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**Drafting Group**
Ahmed Senhoury, Director, PRCM
Barthélemy Jean Auguste Batiene, Programme Officer for Monitoring and Evaluation, Coordination Unit, PRCM
Charlotte Karibuhoye, Programme Officer for Marine Protected Areas, FIBA
Samba Alassane, Coordinator of the Prospective Review project, FIBA
Mika Diop, FBA Coordinator of the Shark Conservation project, FIBA/CSRP
Philippe Tour, CSRP
Mathieu Ducrocq, IUCN
Aboubakry Kane, Coordinator of the Saloum Delta ecotourism project, IUCN Senegal
Pierre Campredon, IUCN Advisor, Guinea Bissau
Paul Siegel, WWF/WAMER
Ibrahima Niamadia, Programme Officer WWF/WAMER

**Photos Credits**
Jean-François Hellio & Nicolas Van Ingen [www.hellio-vaningen.fr]

**Design**
By Reg’ [regdakar@orange.sn]

All correspondence regarding the programme should be addressed to the PRCM Coordination Unit at:
prcm@iucn.org

For the latest information, visit the PRCM website www.prcmarine.org
Assessment of the activities of

PHASE 1 [2004-2007]

Regional Coastal and Marine Conservation Programme for West Africa
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<td>BIOMAC</td>
<td>Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Network</td>
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<td>CU</td>
<td>Coordination Unit</td>
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<td>FIBA</td>
<td>International Foundation for the Banc d'Arguin</td>
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<td>IUCN</td>
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<td>MPA</td>
<td>Marine Protected Area</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>PNBA</td>
<td>Banc d'Arguin National Park</td>
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<td>RAMPAO</td>
<td>West African Marine Protected Areas Network</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
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<td>STC</td>
<td>Scientific and Technical Committee</td>
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<td>WAMER</td>
<td>West African Marine Eco-region</td>
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<td>WI</td>
<td>Wetlands International</td>
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<td>World Wildlife Fund For nature</td>
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A island tree in Sine Saloum / Senegal
By virtue of its human dimension, the number of institutions comprising it and the issues it deals with, the PRCM is a truly challenging endeavour. While the coastal zone holds great potential for development, it is now facing more acute threats and greater pressures than ever before, and its inhabitants will only be able to rise to this challenge if they join forces and skills to work together on the basis of a shared vision. This is the venture embarked upon by a group of some fifty institutions that currently make up the PRCM coalition.

At the end of its first four-year phase, the Programme is pleased to present hereinafter a summary assessment of its achievements. In the light of these achievements, the PRCM stands out as an innovative initiative which has shown its ability to adapt to obstacles as they arise, using an approach based on dialogue, exchange and collective creativity. This approach has received the support of the governments of the seven West African countries encompassed by the PRCM, as well as that of those longstanding donors funding coastal conservation in West Africa, the Netherlands and the MAVA Foundation, later joined by France and Spain, all of whom agreed to take a share of the risks.

As natural resource levels slide downward and ecosystem services deteriorate, the issue of conservation in West Africa becomes an acute one. Indeed, perhaps more than on any other continent, natural resources are the very bedrock of West African development and a secure future for its human populations. This situation, which is also overshadowed by the threat of climate change, has become a source of conflict, and political leaders are increasingly limited in their search for alternatives: what is to become of West Africa’s small-scale fishers as fish stocks dwindle and fuel costs mount? Will they have no choice but to become illegal immigrants seeking an elusive el dorado?

An ever greater number of international companies are showing a keen interest in Africa’s natural and mineral resources, from Mauritanian oil to Guinean bauxite, not forgetting mass tourism in the Cape Verde islands. While this interest represents development opportunities for these resource-rich countries, one can wonder what legacy it will leave behind for future generations who will be forced to stay on.

The PRCM was set up precisely to seek answers to these questions - to build, together with the members in the region, a system of environmental governance for the coastal and marine zone. It is an initiative borne by women and men who have devoted their professional lives to this work and who share the dream of a better world, an initiative which offers a tremendous message of hope.

Ahmed Senhoury,
Director of the PRCM
Fishermen in a dugout / Cape Verde
Gathering the limicolous ones on the island of Niroumi to the passage of a lanche of fishermen Imraguen / Mauritania
Pink Flemish flight in Saloum / Senegal
Mangroves of the river Rio Cacheu / Guinea Bissau
The Regional Coastal and Marine Conservation Programme for West Africa - PRCM grew out of the combined determination of several organisations that arrived at several shared observations at the end of the 20th century. The impacts of human activities along the coast were reaching alarming proportions, yet in the countries which were to become part of the PRCM, the coastal zone is precisely the most crucial area for guaranteeing human development. The connectedness of natural processes in marine ecosystems should lead naturally to a regional approach to natural resource and biodiversity planning and management, and the States involved were in fact separately identifying similar pressing conservation issues. At the same time, the international non-governmental organisations active in the region were recognising the need to work together to set priorities for action within a perspective emphasizing the overall coherence of action and effectiveness in influencing policy. As all of these factors converged, following the course of history as it negotiated the curve into globalisation, it was a logical step for marine and coastal conservation bodies to join forces to create the PRCM.

1 Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Cape Verde
1.1. Background

Before 1997, coastal zone conservation efforts in West Africa were limited to a few marine protected areas and a scattered handful of projects. That year, as the need for a more coordinated approach became clear, IUCN, through its three national offices in West Africa, assisted in the establishment of the Regional Coastal Planning Network (RESOCOTAO). Designed as a network of expertise, RESOCOTAO suggested a number of avenues for action which prefigured the PRCM, one in particular being the need to deal with regional issues. The idea of a regional action plan for shark conservation was born at that time and is today still a flagship project of the Sub-regional Fisheries Commission - CSRP. In this respect, RESOCOTAO can be seen as the seed which grew into the PRCM.

In the year 2000, a workshop entitled “Conservation priorities in the West African coastal zone” was held in St. Louis, Senegal. Those who took part in this workshop were struck by the strong similarities between the priorities set out by representatives of different countries, not least of which were the establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs), sustainable management of fisheries resources, and biodiversity and mangrove conservation. It was during this workshop that the principle of collaboration between international conservation organisations was agreed; this was to be formalised soon thereafter by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding and Partnership by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), the International Foundation for the Banc d’Arguin (FIBA) and, a few months later, by Wetlands International. The memorandum was accompanied by a declaration signed by the Directors General of the four organizations, in which they officially gave their support to the process.

The first regional workshop\(^2\), which laid the cornerstone of the future PRCM, was held in Nouakchott in February, 2002. It took as its theme “Marine Protected Areas in West Africa: enhancing their benefits for fisheries and biodiversity”. The strategy which emerged from the workshop tied together the essential elements of a shared vision illustrating the very specific approach adopted by this region in dealing with conservation issues: the key role played by local communities, participatory governance, the indissociable link between the cultural dimension and the environment, the direct relationship between conservation and fisheries, the need for strong institutions. The regional strategy was submitted to Ministers of the Environment and Ministers of Fisheries in

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2 The word « regional » is used here for convenience but actually refers to the administrative « sub-region » encompassing the PRCM countries. Similarly, the term «West Africa» refers to the same group of countries and is used for the sake of simplicity.
The process to establish the PRCM / Assessment report of phase 1 [2004-2007]

The countries involved, who gave their approval by signing a General Policy Declaration in which they expressed their commitment to supporting not only the aims of the strategy but also the PRCM initiative as a whole.

A Programme Officer was recruited to run the temporary Secretariat of the Programme from IUCN's office in Mauritania, thus lightening the burden of the Executive Secretary of FIBA, who had been spending half of his working time since 2001 on the establishment of the PRCM. In the course of 2002, several workshops were held on a variety of subjects: Co-management of MPAs, Transnational fisheries, Prospective stock-taking review of the coastal environment, Sea turtles, Sharks, Communication. The information collected through these workshops provided an overall picture of initiatives already underway and was used to set priorities for action on a regional scale. Another outcome of the workshops was the decision to cluster the individual initiatives in thematic components which together form the content of the PRCM programme.

The actual exercise of assigning initiatives to the components took place at the regional workshop held in Bissau at the end of 2002, which validated the Programme’s configuration with the following over-arching aim: «The natural resources and biological and cultural diversity of the West African coastal and marine zone are conserved and managed so as to guarantee the future of human societies».

The specific aim «The biological and cultural diversity and the integrity of West African marine and coastal ecosystems are better preserved and managed through concerted initiatives put forward by a broad regional partnership» required that the Programme be organised around six Components:

- Support for the establishment and enhancement of MPAs
- Species and habitat conservation and management
- Management of fisheries resources
- Contribution of MPAs to the development of ecotourism
- Scientific research
- Communication

The project portfolio was subsequently presented at a regional workshop held in Dakar in June, 2003 which convened the Programme's technical and financial partners for the first time, thus marking the official launch of the PRCM. At this workshop, a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation was signed with the Permanent Secretariat of the CSRP, which comprises the same countries as the PRCM. The Memorandum reflects the commitment of States to marine conservation and represents the necessary linkage between the Programme and government policies and the harmonisation of these policies at regional level. The Dakar workshop was also used to survey the institutions involved regarding their expectations of the PRCM: 38% of participants saw it as a framework for promoting synergy, coordination and networks, 33% said it was primarily an instrument for information sharing, and the rest mentioned support for activities, capacity building and harmonisation of countries’ national policies.
The last World Parks Congress, an event which takes place every 10 years, and most recently in Durban in late 2003, was perfectly timed to showcase the new PRCM at an international forum, especially since the African continent and the marine environment had been chosen as the special themes of the Congress. The highlight of the events in Durban was the announcement made by the President of the MAVA Foundation, Dr Luc Hoffmann, of the Foundation’s pledge to donate 1 million euros per year for the five years of the PRCM’s first phase. A few months later, the Embassy of the Netherlands in Dakar announced it would contribute 2 million euros yearly to the programme, to be paid into a basket fund. The PRCM Steering Committee, which had already met four times thus far (see below) decided by consensus to allocate the budget to a group of projects, enabling the programme to get underway at the beginning of 2004.

1.2. Assessment of the establishment process and lessons learned

The programme was not created in a vacuum, nor did it spring from the will of a few individuals. On the contrary, it is the natural and logical evolution of a process begun in 1997 with the Coastal Planning Network, a process which took seven years to become operational. The PRCM is the culmination of a journey shared by the institutions and individuals who have carried it forward and who have known each other for a long time: it is therefore built on solid and firmly anchored foundations. The human dimension of the Programme is critical, and it is largely thanks to this dimension that the hurdles which inevitably beset such undertakings have been overcome. Today, 2/3 of those who took part in initiating RESOCOTAO hold high-level positions involving responsibility for the coastal zone.

The donors who made the PRCM possible, the Netherlands Embassy and the MAVA Foundation in particular, have also been involved in this process since the outset, funding coastal conservation activities over some 15 years; they are the linchpin of this remarkably fruitful and solid partnership. The process has also evolved against a backdrop of international trends which have touched Africa and provided added incentive: the emphasis on science as the basis for better understanding natural phenomena, international recommendations on the need for eco-regional approaches, the Millenium Development Goals, information and communications technologies, etc.

Gathering some 40 institutions from six countries together to form a regional programme with one shared vision requires a major collective effort. It entails not only accepting new paradigms and changes in the scale on which issues are approached, but also new models of operating and relating. Bringing together a scattered group of wagons and assembling them into a train that can move as a single unit in one direction toward a common goal is a daunting task that requires huge effort and investment before it can be launched.

The PRCM places Marine Protected Areas at the centre of its programme content; MPAs reflect thematic, national and institutional realities which are readily discernible and they
are at the same time a key field of action for the international organisation partners, a field in which their technical leadership is widely recognised. Along with species conservation work, in which the migratory nature of the species makes the regional approach a must, MPAs can be seen as the backbone of the Programme’s first phase. While responding to national and international priorities, the vision developed by the Programme also reflects an integrated set of priorities specific to West Africa which members can relate to: the community-based approach, the participatory dimension, the need for strong institutions, incorporating economic issues, the importance given to the cultural dimension.

At the time of publication of the strategy, the high level of political recognition expressed through the signing of the General Policy Declaration by 10 Ministers from the six participating countries played a decisive part in the building of the PRCM. It should be pointed out here that the Declaration was not limited to a commitment to further the aims of the strategy, but also acknowledged the inherent merit of the PRCM and, by logical extension, the validity of the eco-regional approach as an additional layer to sit atop national priorities. For those involved in the programme, this recognition proved to be of the greatest importance, for it posits linkages with the governmental sphere and the possibility of contributing directly to the development of sectoral policy. This linkage was made official through the Memorandum with the CSRP, an intergovernmental institution, affording a unique opportunity for partnership in a regional framework, particularly as regards the connection between marine conservation and fisheries resource management. The decision to base the PRCM’s action in the member countries of the CSRP (resulting in the Programme opening in Sierra Leone in 2005) offered the advantage of working in a recognised and functioning geographical framework of cooperation which roughly follows the boundaries of the eco-region.

Joining a process already underway, securing funding several years before start-up, building a sound and tightly-knit partnership of international NGOs, governments and donors, arriving at a shared vision with all those involved based on thematic areas of importance to all, accepting responsibility by agreeing to lose individually at the start in order to ensure a collective victory much later - these were the conditions that paved the way for the laying of solid foundations for the PRCM coalition.

Old man bijago / Guinea Bissau
2. The PRCM’s governance mechanisms

2.1. Introduction to the governing and governance bodies

Set up by the first meeting of representatives of the PRCM’s three founding international NGOs (IUCN, FIBA, WWF), the Steering Committee was gradually enlarged to include representatives of the fourth NGO partner (Wetlands International), the Permanent Secretariat of the CSRP and the coordinator of RESOCOTAO; then, by way of strengthening partner representation, the Chairperson of the PRCM Regional Forum and the Coordinator of the MPA network (RAMPAO) were asked to join. The Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) (see below) enjoys observer status. The Steering Committee (SC) is the body responsible for decisions on rules governing partnerships and how the Programme should operate. It also decides how funds invested in the basket fund by donors will be allocated. It meets on average 2-3 times per year and is chaired on a rotating basis with a one year chairmanship term. Decisions are always taken by consensus. The minutes of Steering Committee meetings are posted on the programme’s website: www.prcmarine.org.

The Coordination Unit is a lightweight structure at the service of the partners; its purpose is to provide support to the PRCM’s coordination mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation and communication units. It is housed in IUCN’s Mauritanian office (in recognition of the pioneering role played by that country in MPAs and fisheries) and is run by a small team (the Coordinator, Monitoring & Evaluation and Communication officers, an administrative assistant and a driver). It is the Coordination Unit which organises and provides the secretariat for the programme’s bodies, consolidates partners’ technical reports, organises programme monitoring and evaluation, stimulates contact and synergy between partners and with relevant regional and international initiatives, and manages and develops donor relations. The Coordination Unit has furthermore pushed for the adoption of certain priorities for action identified by the Forum, such as environmental education, ecotourism and offshore oil production, and has taken part in the development of several project documents in these areas. It plays a predominant role in communication between partners and with the outside world, overseeing the proper coordination of and connectivity between interventions, publicising the work of the PRCM and taking part in advocacy action.

The Regional Forum is the supreme governing body of the PRCM. It brings together all groups active in the marine and coastal zone, i.e. national and intergovernmental institutions, scientific institutions, national and international NGOs, socio-professional organisations, financial partners (bilateral, multilateral and foundations) and the private sector (fisheries, tourism, oil industry). The Forum is the arena in which the PRCM’s strategic directions, its governance system and recommendations to actors are discussed. It provides a unique opportunity for dialogue not only among the region’s countries but also between sectors. Decision-making within the Forum is founded on the principle of consensus. The Forum has convened three meetings at 18-
month intervals in different capital cities (Conakry, Banjul and Praia); these were attended by 108 to 160 participants from between 71 and 93 different institutions. In order to take full advantage of this large and broad-ranging assembly, meetings of the various networks and training sessions are organised on the sidelines. The Forum is also a mechanism for coordination with other regional initiatives wishing to join a process which is already up and running, one example being the GEF Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystems project - CCLME. The services provided by the Forum in terms of participatory regional governance are now widely recognized, attracting contributions from new donors (Spanish Cooperation, German Cooperation through the CSRP).

It was the first meeting of the Forum that initiated work to create the PRCM Scientific and Technical Committee by making proposals regarding its membership and terms of reference. The STC is made up of six to eight regional and international experts selected on the strength of their skills in areas directly connected to the PRCM’s fields of activity. All of them possess extensive knowledge of the region’s coastal zone and work on a voluntary basis. As STC members, they assess the project proposals submitted to the committee by the Coordination Unit (CU), which has already reviewed them according to a set of objective criteria. Their opinions are forwarded to the Steering Committee, which has the final say in approving projects. The STC also plays an advisory role to the Forum, providing its scientific perspective on developments in the coastal zone or strategic priorities to be considered. The STC met six times during Phase I of the Programme.

In order to transcend national and institutional lines, the decision was taken to adopt a proposal by STC to organise the Programme’s activities by components. A leader has been designated for each one of these components, with the aim of stimulating technical exchanges between projects, developing logical frameworks, organising evaluations and consolidating the results of each component individually. Stemming from the need to better organise exchanges between members working on the same issues, this approach has led to the development of several regional networks. While the Coastal Planning Network has gradually evolved into an informal network for contact and exchange between coastal zone experts, other networks are slated to take on a more formal status. This is the case for the Marine Protected Areas Network - RAMPAO, whose Constituent Assembly was convened on 16 April, 2007 in Praia, and also for the Network of Members of Parliaments and the Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Network - BIOMAC, soon to be officially established. The possibility of an inter-university network has also been discussed. These networks, which grow out of a need for regional interaction, are intended to lead to better coverage of the range of issues by partners in the region, with technical and administrative support being provided by the international organisation partners.
2.2. Assessment of governance mechanisms and lessons learned

About the Steering Committee. The membership of the Steering Committee has evolved gradually over time, demonstrating strong adaptability in taking in new members and responding to Forum recommendations on the need for broad representation of the region’s actors. Cooperation arrangements among the four NGOs were defined in the Memorandum of Understanding, and subsequently by a series of Steering Committee decisions aimed at resolving difficulties in cooperation encountered as Programme implementation progressed. These rules, which cover matters such as the duty to provide mutual information and to acknowledge the PRCM in communication products, have proved difficult to apply for the most part, mainly due to the complexity of administrative systems. The members of the SC have demonstrated tolerance and have developed relationships of mutual trust as they have learned to work together. This made it possible for the Committee to take all of its decisions by consensus, without once having to put an issue to the vote. The flexibility of the Steering Committee has been a key factor responsible for the overall dynamism of the Programme. Transparency vis-à-vis PRCM partners and Forum members is also an incontrovertible principle, hence the decision to post the minutes of Steering Committee meetings on the Programme’s website.

The main difficulties encountered by members of the Steering Committee are related to the high cost of transactions. Administering a joint regional programme, which often means another layer added to the day-to-day administration of individual projects, requires a large number of contacts, reports, meetings and much travel, all of which are costly and time-consuming. While these costs are easier to absorb during non-peak periods, greater care must be taken during busier periods (especially during planning and evaluation) when there is a risk of the partners being over-extended. The possibility of holding some Steering Committee meetings by videoconference might be considered when there are no extraordinary items on the agenda.

About the Coordination Unit. One of the roles of the Coordination Unit is precisely to organise work in chronological stages so as to save the partners’ energy and ensure that the order in which meetings (of the SC, STC, component leaders, the Forum) are held is logical with respect to the functions of the individual bodies. Given the broad range of tasks on the CU’s work programme compared to its staffing strength, the Unit is remarkable efficient. The need to set up a Programme-wide monitoring and evaluation system led to the realisation of the limits to partners’ capacity to meet the requirements that go hand in hand with a regional coalition. The Programme Officer in charge of this matter had great difficulty gathering the relevant information from these partners. A more flexible approach must be sought to avoid further burdening the PRCM, whose bureaucratic load is already heavy. Although no one contest the essential role of the CU, its structural weakness is its cost, which is added to various management costs that already weigh heavily on the projects. Compared to other regional administrations, however, this cost remains modest, especially if one considers the range of services provided by the CU.

About the Scientific and Technical Committee. It plays a decisive role in assessing the strength and value of projects within the overall scope of the programme. One of the greatest difficulties experienced by the STC stems from its twice-yearly meeting schedule which has turned out to be insufficient in view of the large numbers of projects in the selection process, which can not always stand to be delayed or to wait for the PRCM stamp of approval before being submitted to the donors. The fact that the project proposal and selection process is in itself quite complex makes the problem worse. The proposals start their journey with the CU, which forwards them to STC, which gives its opinion to the members of the SC, who decide whether or not to take the projects on as part of the programme before informing the proponents of their decision. The complexity of the process, which at times is exacerbated by delays in submission of STC meeting reports, has put off or totally discouraged some partners, who have made their dissatisfaction known. The decision to
invite the Chair of STC to attend Steering Committee meetings, and vice versa, has eased communication between these two bodies but has not lessened the complexity of the process. The voluntary status of STC members, who all hold professional positions of great responsibility, has most likely been a factor in determining the amount of time they were able to devote to fulfilling the numerous expectations.

About the Forum. Meetings of the Forum, which are held every 18 months, are the high point in the life of the PRCM. They also provide regular opportunities to touch base with the situation in the region’s coastal zone. The vital importance of the Forum is easily understood if one considers the number of opportunities it affords to nearly 90 institutions for establishing contacts, for training and for harmonisation of national policies and discussion. Since issues are generally approached on a transnational scale, participants can voice criticism without offending member countries. A close look at the reports of the three meetings held so far shows real progress in the calibre and maturity of exchanges between participants. Among the issues and limitations that have arisen since the Forum was launched, the question of who should attend is of foremost concern. It has proved difficult to apply a strict rule regarding representation of various categories of actors, especially because of differences between countries (some departments existing in some countries but not in others) and budgetary limits. Moreover, the opinions of representatives of all categories cannot be considered to count equally in decision-making, and this limits the force carried by conclusions, reducing them to the status of recommendations. Finally, the members and the CU do not have adequate capacity to provide follow-up of the implementation of each individual Forum recommendation.

A close look at how the PRCM’s governing and governance bodies operate brings to light several givens. Although these bodies are necessary to the Programme, and despite having limited them to optimal size, they create a set of additional costs that need to be weighed up with respect to expected benefits. Working with a large number of partners based in seven countries and using three different working languages requires a significant effort on the part of the NGOs and the Coordination Unit, an effort that must be weighed up along with the importance of the issues at stake and the projected outcomes. As the latter are often difficult to calculate in economic terms, a cost-benefit analysis is a difficult proposition. If the PRCM has been able to overcome most of these difficulties, it is thanks to the combined determination of the actors, donors and policy makers who have all shown great flexibility, an indispensable commodity when working as part of a coalition in a constantly changing environment.
3. Outcomes of the first phase

A summarised version of the assessment of outcomes achieved during the first phase is presented below; a more detailed description is found in the appendices to this report.

Establishment and strengthening of MPAs

In the field of MPA establishment and strengthening, outcomes include: the development of a Regional Strategy, support to the establishment of eight new MPAs, with work on four others underway, capacity building in the areas of participatory management, maritime surveillance (37 officers trained, including eight captains, and five speedboats provided), establishment of the regional network called RAMPAO and an MPA users' Forum. Another area of focus was the establishment of transboundary MPAs (Senegal Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve) and the restoration of degraded ecosystems (Diawling National Park). This is the most dynamic segment of the programme due to the experience gained by the partners and their long history of collaboration. The approach developed in the regions is typified by its emphasis on the management of natural resources and the high value placed on heritage. A large number of MPAs with resident human communities have become testing grounds for sustainable development, and the lessons learned from this are now proving particularly valuable. The search for a compromise between conservation and poverty reduction, and between resident and non-resident resource users has led to the development of the community-managed protected areas model, one of the most effective conservation mechanisms for responding to the combined pressures affecting the most sensitive coastal ecosystems.

It should be mentioned that the increasing number of initiatives in this field has reached the limit of available skills and human resources, especially for process management and community outreach, and this is equally true of the resources needed for surveillance. These issues have all been taken under consideration by the RAMPAO network, and indeed account for a large part of its programme of work.
Species and habitat conservation

The main outcomes in this field are the development and implementation of regional action plans for sharks, sea turtles, the Monk seal, the manatee and waterbirds, as well as the drafting of an action plan for mangroves. During the first phase of the Programme, activity was largely devoted to a set of baseline studies on these species and the main threats to their conservation. These were the basis for the action plans, whose implementation has been uneven both from species to species and from one country to another. One of the most noteworthy is the Monk Seal Action Plan, in which the conservation of the species is approached systemically, incorporating aspects like the protection of critical sites, fisheries, research, environmental education and communication. Action on the Sub-regional Shark Action Plan is also exemplary because of the level of commitment by the national institutions involved (fisheries departments, research centres) and shark fishery stakeholders. The other plans are still at a more embryonic stage of development due, among other factors, to the disproportionate number of measures required for the conservation of any given species. When it became clear that the majority of species face similar threats (coastal habitat degradation, pollution, fishing) the decision was taken to start a biodiversity network, BIOMAC, to coordinate efforts on a broader scale.

Management of natural resources, particularly fisheries resources

The focus in this area has been on demonstration projects that highlight co-management approaches (Women and shellfish in the Saloum, artisanal fishing in Cayar) and the need to integrate research, management and development action with all those working on each fishery (Mullet, Meagre and Bluefish). In this regard, MPAs can be used as pilot sites, as in the case of Banc d’Arguin National Park (PNBA) where an integrated approach takes all dimensions into consideration: detailed monitoring of landings, scientific research, reporting back of data combined with yearly consultations on fishing methods, participatory surveillance and enforcement, development activities designed to promote sustainable practices, etc. The PNBA experience has been an inspirational example to MPAs in the region through its exchange visits, workshops, publications on lessons learned and regional training opportunities. Although these projects, some conducted locally and others on a transboundary scale, are experimental in nature, close cooperation with the Sub-regional Fisheries Commission (CSRP) has made it possible to create the conditions for transposing them to the regional scale. Another positive outcome of this cooperation is the mutual influence that PRCM organisations and the CSRP, who share the same aims of conserving and protecting marine ecosystems and fisheries resources, have come to exercise on each other. It should also be mentioned that projects under the «fisheries management» component maintain many ties with other PRCM components, in
particular the research and marine protected areas components. Activities under this component have, however, been beset by a number of structural difficulties. The fishing effort in the region is excessive and the depletion of the majority of resource species is pushing fishers toward non-sustainable practices. The disparity between resource levels inside and outside protected areas drives them to move into these areas where they fish illegally. As the fisheries sector spirals downward toward crisis, it becomes more difficult to introduce political measures, and many management recommendations emerging from the Programme’s activities remain unimplemented to date. The recent wave of illegal emigrants, many of whom are fishermen, leaving their countries in pirogues, illustrates the seriousness of this problem; while it can identify possible solutions for resolving this crisis, the PRCM’s action can have only a limited impact.

Promotion of sustainable tourism

Several community development initiatives have been put in place, mainly inside MPAs. It has been observed that sustainable protection and management measures often require restrictions that penalise resource users in the short term. Development projects are a way of compensating for their loss of income. They are also a constructive way to orient production systems toward sustainable practices, or to improve living conditions for local communities (through hygiene, health and education). In some cases, they are instrumental in pinpointing alternatives to resource use, a prime example being ecotourism (PNBA, Saloum, Bijagos archipelago). Increasing the value of fisheries products is another effective method for improving the financial situation of populations; this is done through better processing, more effective marketing and the establishment of prestigious eco-labels, i.e. for mullet roe from the Banc d’Arguin.

Advocacy for a precautionary approach to the development of oil production

Coordinated approaches taken on certain issues by PRCM partners have proved effective in exercising influence on policy-making. Their work on the development of offshore oil drilling, for example, speaks volumes about the potential strength of such a coalition. Action in this field consisted of a study tour to Nigeria, a regional workshop in Nouakchott, a national workshop in Bissau, information and awareness-raising for stakeholders, the production of technical summaries and risk mapping for Mauritania and Guinea Bissau. This work helped to promote good governance in this sector, especially in Mauritania, where the President of the Republic requested IUCN’s support to set up a panel of independent experts, committing funding from the Mauritanian state to the panel’s budget. This constructive approach to collaboration, which has been reproduced in other areas such as industrial shellfish harvesting using dragnets, is a shining example of the effectiveness of a regional coalition in dealing with issues of shared concern.
Research and coastal planning activities

A research programme entitled «Prospective stock-taking review of the coastal environment», has been implemented jointly by West African and European research institutions (in particular, IRD - Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, in France). Its aim is to analyse changes in the coastal zone over approximately the last 50 years, and to produce scenarios for the next 20 years. This programme has acted as a framework for supporting the training of African researchers - four PhD and eight DEA (MSc) students, plus several training workshops - and producing coastal zone management tools (GIS, atlases, databases, maps etc.) for use by decision makers. Maps of fisheries, marine biodiversity and offshore oil production in Mauritania and Guinea Bissau, and the flood risk map of the cities of Nouakchott and St Louis are examples of such products. Working groups on the main areas covered by the « prospective review » have been used to draw up sub-regional summaries and have given rise to publications and papers presented at conferences. The programme has built partnerships with research institutes, networks and projects with the ultimate goal of coordinating efforts and funding support. A conference was held in Stockholm with the support of SIDA - Swedish International Development Agency to compare Swedish, East African and West African experiences in coastal zone management and to support the establishment of the West African inter-university network. Brussels was the venue of an international symposium organised with support from the Foundation for the Promotion of Scientific Research in Africa (Belgium) on the conservation of coastal ecosystems in West Africa, the proceedings of which have since been published. The research programme met with some teething problems at the outset (stemming from the administrative and institutional set-up and limited budget) which delayed the achievement of outcomes. Also, the great majority of research was actually carried out on more limited scales, both temporally and spatially, than initially planned. Activities aimed at supporting integrated coastal zone management programmes at country level were conducted, chiefly in Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and Mauritania. In the latter country, this work led to the drafting of the Mauritanian Coastal Development Plan, to the establishment of a coastal observatory and the enactment of a new Coastal Act which underscores the importance of the integrated approach to coastal zone management. A major communication operation, «Mauritanian Coastal Days» (with an exhibition, an illustrated book in two languages and presentations) raised the awareness of the public and decision makers alike about the specific issues facing the coastal zone against the current trend of rapid development. In Cape Verde, action was aimed at promoting the incorporation of the environmental dimension into municipal development plans, as well as in sectoral policies, especially on tourism.
Environmental communication

Communication played a seminal role in achieving a coordinated and coherent approach, in the dissemination of the Programme’s achievements, in raising awareness about and promoting the value of heritage, and in learning from experience and good practices. Several communication tools proved invaluable: the PRCM website; the monthly newsletter; a roving van which travelled to villages and fishing camps holding film screenings followed by discussion; documentaries aired by national television stations; radio programmes; information sessions specifically designed for teachers and journalists; exhibitions in African and European capital cities. The unique photo library mounted by the Programme, which contains photos of the coastal zones of six of the seven PRCM countries, was used by many partners in their own communication operations and is a valuable standing source of material for promoting the region’s coastal heritage.

Capacity building for stakeholders

The great majority of projects included a capacity building component. Some were specifically designed with the aim of increasing stakeholders’ capacity, like the project on building capacity in negotiating fishing agreements, training in impact assessments or maritime surveillance in protected areas. The participatory management model applied in MPAs was the subject of several regional workshops where topics included co-management, communicating with local populations, and processes for negotiating management agreements, including conflict resolution methods. Several capacity building exchange visits were organised for managers and technical staff from all the countries, as well as resource users: the women who harvest shellfish (Bijagos - Saloum), artisanal fishers (Mauritania - Senegal) and MPA users (Senegal - Guinea).
The PRCM is an innovative programme for West Africa, and this implies significant transaction costs which can only be offset by full commitment by partners, mutual trust and the support of donors well before the Programme even began. The Programme’s organisational structure and governance mechanisms must be highly flexible to enable the many institutions, each with its own organisational culture and priorities to find their own niche and to cope with new issues, like offshore oil drilling, which were not part of the Programme as initially planned.

It is important to garner the involvement of all countries by trying to ensure that they all get an equal share of the benefits deriving from the Programme. This is not always possible when certain variables, such as lack of interested partners or pressing conservation issues, are present. Close examination of the first phase suggests that the PRCM remained too closely connected to the traditional partners involved in pre-existing conservation activities, with whom trust and channels of cooperation had already been established. This resulted in frustration which adversely impacted the smooth development of the Programme. Furthermore, the equitable apportionment of funding among the countries should not be an end in itself (what criteria could be used to measure the countries’ comparative importance?) as this would pose a risk of simply falling back into a myriad of national approaches, all conducted in isolation, whereas the whole point was precisely to join together to deal with problems facing all countries alike.

At several times during the first phase, national partners were clearly frustrated by the feeling that with respect to funding, they were sometimes last in line behind the four international NGOs who were in direct contact with the donors. The process of transferring of responsibility to national entities and building their capacity requires a deliberate and determined policy. In this perspective, setting up thematic networks is one solution, not only to allow for the regional management of issues but also as a way of empowering the region’s actors. Indeed, opportunities for action at regional level by national partners are greatly enhanced by such networks. The international NGOs, who possess the capacity to act on a regional scale, will need to re-focus their
strategies in future, gradually phasing themselves out of direct intervention in the field and providing technical and financial assistance to their partners. The Steering Committee should reflect this process, as it did when it extended an invitation to the Chairperson of RAMPAO network to attend its meetings.

The PRCM’s relations with the political sphere, which largely exist through the CSRP, have proved to be crucially important for getting its priorities onto government agendas and influencing the policy process. In the final analysis, the PRCM’s influence remained modest compared to the magnitude of the pressures on the coastal zone (fisheries, tourism, extractive industries, infrastructure building, etc.) set against the global economic and political situation. In today’s world, development is still measured almost entirely based on economic and financial criteria, and political decisions are more often than not influenced by levels of investment. By this standard, the PRCM’s influence is clearly very minor, as illustrated by the position taken by West African countries during the International Whaling Commission meeting.

Given this state of affairs, the partners have agreed that other ways of influencing these processes need to be found. The work begun with Members of Parliament committed to protecting the environment (a network of Members of Parliament is already operational in several countries and the regional network is soon to follow), for example, is extremely promising. A similar initiative is underway with several networks of environmentally-aware journalists who have been given training, and in some cases funding, and have access to the various sources of information provided by the PRCM. In the longer run, it is investments in environmental education that will be the most effective, but the Programme’s weakness in this area, with the exception of initiatives taken by the NGO Oceanium, Palmeirinha and a few minor project activities, must be acknowledged.

On some issues such as oil production, the PRCM has managed to achieve good results with limited means: visits to Members of Parliaments, journalists, NGOs and technical personnel in Nigeria, outreach materials in several languages, regional and national workshops, risk mapping in Mauritania and Guinea Bissau, and the establishment of the panel of independent experts in Mauritania at the request of the President himself.

The PRCM’s work on MPAs is its greatest success so far. It should continue to be a priority in future, since protected areas are among the most effective conservation tools available. The approach adopted in the region, which incorporates the cultural and economic dimensions within a participatory framework, is an innovative approach to sustainable development that should be held up as an example for the entire coastal zone. However, funding remains sorely insufficient - even more so in that has to be shared by seven countries, as does human capacity for MPA management. Despite much hard work and outstanding successes, maritime surveillance remains a critical problem which is bound to worsen as resource levels dwindle, and as the interest aroused by the difference in resource levels inside and outside MPAs becomes less and less easy to control.

Considerable progress has been in species and habitat conservation, despite inadequate results in the field: the pioneering and exemplary approach of the shark and sea turtle projects has not yet paid off in terms of improving the population status of these species. Experience gained through the projects, especially the Monk seal conservation project, confirms the effectiveness of the combination of protected area - community development - research - communication - education as a framework for setting priorities. The fisheries issue is so far-reaching and complex that the only way to tackle it is through demonstration projects emphasizing the research - management - development approach for each individual fishery. Here again, MPAs stand out as the prime testing ground for new models based on defining priority or exclusive rights of access for resident populations and on zoning plans that give due consideration to the functions each area fulfills and the overriding need to guarantee food security. The PRCM’s excellent relationship with the CSRP has been valuable in achieving constructive and creative
influence over the development of fishing policies at country and regional level. 
Ecotourism did not attain a predominant position in the Programme during the first phase. Although it is not an issue specific to this region, it is of major importance due to the environmental impacts of tourism on the coastal zone, not forgetting its socioeconomic and cultural impacts. The experience of the first phase showed the importance of approaching ecotourism from two complementary angles. The first is to consider ecotourism as an income-generating activity which features the natural and cultural heritage to the benefit of MPA resident communities. The second is to see ecotourism through the lens of land-use planning with a view to optimising the impacts of an activity that has the potential to become an instrument for development. However, it must be stated that regional capacity for impact assessments is highly inadequate.

Coordinating activities component by component has been shown to be an effective means of connecting interventions together harmoniously within a logical framework specific to each theme. However, it must be said that the large number of components produced the opposite effect which worked against the integrated management approach called for by the Programme: for example, several projects encompassed activities on protected areas, fishing and species conservation and thus had to fulfill the priorities of three different components.

The basket fund principle proved to be an effective way of channeling funding to a coherent group of activities. The fund made it possible to guarantee the consistency of the Programme upstream, without being subjected to donors’ criteria or decisions on individual projects which are more difficult to bring together or harmonise a posteriori. The basket fund operates according to a harmonised set of procedures which are applied across the board to all activities and partners, for example regarding technical and financial reports and monitoring and evaluation procedures. It facilitates communication downstream and provides a clearer image of the PRCM, with the resulting effects on new partners and potential donors.

The donors played a key role in building the PRCM, and not only through their financial support. Taking an active part in discussion and planning throughout the process, they had a positive influence on increasing the involvement of local actors, on ensuring that transparency permeated all operations, and on the harmonisation and consolidation of technical and financial reports. They also lent their support on many occasions in dealings with the governments of the countries involved, with other potential donors and in international communication more broadly. The President of the MAVA Foundation played a special and decisive role in building the PRCM, involving himself personally in the design phase, offering constant encouragement and intervening to facilitate dialogue between partners. He has in fact been the unofficial ambassador of the coalition over the years at innumerable international and regional events, tirelessly championing the cause of the West African marine and coastal zone.
Given the high additional or transaction costs resulting from operating as a coalition, it is only fitting to consider the added value that such a coalition offers to offset these costs. The opinions expressed on this subject by members of the Forum, found in Appendix I, are worthy of interest. These additional benefits, which are as a general rule difficult to express objectively in quantitative terms, can be listed as follows:

- The PRCM is the only programme in West Africa which can approach marine and coastal conservation on an eco-regional scale, working on a set of integrated issues with most of the actors concerned, and with a shared vision. It represents a systemic approach to conservation.

- The partners divide up responsibility for a set of agreed priorities according to their specific capacities (presence in certain countries, special thematic expertise, etc.), so that conservation efforts are deployed in a more consistent and effective manner. Each member of the coalition, and the Programme as a whole, benefit from the added value contributed by the partners.

- The energy formerly expended by the NGOs in competing for access to funding is now spent on collective fundraising and pooling of available funds, optimising the utilisation of funding and at the same time improving the image of each of the partners.

- On each of the main conservation themes, regional teams work together towards common goals using harmonised methods and scales adapted to the situation.

- The existence of the coalition has a motivating and inspiring effect on the partners, the older partners leading the new. By way of illustration, the development of the regional strategy on MPAS and the dynamic process set in motion in this field by the PRCM have encouraged Guinea and Cape Verde to bridge the gap separating them from other countries in terms of establishing of MPAs.
• After a number of years of thinking together about ecosystem functioning and management, the coalition has developed a clearer awareness about resources and the risks affecting the entire region. Responsibility for managing these resources and risks is thus also more evenly shared.

• The thematic networks and the Forum provide regional mechanisms for dialogue which facilitate a concerted search for solutions and also the resolution of conflicts that may arise. The opportunities afforded to meet with others (Forum, workshops, exchange visits) forge strong ties between coastal zone actors from different countries, thus contributing to maintaining constructive and peaceful relations in an unsettled region.

• A great deal of communication work is done jointly, with the dual benefit of economies of scale and stronger impact achieved. This results in increased capacity in terms of advocacy. On the offshore oil drilling front, for example, PRCM partners were able to achieve results that would have been impossible for any one of them working alone.

• The coalition model produces economies of scale in several other areas such as training, database creation, representation at regional or international events and the clustering of initiatives on given themes, like the mangrove initiative which now associates IUCN and Wetlands International, or the regional management and governance of fisheries (CSRP, IUCN and WWF).

• Eco-regional coastal zone management is an innovative proposition which inspires and attracts other regions (East Africa, the Indian Ocean, the MEDPAN network in the Mediterranean) and, conversely, conveys a favourable image of West Africa and the PRCM.

• The PRCM offers an attractive platform for practical collaboration to technical and financial partners who wish to increase the meaningfulness and effectiveness of their action. Additionally, the existence of the basket fund provides a mechanism that can simplify funding and reporting procedures compared to the project approach.

• By virtue of its scope and mandate for regional coordination, the PRCM has become a prominent force in marine and coastal conservation in West Africa, a force which encourages new partners to join in, like the GEF-CCLME project on the Canary Current.
Analysing the assessment of Phase I of the PRCM naturally leads to a few recommendations to guide the design of the next phase.

While a great deal of the energy expended over the last few years has been devoted to building the PRCM, the next phase will need to be determinedly operational. Among the key areas of focus is the necessary transfer of responsibility to national partners while at the same time continuously strengthening their capacity. This will mean, among other things, that the share of the budgets taken up by the international NGOs for their own operations and development will need to be reduced in relative terms. National partners will then need to take care to invest a significant share of the budget in the field. To take one area of work, MPAs, it is clear that needs in the field are still tremendous (surveillance, community outreach and development, research, monitoring) and the ability to invest there must not be jeopardised by unduly high management, travel, consultancy or meeting costs. With respect to funding for conservation, the short-term aim will be to diversify the Programme’s sources of funding and, in the longer run, to find a way to turn the basket fund into a trust fund. Here it must be said, despite the moderate capacity of the partners to absorb higher costs, that the total programme budget is inadequate given the number of countries involved and the magnitude of the challenges.

Considering that coastal conservation continues to lose ground and that the outcomes of the first phase are not yet sufficiently prominent, the PRCM now needs to set clear, tangible, concrete, objective and verifiable goals. This is necessary not only in absolute terms but also vis-à-vis policy makers and donors, in terms of communication and also in order to be in a position to set down milestones throughout the process. It should also motivate actors to constantly improve their achievements in the field. In addition to this requirement, there is a need to put in place a monitoring and evaluation system not only for projects but for the Programme as a whole. The system would ideally be agreed on by the whole range of Programme partners, and the agreement of those having benefited directly from the basket fund would be a must.

The analysis of the outcomes of the first phase shows that scientific research has not always been sufficiently tied into the rest of the Programme. It is important that research goals
be better matched to the priorities of the PRCM as well as with the geographical areas of action and key Programme partners. While the spatial dimension was properly factored into the PRCM in the design and building process, especially through the special focus on the eco-region, some extra thought should be devoted to broadening its temporal dimension by forecasting trends with different timelines, taking climate change into consideration.

Considering the political and economic problems to be faced, and recognising that more often than not the conservation movement is swimming against the current, the PRCM must develop a strategic alliance with certain partners who have the capability to increase its powers of influence. One of the lessons learned from the first phase is that Members of Parliament and journalists have significant potential to do just that, and it would therefore be beneficial to step up relations with them, chiefly through training, study visits, and provision of information. Stronger links with the artisanal fishing sector would also make it possible to influence policy on certain issues more decisively. Those that spring readily to mind are offshore oil production, industrial trawling or dragnet fishing, the latter being an area in which the interests of artisanal fishers and conservationists converge.

On a more general level, communication and advocacy work should be significantly stepped up so as to heighten the Programme’s impacts and achievements. Communication material content should be designed and disseminated to target groups having common concerns and comparable levels of training. For example, the same material and methods might be used for Members of Parliament, journalists, teachers and management-level staff of government departments. Many of them have access to the Internet, so documents could be sent to these groups at little cost to the Programme. Advocacy, on the other hand, requires a more specific approach which warrants the development of a full strategy by PRCM partners, some of whom (i.e. WWF and Oceanium in Dakar) have solid experience in this area.

Last, but possibly most important, the sustainability of conservation action depends largely on the young people of today. Implementing a regional environmental education programme is therefore a top priority if children are to grow up to be thinking and aware agents in their own development, able to grasp and rise to the challenges of the day, strong in the conviction that they share a single coastal and marine heritage with other countries.
The participants to the Praia regional Forum (2007) stated that PRCM:

- Contributes to sub regional integration in devoting its priority efforts to regional or cross border issues while integrating an intergovernmental organization (SRFC);

- Is an inter sector dialogue framework between various categories of actors who are capable of addressing relevant issues at regional level;

- Provides for coordination and exchange mechanisms which strengthen the global coherence of interventions and limit duplication risks;

- Create synergies between stakeholders and enables scale economies;

- Allows to make greater benefit of its partners specific skills through complementarity;

- Allows to raise sensitive issues without running the risk of standing against national specificities;

- Provides for interesting partnership conditions for donor visibility, global coherence, partner clustering, and regional dimension;

- Uses an innovative eco systemic approach in serving as a relay between the local, national and the eco regional within a multi-stakeholders dynamics;

- Enriches the content of other regional or international programs and offers collaboration opportunities with other initiatives in the sub region;

- Gathers a strong coalition of stakeholders capable of impacting on policies;

- Allows a capitalization of good practices through exchange visits;

- Is at the origin of a greater awareness of the necessity to ensure the protection and management of the region’s coastal area by means of an integrated approach;
Marine Protected Areas—MPAs are considered as one of the strongest tools for protecting biodiversity and contributing to a sustainable management of marine and coastal areas.

They play an essential role in protecting some habitats such as marine grass beds, mangrove areas, muddy grounds, estuaries and deltas, insular areas, etc., considered as essential to the renewal of marine resources and associated biodiversity. These are privileged environments for species reproduction and juvenile population growth; and thus contribute to sustaining human activities based on their exploitation. In Western Africa, these protected spaces are furthermore specific in the sense that communities are the traditional users who are the holders of our rich cultural heritage which helped—in many instances—in preserving practically all the related natural environments.

In view of their knowledge of environments and resources as well as their presence on the territory, local communities directly contribute to the management and surveillance of the aforementioned habitats.

The presence of these communities and the protection status has led to the necessity to set up specific governance systems whereby participatory approach is systematically favored; and also to identify sustainable resources management schemes.

For all these reasons, MPAs in West Africa constitute nowadays real experimentation poles for sustainable development that can be used as examples for the remaining part of the coastal area. However, it is obvious that MPAs should not be considered as a panacea in view of the dysfunctions as observed, but as one of the global coastal planning mechanism component.

Considering the existence in the Sub-region of migratory species, shared resources, users mobility, fishermen in particular, as well as the impact of exogenous activities and benefits as produced by MPAs beyond their boundaries, and the requirement for maintaining the structure and the regional marine and coastal ecosystems functions, coastal and marine preservation stakeholders devised in 2002 a Regional Strategy for MPAs, with a view to putting in place a coherent network of marine protected areas in Western Africa. The strategy was strongly supported by the political authorities of involved countries, through the signing in 2003 of a general policy statement by 10 ministers in charge of environment, protected areas and fisheries in 6 countries. This common will materialize through the launching from 2004, of the Regional Program For the Conservation of the Coastal and Marine Area, under the initiative of four international organizations (FIBA, IUCN, Wetlands International and WWF) and in cooperation with the Sub Regional Fisheries Commission.

The objective of PRCM is to « better protect and ensure the management of biological and cultural diversity and the integrity of coastal and marine ecosystems in Western Africa through shared initiatives which are promoted as part of a diversified regional partnership ». To meet such objectives, seven components were identified among which the one on the « Support to MPAs Creation and Co-management ». 

Appendix 2
Results of the component in support to MPAs creation and co-management
The component has for specific objective «the establishment of a functional MPA network which is representative of key habitats as well as cultural and biological diversity, the management of which is ensured in participatory manner and contributes to the sustainable development of the area».

The expected results of the aforesaid component were:
1. The creation process of new MPAs are strengthened through an identification of priority areas and processes already in place.
2. MPAs efficiency and management is improved through human, institutional, material and financial capacity building of local, national and regional actors.
3. The integration of MPAs in the Sub Region’s international and sector policies is improved.
4. The Sub-Region’s MPAs creation and management experiences are capitalized on and disseminated.

1. Setting-Up a Network of Marine Protected Areas in Western Africa – RAMPAO

The official creation of a Network of Marine Protected Area in Western Africa (RAMPAO) is undoubtedly one of the main achievements of the first phase of PRCM partners, which answers precisely the specific objective of the component. The long process of managers dialogue led to the constitution of the general assembly on April 16th 2007 during the 3rd Regional and coastal Forum of Praia. Two formal regional preparation meetings – Mauritania in 2005 and Dakar in 2006 - in addition to the informal meeting held during the Banjul Forum were of particular importance for the approval of the Charter, by-laws and membership criteria by the heads of institutions in charge of protected areas, with the participation of few actors from the Fisheries sector, research and other institutions involved in the management of the Sub Regional marine and coastal resources.

The Regional Network of MPA in Western Africa

The final goal of RAMPAO is to ensure, within the Western Africa marine eco region, the continuing existence of a coherent set of critical habitats which are necessary to a dynamic operation of ecological processes that are needed for natural resources regeneration and biodiversity conservation to the benefit of societies. More specifically RAMPAO aims at:

- Promoting experience sharing and mutual apprenticeship,
- creating synergies between MPA on issues of common interest,
- making MPAs of the region functional and operational structures,
- building mutual capacities in advocacy, interest and representation of MPAs of the region at international level.

These objectives are shall be met through the implementation of a regional network work plan, which is operated in partnership with various sub regional and international actors involved in the conservation and management of coastal and marine resources.

The selected full membership( MPA) criteria include the official recognition of the protected area, including the definition of management objectives; the existence of an operational MPA management structure ; the existence of a management plan or a multi-annual plan of activity along with an area mapping plan which delineates the site of the area to be preserved. The membership criteria reflect the concern of sub regional actors as to the need for improving existing MPA management efficiency and strengthening the majority of them.

The creation of RAMPAO answers the will of the Sub region’s States , but meet equally the requirements of many international recommendations , specifically that of the world summit for social development, the 5th Parks world congress, the biological convention on biodiversity and the international congress on MPAs, for establishing MPA networks by 2012.
Therefore, 15 marine protected areas from 4 countries (Mauritania, Senegal, the Gambia and Guinée Bissau) selected on the basis of criteria defined by MPAs officials, are the founding members of this network and seven other applicant MPAs should - in order to join the network - work with the support of RAMPAO Secretariat and PRCM partners towards satisfying a few criteria, such as the conception of Management Plans or multi annual work plans and the operation of management structures. Today, RAMPAO is comprised of more than 90% of the area under protection in the concerned countries and covers a major part of the sites that were so far identified as of priority. The areas that are not yet represented are located on the Cape Verde Archipelago and the southern part of the eco region (Guinée and Sierra Leone). The present major challenge of the network will be to strengthen the global coherence through the implementation of a work program based on priorities of higher regional connectivity and functionality while taking individuals needs of MPAs into consideration. A first step was made in that direction with the development of a data base on MPA, which should allow an analysis of gaps noted within the networks and the definition of priority actions with a view to ensuring a better coherence and representation activity from RAMPAO.

2. Supporting MPA Creation Process

One of this component expected results was that the process of creating new MPAS should be strengthened through a support to priority areas identification and setting-up processes. In 2005, priority sites for conservation and biodiversity for species, habitats and biological processes were identified and mapped, with the participation of experts from the Sub-Region. The creation of MPA is a long lasting process which comprises a synthesis of scientific local knowledge and extensive dialogue with users and institutions, the identification of borders and area mappings which correspond to the various uses made of space and resources according to practiced and agreed rules, the setting-up of concerted management mechanisms and bodies as well as systems of surveillance; the implementation of concerned communities priorities; social communication and extended outreach; the quest for financial partnerships etc. One of the major difficulties encountered during this phase is the ambiguity of roles and prerogatives of MPA sponsoring institutions which translates into a difficult collaboration in some countries between Fisheries and Environment or Maritime Economy Departments in some countries. However, combined efforts of PRCM partners in cooperation with political, administrative authorities and national non-governmental organizations in the 6 first intervention phase countries enabled PRCM to bring a direct support to the creation process or to newly created MPAs. Furthermore, the dynamics started since 2002 has indirectly inspired other actors to create some important MPAs in the region, though the latter have received no direct financial support from PRCM. Thus, over the twelve (12) MPA which were officially created since 2003 in five countries of the Sub-Region, two were entirely supported (technically and financially) from PRCM as part of their creation processes; these are the community MPA of Urok group of islands in the Bijagos Archipelago in Guinée Bissau and the cross border biosphere Reserve of the River Senegal Lower Delta. Six other MPA sites received the direct support (technical and financial) of PRCM for capacity building after they were officially created, whereas other processes were indirectly influenced by the ongoing PRCM dynamics (see table 1). Now that PRCM phase 1 is coming to an end, four processes for creating new MPAs are ongoing in three countries with the direct support (technical and financial) of PRCM. If some sites - specific in character due to the biological resources available therein– have already been identified in the Sub Region and benefit from a protection status, it is still necessary to identify the sites and habitats which are not well known or unknown, with a view to ensuring a better conservation of the areas. The first phase experience demonstrated a participatory dynamics as well as a growing interest for the setting up of community MPAs; however the creation process of some MPAs has not always led to a completion of long but necessary preliminary negotiation phases among various stakeholders. This aspect should be devoted particular attention in the next phase.

The following tables give a summary of the level of progress of processes started since 2003.
Table 1: Officially Created MPAs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year of creation</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Management Plan</th>
<th>Official Decree of Recognition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urok (a)</td>
<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>54 500</td>
<td>Operational</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross border Biosphere Reserve of the River Senegal DELTA (a)</td>
<td>Senegal &amp; Mauritania</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>641 768</td>
<td>Under development</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joal Fadiouth (b)</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>17 400</td>
<td>Under development</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abene (b)</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>11 900</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayar (b)</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>17 100</td>
<td>In the Process of Finalization</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint-Louis (b)</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>49 600</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamboung (c)</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>7 000</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Luzia, Raso and Branco (b)</td>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>105 000</td>
<td>Ongoing development Process</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sal/Murdeira (b)</td>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2 063</td>
<td>Ongoing development Process</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Îlot de Baluarte (c)</td>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Îlot de Curral velho (c)</td>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanbi wetland complex (c)</td>
<td>The Gambia</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>6 000</td>
<td>Ongoing development process</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) MPA that received a Full support from PRCM as part of their creation process.
(b) Process that received a full support from PRCM after its official creation.
(c) Process that indirectly received benefitted from the PRCM ongoing dynamics.

Table 2: MPA in creation with PRCM Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Process Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tristao and Alcatraz</td>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>85 000</td>
<td>Negotiations within and between village communities and islands; identification of management rules in due process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pointe St Georges</td>
<td>Senegal [Casamance]</td>
<td>limites précises en cours de détermination</td>
<td>Negotiations between various communities; identification of limits and management procedure in due process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petit Cassa</td>
<td>Senegal [Casamance]</td>
<td>En cours de détermination</td>
<td>Setting up of local management entities; management rules proposals under discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baie de l’Etoile</td>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>limites précises en cours de détermination</td>
<td>Ongoing Process of initial Dialogue between various stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Improving MPA management efficiency through human, institutional, material and financial capacity building to the intention of local stakeholders.

The MPAs management issue in Western Africa is tightly linked to an availability of technical skills and sufficient financial resources. As a matter of fact, the boost currently experienced in the creation of MPAs within the sub region required increased needs in national stakeholders management capacities.

In view of an availability of technical skills and sufficient financial resources the boost that is currently experienced in the creation of MPAs in the Sub-region involved increased needs in national stakeholders management capacities.

PRCM partners have initiated synergy and complementary actions for backing up stakeholders’ structuring on one hand; and their participation to the MPAs management; along with an improvement of the main actors knowledge and the availability of technical means on the other, with a view to scaling up interventions. On the same occasion, they have started a reflexion, though an incipient one, on MPAs financial sustainability possibilities in Western Africa.

3.1. Putting in Place Participatory Management Mechanisms

The presence of traditional communities around or within the MPAs should no more be considered as an advantage for a sustainable management and operation of MPAs. The approaches in favour of dialogue, accountability and equitable access to the benefits deriving from resources preservation and spaces concur to a better understanding and use of MPAs management measures.

That is how:

- Dialogue fora intended to gather various protection actors and stakeholders are organized on a regular basis at the PNBA, in Urok, Parc National d’Orango (PNO), at PNMJVP, at the RBAB (the Biosphere Reserve of Bijagos Archipelago) a dialogue framework for all actors is being set up on the TRISTAO islands

- Management structures involving representatives of various stakeholders operate at PNBA, at Bamboung, at Joal Fadiouth, at Saint-Louis, at Urok, at PNO, at PNMJVP, at RBAB and discussions have been engaged into with a view to creating local entities in the other MPAS for a greater involvement of local actors in management measures implementation;

- Maritime Surveillance teams are comprised of representatives of the populations in Bamboung archipelago MPAs, at the PNBA and the Bijagos Archipelago MPAs;

- Participatory Surveillance actions are organized in the PNBA et Urok, PNO, the PNMJVP, and at the RBAB with traditional authorities and official service units involved in marine and Coastal resources management;

- Participatory resources monitoring systems are being developed at the PNBA and Urok;

- Management plans of the Nivmi, National Park the Bijagos Archipelago Biosphere Reserve, the National Park of Orango and that of Joao Vieira Poitao were updated during the years 2006 and 2007 for updated, improved and more efficient needs management;

- The conception of management plans for Sal and Santa Luzia in Cape Verde are in due process.

At sub-regional level, a reflexion has been initiated to create a regional forum of MAP end users, with a view to ensuring a wider implication and consideration of their interests in the regional dynamics. A first series of discussions led to the definition of objectives, modus operandi and first actions of this future forum.

3.2. Improving the Skills and Availability of relevant technical and logistical means for an efficient maritime surveillance

The regulation and effective application of measures, in particular through an efficient maritime surveillance remains one of the major priorities of MPA due to the growing pressure of illegal and unreported fishing activities. In some cases the states face real difficulties in making sufficient surveillance means available to the MPAs.
The efforts made since 2004 for strengthening maritime surveillance capacities were concretized through the implementation of a regional training programme. With the technical support of the office Français de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage ONCFS four annual training sessions strengthened the capacities of 37 agents (8 captains) from five countries.

A practical guide to the intention of surveillance agents was finalized, printed in 3 languages and handed over to the relevant national institutions. The guide was not only an important work for surveillance agents, but during the 2007 training session, it turned out to be a training and refresher training media for the agents.

Efforts were also made on surveillance equipment acquisition (vehicles equipment and motor boats). Thus, through the support of PRCM donors (MAVA, the Netherlands, Embassy, and the Spanish Cooperation), five motor boats were acquired and put at disposal of the more exposed MPAs (Park National Banc d’Arguin PNBA, Orango National Park, PNO and Marine National Park of Joao Viera Poinloao PNMJVP) a sixth motor boat which was meant for the Niiumi national park, was delivered with slight delay in February 2008.

These capacity strengthening actions not only improved the knowledge and capacities of agents to plan and conduct surveillance missions but also scaled up the efficiency and security of said missions, thus contributing to an improved intervention capacity of protected areas managers face to likely infringements through these efforts require heavy investment at the beginning, the effects are directly borne on species and habitat protection as could be noticed for example on the Seals Coast in Mauritania, where efficient and deterring surveillance actions were instrumental in the spectacular recovery of the monk seals population.

In Guinée Bissau, the equipment helped in supporting the actions on the Fisheries Ministries in a first instance and stimulated the reconstitution of a national fleet. On the other hand it allowed the dismantling of all fishing camps which settled into the Orango and Joao Vieira Polilao Parks, thus contributing to reducing significantly the pressure exerted on the resources inside these MPAs.

In the PNBA, the acquisition of motor boats led to a 28% increase in the number of surveillance hours in 2007. The 18% decrease observed on the number of secured traditional boats in 2007 compared to 2006 despite a more sustained patrolling activity would find its explanation in the low presence of poachers due to inspection risks they are faced with in forbidden areas. Hence the assumption that here too, pressure decreases progressively as the park intervention capacity increases.

### 3.3. Strengthening human capacities through training and dialogue promotion

Institutional dialogue notably around the various aspects linked to MAP management such as surveillance and law enforcement was encouraged among MPAs, particularly at the PNBA, Niiumi national park and in the Bijagos Archipelago MPAs and with services involved in coastal and marine resources management.

A dozen of exchange visits to the benefit of MPAs users and managers took place between various MPAs, particularly in relation to the creation process and participatory management based on the necessity to endow MPAs managers with knowledge and tools; three regional training sessions were carried out as part of participatory governance promotion in 2005 in Bamboung, in 2006 in Cape Verde and in 2007 in Mauritania. As a total 113 participants from pilot sites public services and communities benefitted from skills capacity strengthening in co-management, social communication, preparation processes, management agreements negotiation and finalization, including conflict resolutions schemes for litigation that arise during negotiation and implementation phases as part of the training, incipient MPAs plans of action were reviewed and finalized during mutual support sessions. Through the said visits and training sessions, various MPAs actors were able to exchange and mutually strengthen the different themes as related to the setting-up and management of MPAs, and therefore capitalized on their mutual experiences.
3.4. Putting in place sustainable funding systems for contribution to MPA management

The MPA component also benefitted from PRCM actions in other fields, particularly in sensitization and advocacy for political dialogue between the environment and other development sectors and for a sustainable management of resources. The Mauritian state has taken the sovereign decision to allocate one part of the income derived from fishing agreements with the European Union to the PNBA, the same for the DSPCM (fishing activities Surveillance Unit) and at IMROP (fisheries and oceanographic research) which are institutions under Fisheries and the Ministry of Maritime Economy, as a recognition of the role that MPAs play generally and that of the PNBA in fish stock constitution in particular and biodiversity in general. In addition, in that same park, a reflection was initiated for the creation of a Trust Fund.

The positive experience of PNBA and Mauritania should inspire other RAMPAA MPA members as well as the rest of the countries through a regional dialogue effort.

Table 3: MPA which received PRCM support for capacity strengthening in management skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Date of creation</th>
<th>Area (Ha)</th>
<th>Management and for development plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Park of the Banc d’Arguin</td>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>1,170,000</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cap Blanc satellite Reserve</td>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park of Diawling</td>
<td>Mauritania</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park of the Delta du Saloum</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>76,000</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Réserve de Biosphère du Delta du Saloum</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPA of joal Fadiouth</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>17,400</td>
<td>Development process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPA of Bamboug</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park of Niumi</td>
<td>The Gambia</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>4,940</td>
<td>Yes. Updating process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RB Arquipelago Boilea Bijagos</td>
<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>839,200</td>
<td>Yes. Updating process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parque Nacional de Orango</td>
<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>158,200</td>
<td>Yes. Updating process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parque Nacional Marinho de Joao Vieira e Poliao</td>
<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>49,513</td>
<td>Yes. Updating process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urok islands MPA</td>
<td>Guinea Bissau</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>54,500</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Lucia Reserve</td>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>Ongoing development process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sal/Murdeira Reserve</td>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2,063</td>
<td>Ongoing development process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future MPA Islands of Tristao and Alcatraz</td>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>Is in due course</td>
<td>85,000</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5. Contribution of MPA to the critical habitats socio economic and ecological protection and preservation of related focal species

The effective implementation of management mechanisms in the MPAs contribute to protecting critical habitats for the preservation of related emblematic or strategic species - Ecological monitoring and surveillance actions supported by PRCM mainly took place in the PNBA, PNMJVP, PNO and are under preparation in Casamance, at Tristao and Urok. According to MPAs, we bring a direct contribution to the protection of the critical habitats and related species cited here under:

Table 3: Direct Contribution of MPA to the protection of habitats and related species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marine Protected Areas</th>
<th>Habitats</th>
<th>Protected and related focal species</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Park of Banc d’Arguin</td>
<td>Grass beds, sandbanks, muddy grounds, rocky areas, sandy beaches, desert environment</td>
<td>Selaci, (guitar ray, nurse shark) sea mammals (<em>Tursiops truncates</em>, <em>Souza teuszii</em> et <em>Orcinus orca</em>), yellow mullet, atlantic croaker, migratory and afro tropical birds, sea turtles, dorcus gazelles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satellite Reserve of Cap Blanc</td>
<td>Sandstone limestone rock,</td>
<td>Monk seal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine National Park of Joao Vieira</td>
<td>Sandy beaches, muddy grounds mangrove, sandbanks, forests, grass beds</td>
<td>Sea turtles, water birds, grey parrots (<em>É rythacus psittacus</em>), rays and sharks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National park of Orango</td>
<td>Mangroves savannah, lagoons, sand beaches, muddy grounds, grass beds</td>
<td>Manatees, hippo, sea turtles, dolphins, water birds, rays, sharks, crocodiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community MPA of Urok</td>
<td>Mangroves, muddy grounds, forests, sand beaches, tannes, (salt marshes)</td>
<td>Manatees, shells (<em>Anadara senilis</em>, <em>Tagellus</em>, <em>adansonii</em>, <em>Pgilina morio</em>, <em>Cymbium sp.</em>), water birds (greater flamingos, herons and shore birds), hippos, otter, selacii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community MAP of Bamboung</td>
<td>Mangroves, muddy grounds</td>
<td>Manatees, numerous marine species (coastal demersal species, coastal palgic species, shrimps, molluscs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integral Reserve of Santa Luzia</td>
<td>Coral reef, mountainous dunes, inter tidal zone</td>
<td>Birds, in particular (<em>Calonectris edwardssii petrel</em>, the meadowlark of Ras Alouda Razae, the red billed tropic bird <em>Phaeton aethereus</em>, the Sula leucogaster, the osprey (<em>Pandion haliaetus</em>), the <em>Rhincodon typus</em> ray sharks, dolphins, marine turtles (<em>Caretta caretta</em>), corals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Reserve of Sal</td>
<td>Coral Communities <em>Millepora alcicornis</em>, <em>Siderastrea radians</em>, <em>Porites astreoides</em>, <em>favia fragum</em></td>
<td>Marine turtles (<em>Caretta caretta</em> and <em>Chelonia mydas</em>), bumped whales (<em>Megaptera novaeangliae</em>), red billed tropic bird (<em>Phaeton aethereus</em>), Ospreys, (<em>Pandion haliaetus</em>),strombs, (<em>Strombus latus</em> porgies, <em>Diplodus sargus lineatus</em>, <em>Diplodus prymnesia</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niumi National Park</td>
<td>Mangroves, muddy grounds, savannah</td>
<td>Manatee, dolphin, whales, and sea turtles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP of the Saloum Delta</td>
<td>Small islands, sand banks, tannes (salt marshes), mangroves, clear forests, savannah areas</td>
<td>Manatees, sea colony birds, dolphins, sea turtles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Improving the integration of MPAs in Sub regional countries national international and sector policies

The legal framework is undoubtedly the basis for the recognition of the specificity and importance of MPAs on one hand, and the reference framework for the protection, management and promotion of MPAs at national and cross border level on the other.

As in the all other fields related to sustainable management of marine and coastal resources, dialogue among MPA and other institutions responsible for sector development has been promoted with a view to further integrate MPAs as management tools. Therefore, through the efforts of local stakeholders and government institutions, significant results were noted in three countries, which give account of the growing awareness of MPAs in fishing and preservation sector measures.

- In Guinea Bissau the decree on the official creation of the UROK community was promulgated in 2005. From 2006, MPA are by their names referred to as areas in which fishing is forbidden as spelled out clearly in fishing licences.

- In Mauritania, the promulgation in 2006 of two enforcement decrees of law 2000/024 on the development, conservation, preservation and surveillance of the PNBA. These tools further reinforced the ongoing efforts at country level to regulate essential resources access and exploitation inside MPAs.

- In Guinée an inter-ministerial steering committee on the process of creating Tristao and Alcatraz Islands MPAs was set up as early as 2005. The said committee is comprised of representatives of various ministries, notably Fisheries, Environment, Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Planning, Economy, Defence Departments as well as other research institutions and civil society. This multi-sector composition is a sign of good will from Guinean authorities who right from the beginning took into account the MPAs creation process as part of the various development sectors policy measures.

- In Senegal, an administrative decision is taken by the inter ministerial technical committee that was mandated to facilitate the coordination of MPAS creation as well the definition of concerted MPA management procedures. The creation of such committee which is comprised of the various technical units of Environment, Maritime Fishing, Armed Forces and Interior Ministries is an illustration of the admitted necessity to improve the legal framework and collaboration between various ministries involved in the marine and coastal resources management.

- A study was equally carried out towards the end of the phase, with the objective to undertake a comparative analysis of legal frameworks relative to protected areas at sub regional level and make recommendations for their improvement and progressive harmonization at sub regional level. It is however noted that efforts remain to be made in some countries, with a view to clarifying protected areas legislative framework in general and MPAs in particular, concerning the institutional anchoring in particular.

Technical support and actions along with the sensitization of authorities are still to be carried out for the creation or improvement of the various countries MPAS legal framework.

A growing inter sector collaboration dynamics for an efficient and concerted management of MPAS

Dynamics of inter sector collaboration are progressively being developed during the phase; however the volume and intensity of activities can be increased with regard to areas and fields which are yet to be covered. In the field of maritime surveillance particularly activities are shared between parks and reserves such as the PNBA, PNO, PNMJVP and the RBABB in addition to fisheries surveillance services in Mauritania and Guinée Bissau. Collaboration links have been existing for a long time between PNBA and IMROP which inspired other MPAs for the sub region in the conception of collaboration protocols with research institutions, notably in Guinée Bissau (between IBAP and CIPA ).
5. Experience capitalization in MPA creation and management was essentially made through exchange and study visits between various MPAs.

On the other hand, many training workshops were held on key topics related to MPA management such as participatory management, surveillance, management efficiency evaluation; these were opportunities for exchange and mutual knowledge building for high level managers, agents and MPAs users.

Studies carried out in the various MPAs led - at various levels of progress- to the development of a typology of actors, the validation of natural resources units and dialogue around consensual management measures; the identification of management issues and priorities, mapping and access rules as well as the conception of a common vision for stakeholders.

Articles of scientific interest and various communication media for a knowledge and promotion of MPAs were drafted on various marine protected areas. Best practices dissemination was made in situ through much instructive exchange visits to community representatives on one hand and managers on the other.

As part of participatory management capacity building and the various actors' involvement in the process of MPA creation and management, a guide on MPAs participatory management is being designed for trainers and political authorities. The guide will be based and shall capitalize on other few successful examples and best practices issued from the sub region in the field of MPA participatory management.

Conclusion

Tangible progress was made as to the creation and management of MPAs and the establishment of a regional network of MPA in western Africa. The role of local communities in the setting up and concerted management of protected sites is more and more recognized and institutionalized particularly with the creation of community MPAs. Institutional dialogue should be actively supported to favour collaboration between MPAs and the various institutions involved in the management of marine and coastal resources.

Therefore, a more systematic inter ministerial dialogue is noted along with the recognition of MPAs as a management policy tool for fisheries by various actors. Though, in view of the cases of incoherence which is still high, such inter sector dialogue seem to be poorly efficient and needs to be strengthened. The Praia SRFC Ministers Meeting in October 2006 which recognized the MPAs as a fisheries management tool will probably boost the dynamics and promote inter sector dialogue at least between the Fishing and Environment Departments for a better knowledge of the role of MPAs and increase in means allocated for their management.

PRCM should, during phase 2, take up the challenge to ensure better efficiency as part of the MPA plans and other management tools implementation, while ensuring that the latter represent a coherent system of marine protected areas which can positively impact on the ecosystem quality regional level. With a view to harmonizing approaches and promoting good practices as identified during phase I, a guidance document on MPA creation process should be developed to offer a framework of references to all stakeholders in the sub-region.

Sustainable alternative mechanisms should be identified for MPAs and implementation plans proposed in the second phase. The economic valorisation of MPAs services and biodiversity in general, which as now is not much tangible, should undoubtedly serve as a catalyst to establishing favourable public policies and to the mobilization of sustainable funding.

PRCM and its partners should strive, in the second phase to produce communication media and capitalize on good practices for the creation of MPAs; and highlight successful experiences of MPAs, in order to ensure a better structuring of approaches and knowledge of MPA creation and management.
The objective of implementing that component was to «strengthen the status of conservation of critical habitats along with patrimonial species in the eco-region covered by PRCM».

The expected results were:
1. The level of knowledge and its dissemination is improved both at national and sub-regional level through sub-regional collaboration,
2. Eco-regional preservation plans were developed in a participatory manner,
3. Technical and institutional capacities are strengthened,
4. Experiences issued from the component are capitalized / valorised in order to change behaviours and make impact on policies,
5. Common IEC operations are implemented as part of an integrated approach.

Sharks, rays, manatees, sea turtles, seal monks are the target species in view of their emblematic and patrimonial nature, and of overexploitation, as far as sharks are concerned. As to the mangrove, it was raised in the component both as a species and a habitat. However, there are other threatened species covered by the program but equally a modest program of habitat preservation through the coral reefs conservation project in Cape Verde.

1. Habitats Preservation

Various initiatives from IUCN and Wetlands International on mangroves were brought together to constitute a coherent set at eco-regional level. Globally, the mangroves initiative in Western Africa IMAO (MIWA) has been started to implement collaboration actions with all involved actors both for resources exploitation (agriculture, fishing, wood exploitation, salt production....) and ecosystem preservation or restoration (officials, research, NGOs, communities etc...) with the objective to make actors adopt preservation and valorisation practices which will guarantee in fine a well balanced environment.

In 2007 a launching workshop was convened with national focal points and the project promoters so as to define procedures and collaboration methods, as well as partnership issues. Besides, a regional workshop gathered 81 participants representing stakeholders, for experience sharing and a review over of intervention priorities with a view to devise a regional Charter and a Plan Action. The solemn commitment of parliamentarians during the closing session illustrated, at the highest level, how participants were ready to be involved. Studies were carried out in ecology / climate sciences, socio-economics and mappings; they were subject to restitution and feedback during workshops which mobilised resource persons from each country. Studies in Forestry and Policy, similar to those already carried out by IUCN Senegal, The Gambia, Guinée Bissau were carried out in Mauritania, Guinée, Sierra Leone within the perspective of a future regional Charter.
2. Improving the level of knowledge on species as well as habitats and dissemination

Actions carried out to this effect led to important data collection with professionals and populations, and the completion of in-depth studies was achieved in order to improve scientific knowledge. The said studies focused on the operation of ecosystems and resources as related to human activities carried out therein, as well as socio cultural representations with regard to some emblematic and patrimonial species. The action of PRCM and its partners was among others to build a regional network of observers, the preparation of documents meant for knowledge capitalization and dissemination.

Putting in place data bases for species follow-up

Rays and sharks referred to as Sharks are among the species which suffer the most from fishing activity consequences. All along the first phase, PRCM partners, under the leadership of FIBA and the tight collaboration with the SRFC worked for a better understanding of rays and sharks in order to further target and ensure a coordination of preservation actions. As a consequence, a data base on sharks was developed to allow the disclosure and valorisation of information on stocks status and exploitation. This information as issued from by-catch surveys by research institutions as part of PAN-Requins (Shark National Plan of Action) and data bases of "the fisheries information system and analysis - SIAP", a Project funded by the European Union and Implemented by the SRFC from 2000 to 2002.

Studies implementation and documents capitalization

As part of PRCM many actions were favoured by the synergetic of a multiplicity of actors working in the sea sector and which allowed to document knowledge on Sharks.

The major results are as follows:

- An identification guide of species (rays and sharks) was printed in those languages (French, English, Portuguese) and disseminated to researchers, scientific observers, managers of PAN-Requins, fisheries professionals and decision-makers.

- In collaboration with the Noé Conservation NGO, surveys on coastal communities empirical knowledge on saw fishes and threatened shark species were carried out. Surveys were made in 5 countries (The Gambia, Guinée, Guinée Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal). Following these enquiries one initiative for the preservation of the saw-fish is in process in the biosphere Reserve of the Bijago’s Archipelago, which would constitute one of the last sanctuary of the species in the eco-region.

- Project data base valorisation and SIAP Project data bases enabled an updating of the IUCN Red List for Western Africa Sharks and contributed to classifying saw fishes in annexes I and II of CITES

- A study led to the characterization of specialized fishing sites in 6 countries (The Gambia, Guinée, Guinée Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone)

- A synthesis of the trajectory of elasmobranchs (ray and sharks) in 7 countries of the SRFC led to a better understanding of sharks exploitation genesis and dynamics in SRFC space.

- The compilation of data on biology and fishing statistics for some species on some countries (Senegal, Mauritania, Sierra Leone) as well as the description of shark fishing actors in Senegal, Mauritania and Guinée Bissau are available

- A document on the project results capitalization will be edited during the year 2008, which is the outcome of the project’s achievement capitalization workshop during its first phase.

The eco-region covered by PRCM is characterized by the presence of important populations of turtles, green and cacoane turtles in particular. Under the conduct of WWF and in partnership with national (DPN and GIRMAC (Senegal), INDP (Cape Verde), Natura 2000 (Cape Verde), CNSHB (Guinée), the IBAP (Guinée Bissau), PND and PNBA, (Mauritania)
and regional institutions (URTOMA, Wetlands International), a plan of action was conceived and implemented as part of PRCM from 2005. During that phase, partners’ efforts allowed to put at the disposal of actors knowledge skills and tools for a better preservation of marine turtles.

A relevant documentation is available on the following themes:
- The exploitation of the marine turtle in Joal Fadiouth: importance and evolution trends;
- Ethno zoological knowledge on sea turtles in the West Africa marine eco-region (Senegal, Mauritania, Cap Vert, Gambia, Guinée, Guinée Bissau);
- A Guide for the identification biology and follow up of the marine turtles laying beaches in Western Africa.

The West Africa manatee, a major aquatic mammal of secret habits living in the rivers and mangroves, is part of the eco-region’s emblematic species. The activities piloted by Wetlands International allowed to have an idea of the species status at the level of the sub-regional coastal area and the acquisition of additional elements on the knowledge of species. With this information, a regional strategy for the conservation of the species has been devised through the collaboration of the various actors concerned in the region. With a view to improving knowledge and contributing to its conservation, four major books were written in collaboration with regional partners.

- A Bibliographic synthesis of the manatee status in Western Africa;
- A survey report on the status of the manatee in the 6 sub-regional countries in which it is present and the validation of documents during national fora (The Gambia, Guinée Bissau, Mauritania, Sierra Leone et Senegal);
- The manatee distribution map in Western Africa;
- Various information targeted posters on the role played by the manatee in local communities’ myths and cultures, which put an emphasis on the threats the species is faced with.

In addition, a scientific and school booklet have been developed which will be disseminated at the beginning of the second phase.

Through surveys made in six PRCM countries and national reports compilation in other African countries a relevant data base exists now on the status of the species notably as to the countries in which it is present, its population, socio-economic value, legal status and recommendations on the species preservation. Besides, with these new scientific data, PRCM brings its contribution to the species classification at the annex 1 of CITES. Water birds which get reproduced in colony are particularly vulnerable. It is undoubtedly such vulnerability, associated with the spectacular character of their concentration that led to the creation of many marine protected areas. As fish consumers, they also constitute indicators of the situation of their preys. Under the direction of wetlands International, an identification guide of otoliths was produced as well as a manual for monitoring breeding colonies. All the information collected on main species biology and ecology were disseminated in various reports.

The monk seal is part of the 10 most extinction threatened mammals in the world. The reproduction colony is located along the Cap Blanc Peninsula. In collaboration with Mauritanian Institutions and with the support of the Bonn Convention, the Ngo CBD-Habitat is implementing a species salvation plan to register the birth growth which has reached peak levels in 2006 (48 births) and in 2007 (46 births). The project contributed to improving knowledge in producing a brochure on accountable fishing drawn to 16000 copies in 5 languages and disseminated with the support of the Spain Cooperation Nauta program. A comprehensive Internet site has also been put in place (www.monachus.es) with a view to providing most relevant information on the species.
Establishing a network of observers for the Identified species

An efficient preservation plan implementation requires the mobilization of actors for data collection and species monitoring. During the first phase of the program a network of observers was established for each of the species, notably sea turtles, sharks and the manatee. Given the fact that a number of issues are common not only to the three groups of species but also to other species and habitats of the region, and that technical and human resources could be pooled for improved efficiency, a network for the protection of marine and coastal biodiversity in western Africa (BIOMAC) is being conceived. Initiators are getting closer to the convention on migratory species- CMS with a view to pooling resources.

3. Developing regional and national participatory preservation plans

National action plans - PAN- Requins of Senegal and Guinée were made official through decrees. A strong communication around the official adoption in 2006 of these actions Plans through the PRCM Network and that of CAPE (Coalition For Equitable Fisheries Agreement) created a positive competition among the region’s political authorities. As a consequence Mauritania adopted its national action plan whereas in Cape Verde the plan of action objectives for sharks’ protection was integrated into the National Fisheries Management Plan. In the Gambia, Guinée Bissau, Sierra Leone action plans were discussed with all concerned actors who approved the requirement and are waiting for states to approve them through official action. A plan of action for the conservation of sea turtles was adopted in Guinée Bissau where it is being implemented, whereas in Cape Verde the drafting has just been completed which is to be officially approved.

Concerning the manatee, national preservation plans were designed in all PRCM intervention countries unless for Sierra Leone and were fed into the strategy for conservation of the manatee which the Abidjan Convention focal points were deeply involved in.

The sub-region Plan of Action for the conservation of sea mammals is, for its part, being finalized.

4. Strengthening Technical and Institutional Capacities

The strengthening of actors capacities is one of the necessary leverage for sustaining conservation actions and strategies. Within such perspective, PRCM partner efforts, in collaboration with other international actors, concentrated on regional or local training sessions to the benefit of actors as well as the organization and facilitation of exchange visits among actors coming from various areas.
As a consequence, the following training sessions were initiated:

- Four regional training sessions on species identification ecology, biology, statistical data collection and the management of shark fisheries. The sessions were targeted 7 SRFC members countries citizens notably the managers of PAN-Requins, fisheries technicians and observers embarked on vessels i.e a total number of 90 participants.

- Two training sessions on sea mammals to the benefit of Mauritanian research conservation and surveillance technical agents.

- As to the improvement of actors capacity for protecting sea turtles, two regional training camps were held on the technical follow-up of marine turtles egg laying sites identification.

As part of the research on colony birds, training sessions on birds reproduction parameters and food regime data collection were organized for the 5 national parks staff of the Sub Region.

5. Capitalizing and Valorizing Experiences in View of a Change in Behavior and Policy Impact Achievement

Partners were able to identify in some actors' successful experiences the elements required for mobilization and adhesion of other actors. Endogenous knowledge and actions by mobilized communities to adopt practices favorable to species conservation were valorized through various media based on the thematic that was dealt with.

- The fact that fishermen stopped fishing selachii in the PNBA was presented as an experience to the International Symposium on “Charting a Course of Action For the future of Oceans ” (Vancouver, February 2005).
- The PLAN-Requin implementation experience within the SRFC space was presented at the European Conference of Selachii in November 2007 at Brest (France).
- A Film on the conditions for shark fishing emergence and development in the SRFC was presented and will be broadcast on SRFC member countries national television networks and through mobile projections.
- The national strategy for the manatee conservation was launched and presented during the COP 5 of the Abidjan convention in 2007. The elements of the strategy were also reported on as part of a CMS meeting: "Western Africa discussions on whales and their habitats" (WATCH). The results of the sea turtles prospection Campaign in the Tristao (Guinea ) Archipelago were analyzed and presented under the form of an advertising poster.
- Presence of sea turtle in the previously unexplored island of Tristao Guinea” at the 27th annual meeting of the International sea Turtle Society (ISTS) (Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, February 2007).
- Finally the study on the “exploitation of the sea turtle at Joal-Fadiouth: "importance and evolution trends" made recommendations on alternative activities. Furthermore, discussions with former exploiters (fishermen, sellers etc…) of marine turtles in Fadiouth allowed to create an association to protect sea turtles protection and develop micro-credit schemes for actors retraining.

6. Establishing regulatory tools favorable to conservation in the countries of the Sub Region

The PRCM partners’ approach is to work as a parallel towards adopting regulatory tools at national regional/international level. Consequently results issued from NAP-Sharks surveys led to the proposal of regulatory measures favorable to conservation. The convening of a workshop for updating the IUCN Red List of selachii in Western Africa gathered 25
Scientists from England, USA, Portugal, Russia and France as well as participants from the 7 SRFC member countries which allowed an updating of the status of 42 species. Thus, are now classified in the category of critical extinction risk the following species: *Rhynchobatus, Lübbertii, Negapiiran brevirostris Sphyroa makaran, Pristidae. The Rinabatos Cemiculus, Rhinobatos rhinobatos, Rhynchobatus* are in danger of extinction. The *Gymnura altavela* and *Leptocharias smithi, Sphyra lewinii* are in the category of vulnerable species. Equally, the status of saw-fishes was revised in June 2007 as part of CITES, this is how the *Pristis pectinata* species and *Pristis pristis* were put in annex I and the *Pristis microdon* in annex II.

**7. Information-Education-Communication-IEC- and Advocacy common Actions Implemented By means Of An Integrated Approach**

While mobilizing their networks for sensitization on the status of targeted species conservation, PRCM organizations also developed communication strategies to inform and educate the public at large and some key groups of actors. The manatee bulletin was edited and information publications on that species are published twice a year in Sirenews with [http://www.sirenian.org/sirenews.html](http://www.sirenian.org/sirenews.html). A website is functional and give essential information on the species, project and available communication tools along with a network of scientific experts and national focal points.

Likewise, articles on sharks were published in scientific magazines and national plans of action were made official which led to IEC activities with the production of communication media, targeting the public at large. In order to level-up the adhesion to the manatee conservation, a film was produced on the salvation of a manatee trapped in Senegal “SOS Lamatin: Kanel se mobilise” (Save the manatee: Kanel Gets Mobilized). The film is also projected during international events.

More generally, IEC campaigns on the necessity to protect turtles guided their efforts toward the public at large (T-Shirts, flyers, posters, site web), experts (scientific booklet). A greater integrated communication impact on targeted species is felt at the level of organization leaders which allowed the conception of sensitization campaigns on numerous species. The allocation by the Ross Bethio rural community of 250ha for the creation of a future community reserve to protect manatees and turtles around the Lac de Guiers testifies of River communities’ interest in protecting targeted species.
Appendix 4  
Results of the fisheries management component

As part of PRCM, the fisheries management component has for objective to “Promote a sustainable exploitation of marine resources which pay due respect to the integrity and operation of ecosystems and participate to socio-economic development.

Expected results were:
1. Concerted and accountable methods of sea resources management are developed and/or strengthened;
2. The Institutional Capacities of SRFC Member States and bodies are strengthened;
3. The economic and social status of communities (fishermen processors’ communities ...) is locally improved through valorization and support to alternative income generating activities;
4. Experiences and knowledge of management methods, resources and products valorization are capitalized and disseminated.

Concerning the global dimension of fishing which represents in the region a sector of considerable social and economic importance, the initiatives engaged into by PRCM are undoubtedly modest. Deriving from experiences developed in marine protected areas, PRCM projects contributed to identifying an innovative approach which gives ascribes a lead role to co-management within each fisheries, along with a parallel integration of research, management and development. Though these projects were carried out as experiments at local level for some and at borders for others, the privileged collaboration with the sub-regional Fisheries Commission –SRFC would have favored conditions for a likely capitalization of experiences at regional level.

1. Developing or Strengthening Concerted Management Methods

Common Management Plan on Countries Shared Stocks
Though the countries that have not yet reached the level of a really harmonized management of shared stocks or of common interest to date, recommendations for establishing cross border management plans were issued from the September 2006 Praia workshop on artisanal fishing, organized by the SRFC, does confirm the interest of the SRFC member states to develop concerted management methods to the benefit of fisheries.

In sharing such observation and understanding the necessity to support efforts by SRFC member states to use Fisheries concerted management methods, PRCM partners developed concrete actions and strived on the other hand, to implement the recommendations issued from the Praia Workshop. Therefore, and as part of PRCM, the Support Project to a Concerted Management of mullet, Atlantic croaker, and blue fish stocks shared between
Mauritania and Senegal, under the leadership of IUCN, aims at establishing a mullet fishing management plan between Senegal and Mauritania. Such plan has not yet been developed but fisheries are subject to monitoring and the process is ongoing. Collaboration between the Centre de Recherche Océanographique de Dakar Thiaroye (CRODT) in Senegal and l’Institut Mauritanien de Recherche Océanographique et de Pêches -IMROP led to the setting up of joint task forces in the two countries which developed a data analysis on the three targeted species from 2005 to 2007. Likewise, a diagnosis of mullet fishing in Mauritania and Senegal was made with all concerned actors on both issues related to research, exploitation and surveillance, as well as on valorization and marketing concerted management and planning.

Disseminating concerted management method to the intention of numerous fisheries

All the initiatives carried out with PRCM on the fishing sector have presented a number of elements as factors for success which were promoted as such. Therefore, co-management is now considered as a basic principle which allows all actors in a given fisheries (fishermen, vessel owners, fish sellers, administration services, researchers and NGOs) to implement a concerted resource exploitation system. Furthermore, the eco systemic and integrated approaches of scientific research, fisheries management and development actions are two additional success factors as part of fisheries management initiatives implementation. The concerted management support project on mullet, Atlantic croaker and blue fish shared stocks between Senegal and Mauritania has largely contributed to strengthening the relationship between fisheries administration entities and professional organizations in the two countries. At local level, initiatives for a concerted management

The agreements signed between the African States and the E.U are subject to comments, analysis, and often critics from international observers (States, NGOs, and other international institutions.) One of the reasons is linked to the fact that they are midway between sector policy (Common Fisheries Policy) and development support policy. Hence the presence of two department units within E.U having contradictory positions most of the time, as to their intentions and understanding of fishing agreements. NGOs specialized in European cooperation policy issues have highlighted the negative effects of the agreements as to sea resources overexploitation and denounced unbalanced negotiation conditions. Finally, international organizations in charge of international regulations denounced the said agreement because the financial compensation resembles to subsidies; which leads to an increased interest in over exploiting the resource.

Despite all critics, European agreements are everlasting. Only if they are changed into partnership agreements by virtue of which one part of the financial compensation is directly paid to the fishing sector, a real innovation could not be achieved; whereas neither negotiation procedures nor signed agreements formats can be the same.

The negation of a commercial vision of the agreement is such that no concrete solution is implemented by countries of the sub region. The permanent claim for non commercial agreement leaves the African countries governments in a non economic vision of the fisheries activity as well as an ambiguous vision of the role played by the fisheries sector in the development of African economic systems. The importance of the fisheries sector economic share is almost always underestimated. The potential revenues of the resources associated to efficient regulation mechanisms which requires that over exploitation and overloading situations are corrected are but rarely estimated as an indicator of the sector’s contribution. Therefore, the technical part of negotiations (volume of negotiable rights, set of technical measures and conditions for establishment, follow-up, and control) would become homogeneous and would be integrated to management plans without any a priori technical discrimination, unless to correct comparative advantages which are non compliant to international trade rules (subsidies for example).

Negotiation preparation could equally benefit from a better coordination, within fisheries regional organizations. For instance the organizations could help in sharing the analysis of environment as well as data on the content of fisheries management plans and the enforced exploitation systems.

Many NGO support projects (WWF, IUCN) for instance in Western Africa or other international initiatives have tried to improve international agreements technical negotiation capacity. The paradox of these negotiations is that they are complex as to the composition of
of shells in the Saloum area led to the emergence of dialogue and negotiation dynamics between the various categories of local actors on the management and sustainable conservation of resources in Dionewar, Niodior, Falia, and Fadiouth villages. The organization of inter-village exchange meetings led to a concerted definition and adoption of resources management rules as ensured by surveillance committees which were established on the basis of democracy rule. Therefore, the intervention capacity of surveillance committees through the establishment of an institutional support mechanism enables the observance of an affective biological rest in Niodior, Dionewar, and Falia villages. However, the growing presence of external exploitation agents makes it difficult to implement such measure.

Conflict Mitigation between intercommunity and regional trades

Training sessions on intercommunity conflict management to the benefit of professionals exploiting the same resource were organized in Mauritania and Senegal. They have demonstrated that there is an interest in solving frequent crisis between users, or between users and administration entities. What remains to be done is to extend these training sessions to other countries of the sub-region. The events that occurred between the Cayar and the Guet Ndar Communities in Senegal is a proof of the requirement to train actors so as to prevent such conflicts.

Vulnerable Resources Access Limitation Rules

PRCM partners have also worked in collaboration with fisheries public administration entities for the use of specific permits for fishing sharks in Guinée and Sierra Leone as well as the official recognition of Sharks Plans of Action in Senegal and Guinée. These measures have also for objective to limit the access to vulnerable resources. However, to date, only the shark is subject to such limitation and merely in Guinée and Sierra Leone.
2. Regional Negotiation Capacity Strengthening and Fisheries Governance

The industrial fishing concerted management and policy harmonization among countries constitute one of SRFC main objective with whom PRCM has signed a partnership agreement. Consequently, upon request of Ministries in charge of fishing in the SRFC member states, a new web site was developed www.accordsdepeche.com as part of the fishing agreements negotiation capacity building project, which led to a strengthening of regional cooperation mechanisms. Still in tight cooperation with the SRFC a fishing agreements negotiation capacity building manual was developed and a training held in Dakar in October 2007. It allowed participants to better take into account their national experiences in the content of the manual and exchange on the fishing agreements theme.

PRCM partners are equally involved in the issue of industrial exploitation of cherry stones clams in Mauritania which was subject to a solicitation from Netherlands ship owners. Due to important environmental hazards (degradation of the substratum, waters turbidity in the proximity of the PNBA) and socio-economic (impact on artisanal fisheries) technical advice was given to the Ministry for Fisheries and the concerned stakeholders during a workshop that gathered 40 participants. An important documentation on this type of fisheries throughout the World (Netherlands, France, Argentina, USA) was compiled on a DVD. The workshop concluded with a set of recommendations that notably urged not to open commercial fishing activity before sound and relevant impact studies are carried out on experimental fishery.

3. Products valorization and Support to the creation of income generating activities for fishermen and the community of processors

Artisanal fishing products valorization has been developed with the perspective to reduce fishing efforts through decreased losses inherent to by-catch surpluses.

Improving the quality of traditional fish products

Product valorization is progressive and remains localized; it concerns only a restricted number of products and countries.

- In Senegal, initiatives for improving the safety of marine products and landing sites were carried out in Cayar, in collaboration with the city administration. Training sessions in hygiene and marketing were delivered with the objective to increasing fish products added value to the benefit of trade associations (Groupement d’interet Economique-GIE) of shell collecting women in the Saloum area. The supported GIE participated to national trade fairs to ensure the promotion of their products.

- In Mauritania, actions emphasized on the improvement of tishtar (mullet meat) quality conservation and the bottargua (dried mullet eggs) through the vacuum drying package system and loss minimization. Such support went to 10 cooperatives comprised of 445 women through training in sea products processing hygiene, the acquisition of tiny material, and credits, the setting up of a conservation and packaging unit along with the building of traditional sea products selling depot of Imraguen at Nouakchott as well as the promotion of these products.
Important achievements were made for the Banc d'Arguin mullet fishery eco certification, as well as for the perspective of labeling the bottargua. After a workshop held in Mauritania, the said fishery was selected by the Marine Stewardship Council -MSC as a case study for developing guidelines to be used for the eco labeling of small scale fisheries in the Southern Hemisphere countries.

**Alternative development activities to the fishery**

To support the resources sustainable management process, the initiatives undertaken as part of PRCM within the fisheries management component were sustained with development actions. They consisted in essentially putting credit lines at the disposal of actors and delivering management training to support income generating alternative activities.

Therefore, the setting up of a savings mutual fund for the Cayar women led to an increase in the number of women-initiated activities. Besides, equipment was made available to women processors and a school program for fishermen's children initiated as part of the Cayar sea resources community management project.

With a view to diversifying their activities other than processing, a micro credit fund was established for developing small alternative activities (millet hulling, running small shops, ...) for a GIE of shell collecting women. A technical support was brought to another women's economic association to help them develop their forest products processing and marketing. The various support actions all had for objective to offer real alternatives to a category of actors and incentives to comply with targeted management measures.

4. **Knowledge and experience capitalization of management methods and products valorization**

The internet site on fishing agreements (www.accorsdepeche.com) is a tool which facilitates the availability of the information shared by various countries of the SRFC. It has been opened to fishing agreements in general including regional fishing accords. It has been validated by the SRFC. The fishing agreements training guide is to complete knowledge acquired on negotiation skills on the field and to the benefit of member countries SRFC member countries administration entities.

A taskforce has been set up which is comprised of researchers of the sub-region and IRD has tabled on the development of a wide range of biological indicators (environment, biological wealth, fish populations structuring, population abundance, trophic relationship, level of exploitation), so as to compare a dozen of estuary systems in five countries of the sub Region (Gambia, Guinee,Guinée Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal) subject to various levels of environment antrophic pressure. The work as produced will allow to make available to SRFC member countries and non-governmental actors an evaluation tool of fishery effects on ecosystems, but also of marine protected areas effects as a fishery management measure. Therefore, it is an important component which brings improved coherence among PRCM components.

**Concerning shells**, research activities carried out in partnership with the IRD led to a better understanding of ecological constraints related to the reproduction of main commercial interest shell species and allowed to derive the most potentially management efficient options such as the fallow or re-fish stocking systems. Research was notably carried out on population ecology, analysis of the trophic network, level of pollution and
contaminants, as well as exploited production assessment. Dialogue workshops were organized in each of the villages with a view to setting up resources management and conservation rules, leading to commitments on the use of selective screen for collecting arches, the biological recovery periods, the fish stocking of devastated areas, waste management or the necessity to get rid of pile foundation latrines.

A product marketing study was launched on the basis of the work carried out on the outlet last year, in order to identify market features for the three highest economic potential products which are arches, melongenas and oysters. Finally, a study was proposed on energetic alternatives to the use of firewood through high performance ovens notably.

Concerning mullets, Atlantic croakers and the blue fish, studies carried out to date on the three species led to an updating and improvement of the level of knowledge and also to an awareness of the economic, food and social importance of these fisheries, but also the required conception of resource operational management systems. Exchange visits are a power apprenticeship tool among actors of different area and experience. PRCM has privileged those which constitute an approach for extending some practices and positive experiences in the region between two or many countries or within one same country.

That is how exchange visits made in Dakar, on the processing sites of Rufisque, Yoff, Mboao, and Sicap have enabled women in the Saloum Islands to discover new experiences notably in the field of organization and sea products processing management activities. As inspired from the organizational pattern of their colleagues and women processors in Dakar, they equally identified new market opportunities in particular for fresh products, and linked up with Enda Graf partners in Dakar. On the other hand, exchanges on the constraint to develop the sector allowed to start examining the creation of a national network so as to improve their advocacy capacities.

The visits also allowed women processors in Senegal to share experiences with Mauritanian and Gambian women on hygiene conditions during workshops held on processing. The training as delivered during these meetings on organization leaders negotiation capacity building enabled women to develop a relationship with local authorities notably, and to participate for some cases to local processes decision making on the sea product processing outlet.
This component had for objective to «Promote a tourism pattern which is respect full of the environmental, socioeconomic and cultural equilibrium in the coastal area of those countries covered by PRCM».

The expected results were:
1. The demonstrative value of ongoing projects and experiences in the region is capitalized to promote a sustainable and integrated development of tourism,
2. The capacity of actors intervening in ecotourism development inside MPAs is backed up.
3. Populations' social and economic conditions as well as the preservation of MPAs cultural and environmental heritage are improved through the development of eco touristic activities.

PRCM action was mainly guided towards demonstrating the feasibility of ecotourism along with an approach for a better knowledge of opportunities and potentials. Ecotourism finds its relevance in the preservation issue, in the sense that it ensures the improvement of communities livelihoods who live on the sites that were identified while safeguarding and restoring biodiversity, resources and environment.

The direction taken by the sustainable Tourism Component figured out in the Prospective General Report Evaluation, which is one of the research project implemented as part of PRCM was mobilized to support the improvement of knowledge and skills capitalization.

PRCM actors' activities allowed to inform, sensitize, identify and show within areas what intervention to carry out in order to ensure the development of ecotourism. Such demonstrative approach was implemented in the Biosphere Reserve of the Saloum Delta in Senegal in 7 village sites. Seven income generating eco touristic destinations are developed and surrendered to populations through committees that they created themselves and that were made operational through the project by means of training modules (7 thematic available modules), equipment (traditional boats, and ride calesches VTT; picnic equipment etc.) and structures (pontoons, lanes, eco touristic accommodation huts, etc.). Ecotourism is a new activity which requires a community adhesion so as to be developed harmoniously. The participatory work of all social and socio professional layers led to the awareness of an abusive exploitation along with an assessment of some resources heritage value. This favored the emergence or the strengthening of new social or socio economic links through village committees, who have more legitimacy to take in charge community concerns relating to environment and preservation. Among major changes noted with the populations is a better understanding of land value, an essential resource at their disposal, for a partnership development which is adequate with the concept and principles of ecotourism. The project developed an approach capable of creating large adhesion (or adherence) as well as local ownership (through local and central government authorities which allowed in some municipalities to consider ecotourism when conceiving development plans which are legitimate and legal tools for piloting local development.
2. Building the capacities of actors intervening in the development of ecotourism within MPAs

An Eco Tourism Development Strategy Project
Exchanges were undertaken at the level of the Delta du Saloum Biosphere Reserve –RBDS– which allowed a definition of an eco tourism vision and objectives. The drafting of the plan was delayed due to information collection and analysis relating to other sectors’ political processes which are tightly linked to ecotourism (crafts activity, culture, training, environment). The information issued from the exchange discussion on eco tourism and studies carried out on the subject led, in the absence of eco tourism promotion plan, to the development of a project for the second phase of PRCM, which takes into account the vision and diagnosis defined in addition to the progress made.

Ecotourism is considered in the Local Development plan
Sensitization and information actions towards local authorities of the RBDS area led to a better awareness of eco tourism potential in local development. Two comprehensive identification and specification studies on eco touristic potential were carried out by the rural communities of Fimela and Djilor, which will contribute to developing Local Development planning-LDPs as they are referred to in those areas. The participation of the team project to the LDP planning in Diossong led to the consideration of eco tourism in the development of the Diossong rural community.

Available tools and studies
The following tools and studies were realized to contribute to promoting and implementing initiatives on eco tourism in the region:
- Multi-disciplinary approach to inventory and specify the eco touristic potential;
- Method to identify education and training needs in eco tourism;
- A study on the RBDS sensitive sites was carried out and a conception methodology which was much inspired from that of X. Izureta (tourism activity environmental monitoring in marine protected areas- MET/AP) will improve the MPAs managers capacity as part of the said studies implementation.

Knowledge in hosting, management, restoration, guidance and interpretation
With the objective to endow human resources with capacities, 15 individuals (guides, MPAs managers) collaborating with the RBDS received a training articulated around 7 main modules: sea fauna, ornithology, botany, communication and tourist guide skills, information collection skills in history, culture, ethical values, along with eco tourism behavior. The training documents were duplicated and distributed at a wider scale in the RBDS.

3. Populations’ socio economic conditions and cultural and environmental heritage preservation of MPAs are strengthened through eco touristic activities development

A local development fund is put in place with eco tourism benefits
In the Delta Du Saloum Biosphere Reserve negotiations with local authorities and communities led to the equal sharing principle of funds generated from the exploitation managers of the, the activities preservation of the village. These agreements have been formalized in a protocol during tourist tour transfers. Beyond the result which is undoubtedly an interesting one, it is the whole process that led to reach the target which is to be valorized and capitalized on. Infrastructures such as small built bridges (pontoon), beyond their usefulness for ecotourism, facilitate and ensure the safety of neighboring populations movements. Furthermore, populations are increasingly sensitized on the capacity for ecotourism to give more acceptable social solutions.
Appendix 6
Results of the hydrocarbons components and quality of environment

This component has for specific objective to «Promote decisions taken on exploration, exploitation, and oil transportation which are compatible with a sound management of marine and coastal environment by the countries covered by PRCM».

The expected results were:
1. The targeted audience was informed through relevant communication tools;
2. Expertise and action capacities are built at national and regional level;
3. Tools and mechanisms meant for hazards prevention and management are adopted;
4. A legal and legislative framework which allows a sound management of the oil sector is adopted and implemented.

Not provided for in the initial conception of the program, the creation of this component is a symbol of the reactivity and capacity for adaptation by PRCM to the evolution of its environment as well as the manifestation of the value added by the non-governmental organizations coalition which is PRCM. It started first of all with sensitization and lobbying actions, then training under the leadership of WWF, and finally the implementation of a formal project of «Independent Panel of Expert on oil exploitation in Mauritania».

1. Target audiences are informed through relevant communication tools

Une visite d'étude pour les acteurs et la société civile
A visit study organized in February 2005 for eleven persons in Mauritania, in Senegal, in the Gambia, and Guinée Bissau from public entities, the media, parliaments and civil society allowed to that group to exchange with actors endowed with ascertained experience on oil exploitation; and also to observe social and environmental impacts of oil exploitation in the Niger Delta. The multiplying effects were noted through the echoing made by participants in their countries to leading bodies through networks, the media, and through restitution meetings in each country.

From the visit a series of recommendations were formulated by the participants and addressed to governing bodies during a regional workshop on the oil sector held in Nouakchott in February 2005. During the workshop, two technical brochures, which were issued under the initiative of founding organizations were largely disseminated and proposed a bibliographic synthesis of environment impacts of oil exploitation, along with a presentation of some experiences around the world, (Canada in particular) of international instruments at the disposal of states and meant for assisting the development of this sector of importance to the region’s national economies.
Here under is a list of the lessons learnt by the Mauritanian delegation and presented at a restitution meeting.4

- Have in mind the oil resource is not an unending product;
- Know that the real challenge is investing oil revenues in the health, education, and other sustainable sectors (fisheries, renewable energy, agriculture, trade...);
- Creation of a framework (laws, strategies, and convention) for structures in charge of environment;
- Set up development funds for local communities and strengthen their independence vis à vis oil;
- Build the capacities in good governance (transparency, co management);
- Master oil technology and the progressive nationalization of the exploitation sector.

The Nouakchott regional workshop, organized with the support of the private sector (Woodside, an oil exploiting company) and the government of Mauritania on «environmental and oil exploitation management capacity building» gathered 77 participants from 8 countries from Africa, a number of European countries and Australia.

The major achievements are:

- The sensitization of political and public authorities responsible for oil issues in the intervention countries. In Mauritania, recent governmental decisions favor the taking into account of environment in oil resources management policies: the request for an expertise, and the will to strengthen the legal framework, the acceptance of the Initiative for Transparency of Extractive Industries (EITI), the will to forbid exploration activities in the most sensitive blocks in the same geographical situation as the PNBA.

- Dialogue promotion between the various actors concerned with the oil sector

- Putting relevant information available to participants which allow an upstream integration of oil industry incidence in the marine and coastal management policies.

Sensitization and dialogue workshops

Following the Nouakchott workshop, a restitution workshop was held in Guinée Bissau in September 2006. If the non participation of the government is to be lamented, the workshop organized under the leadership of the Assemblée Nationale Populaire, was much attended to all along the proceedings, by members of parliament, civil society, and the media. 70 individuals received information on environmental impacts of oil exploitation. A plan of action was conceived to build the capacities of actors, initiate exchange of ideas and dialogue frameworks and ensure sustained sensitization. Parliamentarians also committed to require from the government the ratification of some key texts as well as an updating of the national legislation.

The launching of the "Panel of Independent Experts on oil exploitation in Mauritania started in April 2007. Many encounters were organized with the various parties so as to explain the Panel mission and ensure the adhesion of various actors, private sector, civil society, and government representatives. Furthermore a workshop was held by the Junior Ministry in charge of environment in collaboration with IUCN, on October 25th, with the attendance of participants representing oil operators, public service authorities and civil society. The panel focused its intervention on the year 2008, during which a strategic environmental study will be carried out with the help of the World Bank, following the recommendations of the various partners to development of which PRCM organizations. The government will consequently have a set of technical recommendations which are yet to be gathered.

Press communiqués and information availability

The regional workshop of Nouakchott and the restitution meeting of Bissau were relayed by the national public and private media thus giving a wide audience to the issue. Two press releases were issued, distributed and put on line on PRCM's partners' web sites. A web site is totally devoted to the Panel Project. The most important documents have been put on the web to this effect on the panel website (www.panelpetrole.mr).

4 Bowba mint ELKHALLAL : Impacts of oil exploitation In Nigeria : what lessons for Mauritania
Conception and distribution of documents in various languages

The production of PRCM brochures is mainly geared towards sensitizing the populations and stakeholders as well as expertise building, through an extended presentation form of texts and reference international provisions:

- Dissemination of the book on offshore exploitation and oil maritime transportation environmental management* in its complete version and summarized French and English booklet: The Authors are Sandra Kloff and Clive Wicks;
- A bibliographical synthesis on the ecological impacts and regulatory aspects of off shore exploitation. Author: Julien SEMELIN;
- A film on oil exploitation impact in Nigeria (not produced by PRCM) is used as sensitization tool.

2. Expertise Capacity and actions are strengthened at national and regional level

A training session on environmental impact studies to the intention of some thirty governmental institutions (environment and hydrocarbons) and NGOs in the Gambia was held as part of the second regional marine and coastal forum. As a privileged experience exchange and knowledge transmission framework, the training sessions will be extended to other countries so as to involve a critical number of people endowed with expertise and action capacity in that field area. Within such perspective, another training session took place in December 2007 in Guinée Bissau which gathered about thirty participants.

Production of supportive decision making tools

In relation with WCMC, maps which gathered information on oil blocks and oil exploitation and exploration concessions, the Fishing sector activity areas which host a specific bio diversity or ecological processes that are key to the renewal of sea resources was produced in Mauritania and Guinée Bissau. The documents meant for institutions and various concerned actors can be used for guiding the development choices as made and for defining vocational skills in the various marine and coastal areas.

3. Tools and Mechanisms for Prevention and Risk Management

Mauritania engaged itself into the realization of a Strategic Environment Evaluation of hydrocarbons development and coastal management in that country. The advice given by the Netherlands Environmental Evaluation Commission on terms of reference is available. PRCM would have contributed, along with other actors to that process by putting its network available to the team, its technical resources and knowledge of the Maurititanian coastal area.

In addition to Mauritania, the promotion of strategic environmental evaluation was extended to regional meetings. This is how the joint meeting of the parties to the Abidjan and Nairobi convention in November 2007 was a privileged opportunity for PRCM to make presentations on hydrocarbons impact. PRCM advocated with the signatories of these two conventions for the necessity to promote the resort to strategic and other types of environmental evaluations notably in cross border projects and programs, in order to avoid the negative incidences on the marine and coastal environment notably as far as off-shore exploitation and exploration activities are concerned, which engender many environmental concerns in the region. The advocacy was heard as testified by the excerpts of the Nairobi and Abidjan Convention Heads of Delegations joint declaration:

Conscious of the importance to carry out strategic environmental evaluation and other studies to avoid or curb the negative incidences on environment and the ecosystem services notably in relation to the increased activities in the oil and gas, mineral sector, make the resolution to:

- To carry out strategic environment evaluations and other studies on activities likely to have negative impact on the coastal and marine area and notably oil, gas and mineral products exploration, exploitation, transportation and exploration activities in particular while taking the role of the International Maritime Organization into consideration.
- To carry out strategic environmental evaluations before the undertaking of any hydrocarbons exploration or exploitation activity.
During that meeting, the results of various group works were compiled in a project document.

Mauritania was the first country to require from its partners the launching of a strategic alliance, which will take place in 2008 with the support of the World Bank to produce opportunity analysis of costs relating to the sector's development and recommendations on said sector environmental management conditions.

As a parallel, project activities "Independent Expert Panel on oil exploitation in Mauritania" started on April 2007 following a request by the Mauritanian Government to IUCN to establish an independent panel with a view to studying the social and environmental aspects of agreements signed with attending oil and gas exploitation operators.

As an independent scientific study group, the independent panel of experts responsible for studying the social and environmental aspects of these agreements shall have for mission to assess the various environmental provisions of the agreement(s) and impact studies as well as management projects. It will allow to determine the quality of the information as used, the relevance of exploitation actors conclusions working in the off shore country waters and the likely efficiency of mitigation measures, along with proposed development and preservation plans. It should contribute to the adoption of rigorous social and environmental measures for current and future oil exploitation and exploration activities in Mauritania and the region as a whole.

The panel focused among others on subjects such as:

1. A quality assessment of all technical and scientific documents on social and environmental impact studies;
2. The identification of lagoons, where necessary, within social and environmental exploitation actors development projects, as well as their political, legislative and regulatory frameworks;
3. The importance of supporting through the panel's activities, the development of reference environmental standards in the field of oil exploitation;
4. The development of a governmental capacity for ensuring the management of off shore gas and oil exploration activities and the establishment of standards applicable to Mauritania which could serve as an environmental reference for the oil extraction industry.

Today, PRCM constitutes a powerful means of advocacy and has often been cited both by national (government and civil society) and international actors for its significant role in the sub region in view of the current and future major challenges of mines and hydrocarbons exploitation. The space it has opened for dialogue initiatives among actors - which are difficult to promote through institutions, private companies or civil society - are welcomed by various parties. This is a sign of recognition of the efforts provided and the high expectations from various partners from the coalition. For instance, the Abidjan Convention COP 8 meeting appeals to PRCM for it to support the Abidjan Convention ratification process in the sub region, notably in Mauritania, Guinée Bissau, and Cap verde. (http://www.unep.org/AbidjanConvention/The_Convention/COP/index.asp).

In consideration of the various requirements SOLICITATIONS and in awareness of the major role that PRCM can play in the sub region for promoting collaboration between governments and non governmental organizations, PRCM partners proposed a project on hydrocarbons management as part of the future phase 2 of PRCM.
The research component was designed with the specific objective to «develop required knowledge, tools and skills for an integrated management of coastal and marine areas in Western Africa».

The expected results are:
1. Creation and strengthening of a regional and scientific collaboration dynamics for an Integrated Management of Coastal Areas;
2. Improvement of knowledge on coastal dynamics and management practice;
3. Increasing national and regional expertise capacities;
4. Production of tools to assist in making the required decision for IMCA (an Integrated Management of Coastal Areas).

Therefore, two additional projects which are complementary in nature as to approaches used and interrelated in their subject matter, are implemented by PRCM partners under the leadership of FIBA, and in collaboration with IRD for the "Prospective Global Report Project; and also through the collaboration of IUCN as part of the Mauritanian Coastal Planning Project (PALM). The Prospective Global Report Project seeks to ensure a better understanding of the chain of events which led to a moderate use of resources and environment as well as areas, current waste situations and major environmental hazards. The objectives were geared to research training (university training in particular), regional cooperation through the setting up of scientific and research networks and the production of management facilitating tools for the Western Africa Coastal and marine area.

PALM has the same objective as the "Prospective Global Report Project" which with collaboration ties was established. However, it adopts a research action approach with a view to answering the needs for an Integrated Management of the Mauritanian Coastal Area which, as a rich biodiversity area, has an enormous potential in the field of socio economics and tourism, hence the major changes it faces caused by anthropic actions.

1. Improving the Level of Knowledge on Coastal Dynamics and Management Practices

The availability of knowledge and management practices have been a central issue to the component, which are extensively shared among all actors, research institutions and decision makers. A variety of themes (methods and models; a regional GIS development; shoreline anthropization, shoreline dynamics and related hazards; dynamics of agricultural and forest coastal landscapes; sea resources dynamics, urban dynamics and tourist dynamics) were identified and subject to studies. Given the complexity and diversity of explored domains, the pooling of human resources and the means of various institutions and actors of the region and Europe have been of necessity to experienced success stories. Therefore, studies were carried out according to the various themes cited above and some of them published in international scientific magazines.

Thematic Studies are Made Available
To date, many thematic studies were produced which consequently contributed to improving the knowledge of actors involved in coastal area integrated management.
These are among others:

- The report on agricultural and forest landscape characterization in Western Africa coastal area, which led access to many doctoral papers and PHD works;
- A summary report on fishing techniques in the sub region;
- The Ground Swell Atlas in West Africa;
- The Study Report on wind direction and speed scope characterization in the West African Coastal area from data chronicles provided by ERS-1, ERS-2 and QUICKSCA satellites;
- A list of the region’s water species (biodivbp.xls), acquired through "data mining" from existing files and data bases (SIAP, FIGIS…): it is comprised of 1686 species;
- Group work meetings’ reports on estuary areas characterization as well as the identification of biological indicators and exploitation of marine areas resources.

In view of the difficulties encountered mainly as to the availability of moderators of thematic areas, many themes are still ongoing and should be completed by the end of the year 2008. These themes among other research studies, deal with aspects that have been sufficiently covered to date:

- A global report on tourism in each country so as to identify failure and success factors.
- A data base under the form of a regional touristic resource Center.
- A global report on urban occupation trends in the five countries of the Sub region.

Finally workshops on the results of each thematic field area along with a synthesis of research findings to transfer to beneficiaries are planned for the year 2008.

**Scientific Publications**

Many scientific publications were issued:

- Missao itinerante para a Implantacao dos Sitios Ateleies do Eixo 4, nos Cinco Paises da Sub-regiao
- Abilio Rachid Said et Frédéric Alexandre: dynamique des paysages agricoles et forestiers.
- Saoudou Ndiaye, 2007 : analyse critiques des donnees disponibles dans le CIAO ; memoire de master II -UBO/Géomer ; 53 pages.
- Y.-F. Thomas & A. M. Senhoury, “the significant height of waves in Western Africa, Observation by means of Radar Altimetry”; Journal PHOTO - INTERPRETATION N° 2007/1 (pp. 25-48)
- Y.F. Thomas & A. Senhoury: "Significant Wave Height Distribution in Western Africa measured by means of a Topex radiometer", "article submitted to scientific review" Photo Interpretation for publication in 2006.
Participation of Scientists of the Sub Region to Regional and International Conferences on shoreline issues

These meetings are part of the valorization of produced knowledge and scientific findings in the sub region. The participation of 7 west African researchers to the Symposium on West African Ecosystems was held in Brussels in February 2005 was highly appreciated. The conclusions of that symposium were produced and re printed twice to meet the demand. A total of 500 copies were produced.

In addition to this event, PRCM was represented to three other major meetings. The first conference was held in Brest on «the Management of marine molluscan fishes». The second was an international gathering on MPAs (Mekhnes, Morocco). The third meeting was that of PRCM/CIDA in Stockholm which was an opportunity to meet 8 scientists of the West African sub region along with their colleagues from Eastern Africa and Sweden.

Another meeting which gathered the same experts was held in Durban (South Africa) in 2007. This multifarious participation offered opportunities to present communications on coastal issues in West Africa and laid the ground for a partnership among institutions.

2. Increasing national and regional expertise capacities

In view of weak human and technical capacity, the availability of a critical mass of national and regional experts capable of producing tools to support decision making or give advice to decision makers on shoreline challenging issues, is an important leverage and even, a sine qua non condition for an integrated coastal area management application. One of the component’s major concerns is to help in training both graduates (masters and PHD level) and technical staff (technicians and engineers). Consequently, research modules moderators participated actively to academics and students training as part of project structures and that of partner institutions; likewise, some students benefitted from regional and international fellowships.

PHDs on Integrated Management Techniques

Four PHD works were engaged into between 2005 and 2006. They are being prepared by students from the region at the Universities of Cheikh Anta DIOP of Dakar, Havre, Géomer Brest, at the MNHN-Paris on the following topics:

- The dynamics of sand shores coastlines in Western Africa
- Fisheries regulation in Senegal and its impact on West African fisheries;
- Review of the relationship between likely local and regional management schemes
- Contribution to the study on la Baie d’Etoile ecosystem


Fellowship Sponsoring for PHD students

A dozen of students from the sub region or the north have received logistical support, fellowship and training from some theme moderators, to
prepare masters or PHD graduation lectures. They are registered either in the sub region’s universities (UNESCO Fellowship, Centre d’Etudes et de Recherche en Environnement - Université de Conakry) in the universities of the North (Université de Versailles -IRD, Université de Brest). Five of the students who are fellows of the Prospective Global Report, conducted various research topics and obtained their PHD in 2007:

- Impact of rain fed rice on mangrove plant formations in the Sangareah bay (dubréka district);
- Traditional «tété yélé» nets in the Kaloum peninsula, impact on the exploitation of marine resources;
- Feasibility study of a GIS dedicated to the African coastal area: critical analysis of available data in the Western Africa Catalogue of Information (CIAO);
- Contribution to the study of tourists flows all along the Mauritanian shoreline;
- Occupation of the peripheral space of the National Diawling Park: analysis of conflicts and threats on an artificialized system.

Training of trainees

Seven student trainees were supported by the project for the years 2005 and 2006 of which 3 were hosted by IRD in Dakar and 4 at GREZOH of Nouakchott University. In 2007, 2 trainees of the University of Versailles -Saint Quentin and two female students of the UNESCO Fellowship were hosted by the LINUS laboratory of C3ED/IRD of Dakar.

Sustained Training For Professionals

A training module on GIS was organized in 2005 for 14 participants from the sub region: 8 UNESCO PHD Fellows and 6 professionals. Some of them were used as focal points for the development of the CIAO (Catalogue of Information for Western Africa).

A multi disciplinary higher education devoted to the integrated management of coastal areas

A Masters Degree of the University of Cheikh Anta Diop - Dakar devoted to coastal zones management has been developed with the support of the Global Prospective Report and UVSQ partners. Validated by the University scientific bodies, its implementation is in process at the UNESCO Fellowship in view of the LMD reform at Cheikh Anta DIOP University.

Trained Students Monitoring

In 2007, the Global Prospective Report started to monitor the students who were trained in their countries: the two Guinean UNESCO Fellows are currently teachers and researchers in marine disciplines; the Mauritanian female student trained in Brest is being monitored so as to be able to participate to the ongoing management of the CIAO currently being established in Mauritania.

3. Creation and Strengthening of a regional scientific collaboration dynamics for an Integrated Coastal Areas Management

A University Network under creation

Concerning research, the various actions contributed to strengthening thematic networks in the fishing and tourism sector, coastal dynamics, urban dynamics, and forestry dynamics. They equally helped in pooling initiatives for the establishment of a regional GIS through the convening of meetings between projects and programs which are active in the field of geomatic applications (BAGIS, SRFC, CSE). The various contacts and meetings were opportunities to make associated research and training institutes along with foreign partners to contribute to the emergence of a regional expertise and adhere to the establishment of an inter-university network. This
A major initiative led to the proposal of an institutionalization project for such network as part of PRCM Second phase.

A Research Project shared by many institutions
One of the major challenges of the Global Prospective Report is to arrive in involving the majority of research and training bodies in its activities. Among the most cited reasons for non-involvement, there is the lack of skilled human means on aspects related to shoreline management, as well as the fact that sustained funding is not available.

A project on the coastline area hydrodynamic modeling in Western Africa has been proposed by teams from various sub regional institutions. Project implementation is conditioned to the acquisition of funding that is being currently secured. An inter-institutional collaboration for a contribution to the integrated management of coastal systems is already in due process. Consequently the contribution of some sixty research institutions and universities of the region and roughly a dozen of partners from the institutions of the North has been recorded. The establishment of an Observatory of the Mauritanian coastline offered the opportunity to transfer skills to Mauritania (coastline areas management, geomatics,...) and favored the setting up a network of national, regional and international partners (PNBA, PND, IMROP, University of Nouakchott, PRCM, CNRS...).

4. Production of Support Tools To Management
Tools were designed for actors and decision makers for a cautious planning and management of the coastal area. The sub regional Plan of Action for the conservation of priority sites has been developed by a workshop of experts that met under the initiative of WWF from 2003; the plan provides a mapping and information on the most sensitive areas of the sub region which are comprised of the majority of the MPAs that were created to protect fragile habitats and nurseries.

In Mauritania, decision making tools were conceived; it is notably «the Biodiversity and Hydrocarbons Map in Mauritania» in collaboration with the Prospective Global Report/PRCM, IMROP and UNEP/WCMC as well the «Mapping of shoreline hazards in the city of Nouakchott» with the collaboration of the Global Prospective Report and the University of Caen Basse Normandie (France), through the conception of a Land Digital Pattern (LDP); As a parallel, a topographic study of the city of Nouakchott was carried out to identify the areas exposed to flooding, erosion and port facilities sand silting through a mapping of all hazards.

To date, the Main Planning Scheme of the Mauritanian Shoreline comprising an inventory of the country’s potential, as well as strategies for sustainable development has been conceived. As a central, participatory and consensual document which defines the relevant planning and development framework for the Mauritanian coastline, the PDALM answers the needs for an Integrated Management of the Coastal Area. The promulgation of decree n° 2007-037 relative to the shoreline by the Mauritanian government confirms the importance granted so far to coastal areas by official authorities: coastal planning process ownership, strengthening of legislation on coastline management and its resources,
consideration of the coastline environment in the national strategies and of some development partners, implementation of preventive measures (for instance the rehabilitation of the dune belt).

In consideration of the requirement to create a framework for dialogue on the issues related to the Mauritanian shoreline, a Technical Committee was set up, strengthened and extended to key actors of the coastal areas (representatives of civil society, private interests, scientists, decision makers, coastal institutions, local authorities and other stakeholders) in order to exchange information and feed into the exchange of views on coastal area management and planning.

Other tools to support decision making were developed, among others:

- A sub regional plan of action for the conservation of priority sites;
- A land digital Model for Western Africa;
- An ongoing mapping of flooding hazards for the city of Saint Louis;
- A map presenting the biodiversity and oil activities all along the Mauritanian shoreline;
- The conception of a digital catalogue of information on the coastline in Western Africa.

**Conception of a regional geographical information system**

To date, a Catalogue of Information for Western Africa (CIAO) is freely available on internet (www.premarine.org/ciao) in collaboration with Géomer. In its first version, the CIAO catalogue contains 236 sheets which give the information available in the three main themes (natural, anthropic and regulatory), at various spatial levels (local or regional) and which have different quality criteria (timeliness, accuracy, exhaustiveness...)

As a dynamic tool, CIAO has for calling to get progressively enriched through the collaboration of all coastal actors. The conception of the CIAO is the first step of a Geographical Information System feasibility study dedicated to PRCM coastal areas. The GIS model of Cape Verde would be used as a reference for establishing a foundation basis. Actions are ongoing with the Red Afrimar Network, the Spanish Cooperation and the SRFC to valorize the CIAO as part of a regional GIS on the fishing sector.

Furthermore, the Mauritanian shoreline Observatory that has been put in place allowed to develop a structured approach with a view to ensuring the follow up of long term changes of the Mauritanian coastline, taking into consideration the specific context of that environment. To that end, a multidisciplinary GIS organized around the themes of «The Dune Belt Evolution Monitoring», «Access to Waters», «Infrastructures», «Socio Economic Issues» and «Pollution» was put in place to enable a listing, storage, synthesis and dissemination of information produced by various bodies. However, data collected on the themes of pollution and socio economic sector remain modest and require increased means.
Programme Régional de Conservation de la zone Côtière et Marine en Afrique de l'Ouest

BP 4167 Nouakchott, Mauritania
tel. +222 529 09 77
www.prcmarine.org

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