



## Final Report

# Enhancing Community Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of the Keta Lagoon Complex Ramsar Site, Ghana



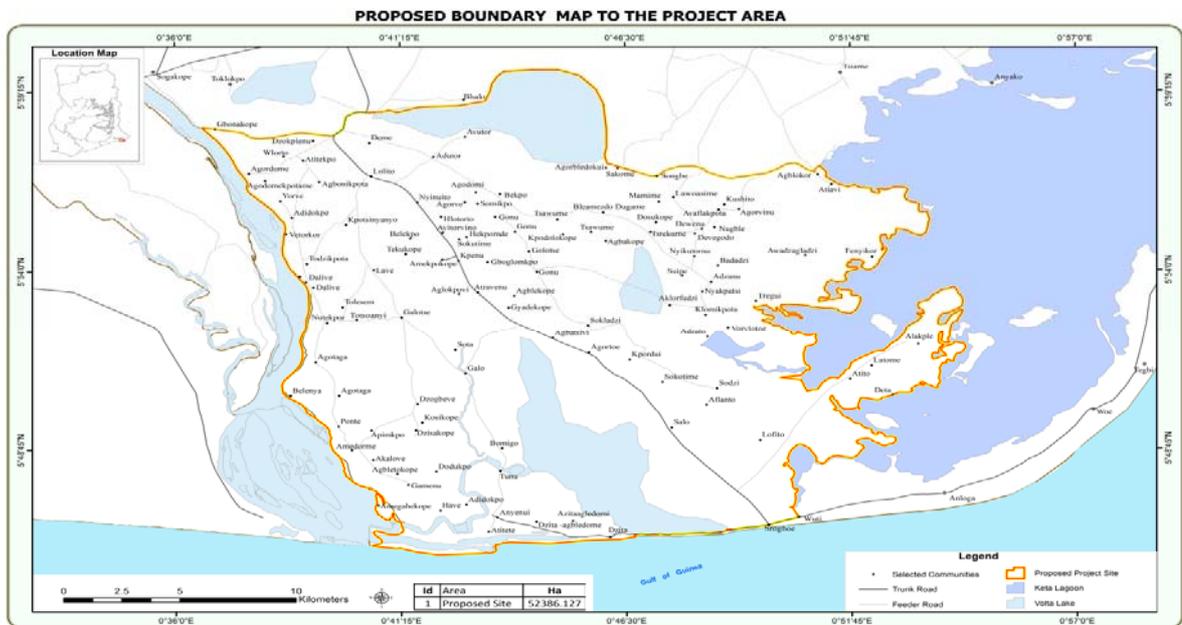
Project financed by the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (BMUB).

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to express our sincerest gratitude and appreciation to the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative for their financial support to the Keta Lagoon Complex Ramsar Site for the project titled 'Enhancing Community Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of the Keta Lagoon Complex Ramsar site, Ghana'.

We also wish to thank the Wildlife Division of the Ghana Forestry Commission for their support in seeing the successful implementation of this project. Lastly, we wish to also acknowledge the immense support by the local communities and school children for participating in this project.



Map of Keta Lagoon Complex Ramsar Site

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The management of the Keta Lagoon Complex Ramsar site implemented the project "Enhancing Community Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of the Keta Lagoon Complex Ramsar Site' from April to October, 2014. This initiative was funded by the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative with support from the Wildlife Division of the Ghana Forestry Commission.

The main aim of the project was to enhance community action for the conservation and sustainable management of the Ramsar site. This report communicates the highlights

of the activities undertaken during the implementation of the project from April-October, 2014.

## **2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT**

Keta lagoon Ramsar Site is of great international importance due to the large numbers of waterbirds that it supports. It has a high diversity of bird species accounting for about 80% of all listed wetland bird species in Ghana. Important bird species on the site include curlew sandpiper, ringed plover, Greenshank, little stint, spotted redshank and black winged stilt.

The site also harbours 3 species of endangered marine turtles namely Leatherback, Green and Olive-ridley and also the West African Sitatunga, an endangered amphibious antelope.

The main uses of the wetlands include fishing, farming, salt extraction, exploitation of mangroves as fuelwood and water transport. Despite all these benefits the wetland is faced with a lot of threats. Major threat facing the wetlands is apathy and general low level of awareness and knowledge on wetland and biodiversity issues among stakeholders leading to deforestation, overexploitation of resources, reclamation of portions of the wetland for development and pollution from agro-chemicals and household wastes. As a result of these threats the integrity of the wetlands is fast degrading.

The main objective of the project was to enhance community action for the conservation and sustainable management of the site through restoration of degraded habitats, education and raising awareness on the values of wetlands and biodiversity.

Planned activities included Radio Programmes on wetland conservation, Production of educational/awareness materials, conservation education in schools/communities and habitat restoration. The target groups were decision makers, youth, fishermen, farmers, women and school children.

The project was funded by the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative and supported by the Wildlife Division(WD) of the Forestry Commission(FC), Ghana for a period of 6 months (2013-2014).

The Wildlife Division worked closely with the local communities to implement activities under this project.

### 3.0 ACTIVITIES TO BE PERFORMED UNDER THIS AGREEMENT AND EXPECTED RESULTS

<b>Project Activity</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>	<b>Result Indicators</b>
Conduct Radio programmes on wetland conservation	At least 10 radio programmes developed and broadcasted on two (2) local Radio stations	10 Radio programmes ( 5 English and 5 local) developed and broadcasted on 2 Radio stations by September, 2014
Produce educational and Awareness materials	1000 leaflets, 100 T-shirts and 5 billboards produced and distributed	1000 leaflets, 100 T-shirts and Five(5) bill boards produced and distributed by May 2014
Conservation Education in Schools/Communities	Conservation education organized in twenty(20) schools and ten(10) communities in Keta Municipality  One projector and a screen procured for conservation education	Conservation education organized in 20 schools and 10 communities in Keta Municipality by September 2014  One projector and one (1) screen procured for conservation education by June 2014
Habitat Restoration	7000 mangrove and other tree seedlings raised in a central nursery and planted in 5 communities	3,000 mangroves, 2000 Acacia spp and 2000 Cassia spp seedlings raised and planted in 5 communities by September 2014

#### 4.0 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

Activity	Implementation	Results and Result Indicators
Conduct Radio programmes on wetland conservation	We organized radio programmes in English and the local Ewe Language on one (1) local radio station to address the problem of apathy and raise awareness among stakeholders on the values of wetlands and biodiversity.	12 Radio programmes (6 English and 6 local language) were developed and broadcasted on Hogbe FM radio station to educate stakeholders on wetland conservation issues. Issues discussed included status of Keta Lagoon Complex Ramsar site, wildlife laws, importance of wetlands and biodiversity, role of stakeholders in the effective management of wetlands, international conventions, migratory birds and Flyways, importance of birds.
Produce educational and awareness materials	To further raise awareness on the importance of wetlands and biodiversity we designed, produced and distributed leaflets, posters, T-shirts and billboards in beneficiary communities	1000 leaflets, 100 posters, 100 T-shirts and 3 billboards designed, produced and distributed to stakeholders.  The leaflets and posters were distributed on market days in beneficiary communities and in schools. T-shirts were distributed as follows- Local people including volunteers(60), Wildlife staff (10), members of wildlife groups(30)
Conservation Education in schools and communities	We procured a projector for our educational programmes  Visited local schools and communities from April to October, 2014 to give lectures on wetland/biodiversity issues and show documentaries on wildlife	One(1) projector procured  A total of over 6,000 pupils and 157 teachers in 22 schools sensitized on wetland and biodiversity issues  12 communities educated on wetland/biodiversity issues using vehicle mounted public address system
Habitat Restoration	We organized a training workshop on	35 pupils gained knowledge and

	<p>mangrove nursery practices for school children on 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2014.</p> <p>Under a food-for-work programme we were supported by community volunteers and school children to raise 7,500 mangrove and other tree seedlings in a central nursery</p> <p>2,500 mangroves and other tree species planted in degraded areas in 3 beneficiary communities.</p>	<p>skills in mangrove nursery practices</p> <p>One(1) central nursery established with 7,500 seedlings made up of 3,500 white mangroves, 2000 Cassia spp and 2000 Acacia spp for habitat restoration</p> <p>1,500 mangroves, 500 Acacia spp and 500 Cassia spp planted in 3 communities namely Tunu, Attitetti and Xavi.</p>
<p>Celebrate World Migratory Bird Day (This is an unplanned activity and does not form part of the agreement)</p>	<p>World Migratory Bird Day celebrated on 10th May 2014 in Afeadenyigba in the Keta Municipality through lectures and field visits to create awareness on the event for the protection of birds. This was preceded by a Press release in Accra and social announcements on 2 Radio stations in Keta of the event.</p>	<p>36 participants including the Executive Director of Wildlife Division of Ghana Forestry Commission, the Ramsar Focal person in Ghana, CEO's of 2 environmental NGO's, staff of Wildlife Division, representatives of local people and School children attended and participated.</p>
<p>Acknowledgement of donors and partners</p>	<p>To enhance the visibility of project partners and donors we acknowledged them on our radio programmes and displayed their logos on all our educational/awareness materials</p>	<p>Donors and partners acknowledged in all 12 radio programmes aired.</p> <p>Logo of donors and partners embossed on all our awareness materials including leaflets, posters, T-shirts, information boards and reports</p>

## **5.0 CHALLENGES**

- Flooding of lands earmarked for planting mangroves and other tree species in 3 communities due to excessive rains. This has affected the planting of the mangroves and trees. For now planting is ongoing but at a slow pace.
- Open resistance of some land owners to enter an agreement with the Wildlife Division to control future access to the planted mangroves and trees.
- The absence of school children for most part of the project period as they were on their annual 3- month long vacation holidays. This reduced the number of education programs conducted in schools and the planting of seedlings during the period.

## **6.0 WAY FORWARD**

- In the coming months as the rains subside planting of mangroves and the other tree seedlings will be intensified in the areas earmarked for planting
- Conservation education in schools and communities will continue as usual as we are targeting to reach 10,000 pupils and 500 teachers by the end of December.
- We will seek further funding sources to erect more information boards and also purchase bird watching equipment to initiate a monthly birdwalk programme in the Keta Municipality. This is to raise awareness on the protection of migratory birds and also the tourism potential of the site.
- We will continue our monthly bird counts in all five sites in the Ramsar site to provide data on the birds that visit the site and their status.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

The project has been very successful and has gone a long way to highlight the challenges faced by the Ramsar site and the need for all stakeholders to see the management of the site as a shared responsibility.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- There is the need to consolidate the gains made during the implementation of this project especially in beneficiary communities and possibly expand it to new areas of the Ramsar site.
- There is the need to intensify conservation/environmental education in schools. This should include field visits for children to appreciate the value of their environment and their role in the conservation and sustainable management of these wetlands.

- Acquisition of the requisite skills and knowledge in wetland management and planning are essential for all stakeholders for the effective management of wetlands and their resources. There is therefore the need to continue to build the capacities of all stakeholders, especially at the local, district and national levels.
- There is the need for WSFI to introduce follow-up grants for first time grant winners in order to consolidate their activities after the first year.

ABDUL-KAREEM FUSEINI, MANAGER

KETA LAGOON COMPLEX RAMSAR SITE

P.O. BOX KW 115, KETA. GHANA

TEL: +233 243 168 865