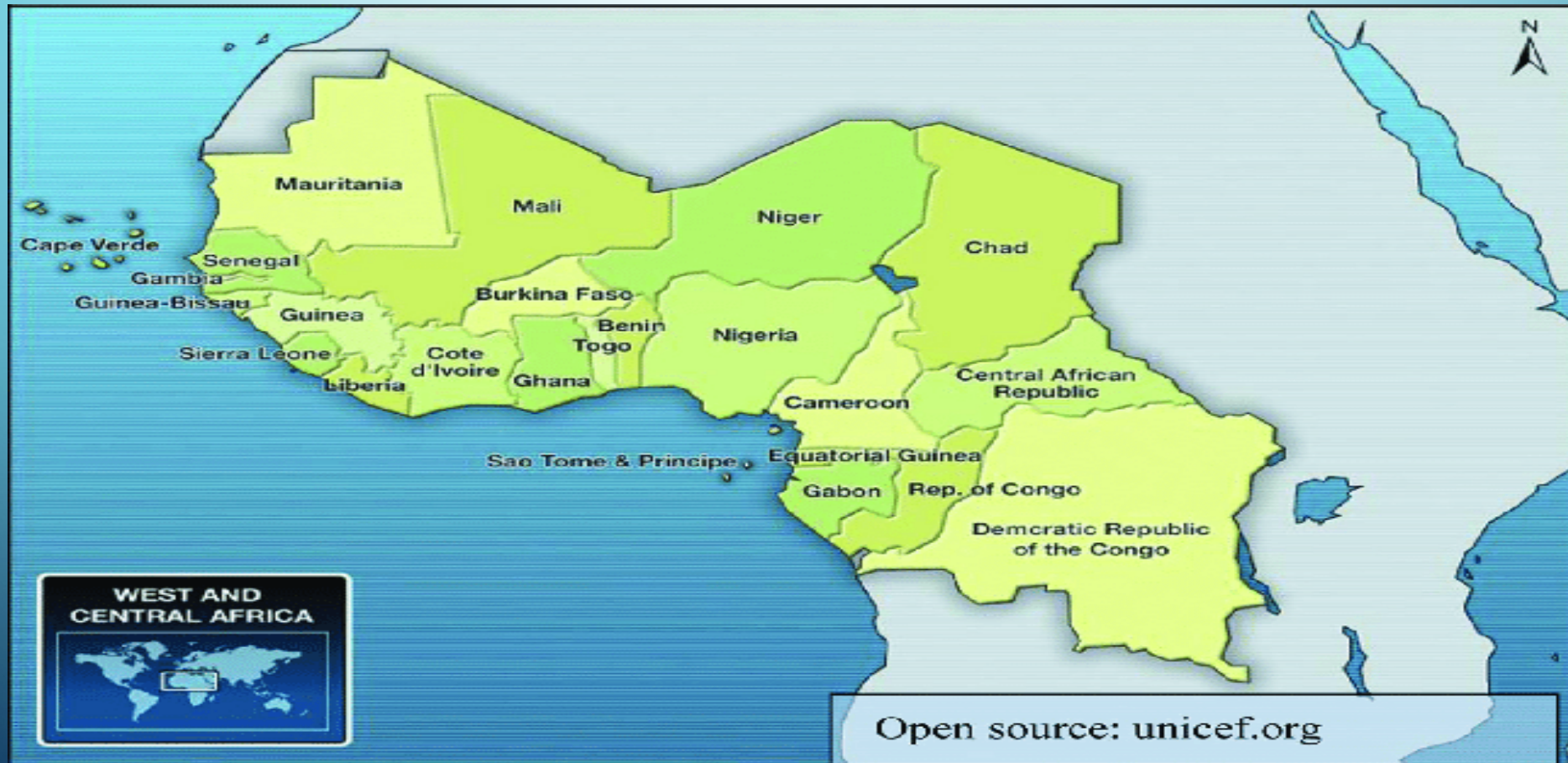
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to foster multi-sectoral learning,
building & programme implementa
including building national capacity
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CONSERVING AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY: THE WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN CONTEXTS





CONSERVING AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY: THE WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN CONTEXTS CONT'D

- With up to 20 seaports in the West and Central Africa sub-region, shipping and maritime trade are significant.
- Comprises of vast levels of hydrocarbon deposits, water bodies and marine biodiversity (sea turtles, fishes, water lily, floating rice, etc).
- The Gulf of Guinea (GoG) which consists of 17 West and Central African nations is a major maritime economic hub.
- GoG comprises of the world's third largest mangrove forest (Wetlands International, 2016).



MAP OF THE GULF OF GUINEA





THREATS TO CONSERVING AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY IN THE WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN SUB-REGION

The biodiversity of the West and Central African sub-region face different threats such as:

- a.) Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing
- b.) Maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea
- c.) Marine pollution



A.) ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED (IUU) FISHING

IUU accounts for up to 40 percent of fishes harvested in West Africa. Countries in the Global North are often the final destinations of such catches (Chatham House, 2013)

IUU reduces species population as perpetrators often target select species. This especially impacts coastal communities.

For example, in from Ghana, “trawlers enter prohibited zones and illegally adapt their fishing gear to target sardinella, which are in high demand for local consumption” (Maritime Executive, 2021). A somewhat similar case exists for Nigeria.

IUU is linked to maritime security issues in the GoG.



B.) MARITIME INSECURITY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

There has been some reported progress on maritime security in the GoG. According to the ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB), “The Gulf of Guinea region recorded 28 incidents of piracy and armed robbery in the first nine months of 2021, in comparison to 46 for the same period in 2020” (October 2021).

Progress is slow in terms of ensuring rich protection of maritime resources including aquatic life.

Several initiatives are being implemented to address maritime security issues in the GoG.



C.) MARINE POLLUTION

- 80% of marine litter in water bodies originate from land/upstream.
- Plastics, for example, distort the activities and lives of aquatic animals.
- Plastics clog/block passage channels of aquatic animals. Such blockages are also fatal to human lives. E.g. Every year in the Democratic Republic of Congo, there are fatalities linked to flooding emanating from plastic-clogged waterways (Bukasa et al., 2021, p. 181).
- Also, ballast water becomes problematic, when it introduces invasive species that compete with and/or destroy aquatic animals of West and Central African waters.



C.) MARINE POLLUTION CONT'D

- Ocean noise is another form of marine pollution. It is an affect of shipping and some other marine activities.
- There is currently no global convention or policy regulating ocean noise.
- Ocean noise distorts the physical features of aquatic animals, affects their ability to protect themselves from attack etc.



SOLUTIONS





SOLUTIONS FOR IUU AND MARITIME SECURITY ISSUES

Ensuring that coastal communities are engaged in the use and protection of their Indigenous, maritime resources.

Deployment of adequate, maritime surveillance technology.

Creation and harmonisation of laws against maritime crimes.

Establishment of marine-protected areas (MPAs) as key legal instruments.

AFMESI has created a robust MPA strategy and seeks the support of regional governments and institutions to take it a step further.

Negotiations for protection of aquatic animals in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ).



SOLUTIONS FOR MARINE POLLUTION

- Implementation of regional and national strategies on environmental management (e.g. Nigeria's model for marine litter).
- Ratification and domestication of international conventions on marine environment protection e.g London Convention and its Protocol, MARPOL and its annexes.
- Provision of waste management infrastructure upland.
- AFMESI conducts marine litter management activities in collaboration with members of the host community (especially youths from that community) to ensure sustainability of proper waste disposal attitudes.
- Promote regional implementation of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (2004).



SOLUTIONS FOR OCEAN NOISE

- Advocacy for national, regional (Africa) and international laws regulating ocean noise.
- AFMESI has secured a partnership to facilitate the training of young Africans in marine acoustics detection.



AFMESI STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN (2021 – 2025)

This is a 22-page document that will guide the NGO's engagement with pan-African stakeholders and international partners. It has five thematic areas:

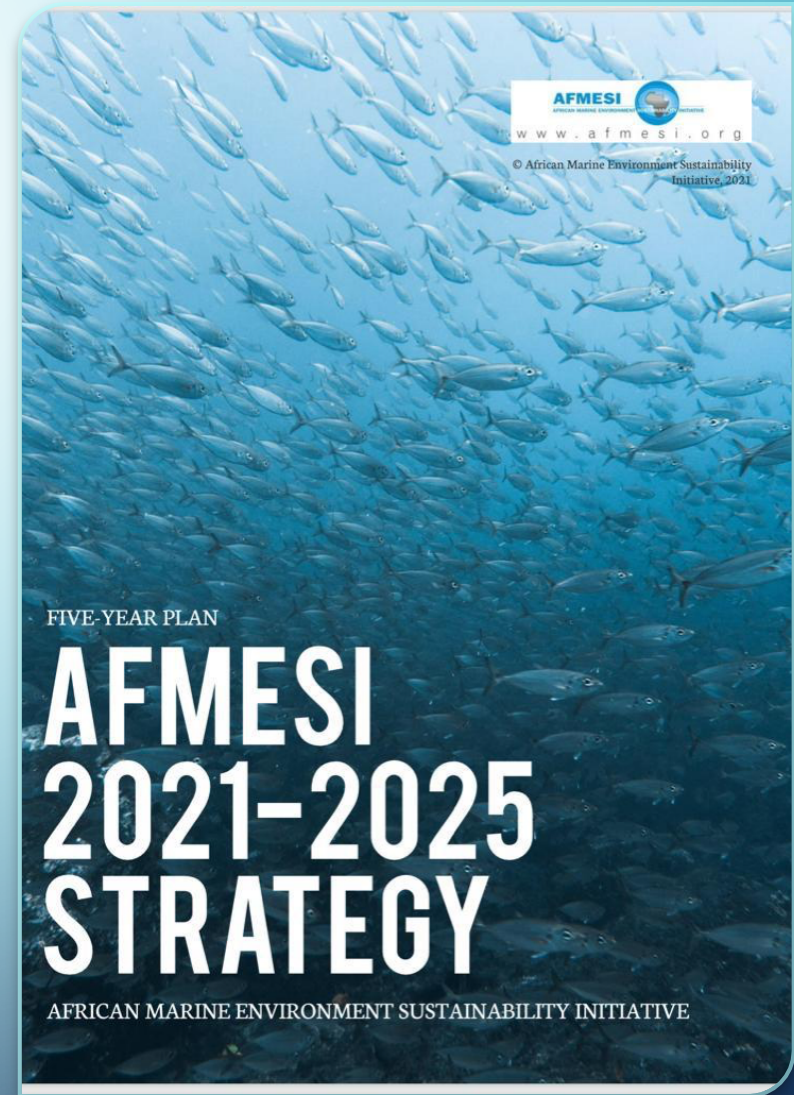
Engagements and relationships

Science and research

Advocacy and implementation: AFMESI will be launching an IUU awareness program.

Communications

Fundraising and organizational foundation





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