

PRCM – WEST AFRICA CBD Focal Points Workshop – The Gambia, 15 – 16 April 2008

Draft Banjul Declaration

We, the CBD Focal Points and the protected areas managers of Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea – Conakry, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone after meeting in Banjul on 15, 16 April 2008:

1. Reiterate our commitment to the full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity mainly in achieving the 2010 Biodiversity Target and, 2012 target for establishing effective networks of marine protected areas in West Africa
2. Take note of these progress and achievements in the implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas, development of innovative financing mechanisms and in the mainstreaming of biodiversity in the sectors of fisheries, tourism and agriculture with the support of PRCM.
3. Take note of the outstanding achievements done by the Sub – regional Conservation Programme on Marine and coastal zones in West Africa (PRCM) since its creation in 2004: establishment of network of MPAs in West Africa, enhancement the coverage of protected areas, development of trans-boundary protected areas, better protection of key biodiversity areas, development of new approach aiming at mitigating critical threats such as oil and gas, etc.

However, despite the aforementioned efforts in West Africa, serious challenges in meeting the 2010 and 2012 targets still remain:

- Governments of the countries covered by the PRCM have inadequate human and financial resources with which to fully implement the Programme of Work on Protected Areas;
- The economic and social values of biodiversity are not understood as critical to alleviating poverty and in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): particularly in contributing to food security; providing medicine; adaptation to climate change; and in providing clean water for people and agriculture;
- The impacts of climate change on biodiversity will seriously compromise the region efforts to establish and effectively manage protected areas;

- Poorly implemented initiatives aimed at climate change Adaptation and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) can pose serious threats to biodiversity and local communities.

Request COP to:

- Take note of the efforts in PRCM countries in implementing the CBD especially with regards to the Programme of Work on Protected Areas and the implementation of the ecosystem approach;
- Provide information on case studies and best practices relevant to the linkage between biodiversity conservation and key issues such as fisheries management, poverty alleviation, food security, adaptation to climate change, water supply, medicine and disaster mitigation;
- Adopt a strong Resource Mobilization Strategy with clear targets to increase funding for protected areas from domestic budgets, overseas aid and innovative financing mechanisms; take clear responsibilities for implementation; and develop a robust system to monitor progress;
- Call on GEF and other donors to provide additional funding to PRCM countries and to support governments in applying for grants;
- Provide information on sources of funding for biodiversity conservation to countries within the PRCM;
- Ensure that the three objectives of the CBD are fully integrated into all projects that aimed at Adaptation to climate change and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD), ideally by the development of a joint programme of work with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

We take the opportunity of this declaration to thank the Gambian government for accepting to host this meeting; our thanks go also to the PRCM mainly WWF for taking this initiative and the CBD secretariat for accepting our invitation and providing technical support.