



ISLAND BIODIVERSITY DAY CELEBRATION -22ND May 2016

Islands are one of the precious gems of a nation but are left at the mercy of natural disasters, climate change or variability effects and harsh human activities, which can lead to acute environmental disasters, biodiversity loss and other related threats. And if this situation is not globally addressed with innovative and proactive actions and solutions, there will be possible sea level rise that can result to, the inhabitants becoming environmental refugees.

Since we IslandAid Sierra Leone do not want that to happen, therefore join the world to continually create the awareness for the effective environmental, ecosystem management and biodiversity protection of the islands against the growing threats of climate change and related climate variability effects.

Our core policy objective is geared towards island conservation biodiversity and sustainable livelihood. This is just related to or in line with this year's theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity, ***"Mainstreaming Biodiversity; Sustaining people and their livelihood"***. It is like putting into action the FAO'S Blue growth Initiatives of Islands' sustainable development

In conformity with the provisions or resolutions of international protocols, conventions and agreements for the preservation and conservation of the islands in the areas of environmental and ecosystem management and biodiversity protection, our organization IslandAid Sierra Leone organized a three day Island Development conference on 2nd-4th September 2015, and escalated the inherent problems of Island, catalysed commitments and collaborative ties for innovative action and solution. It is evident that the islands are prone to Biodiversity loss and ecological vulnerability.

The conference was necessitated on the outcome of the Island Day celebration on May 2015, with the theme "Nature is speaking; and must be protected against the growing risk of Biodiversity loss and environmental threat"

To this backdrop, we therefore took the initiative to sensitise the twenty two (22) Island communities in the country with systematic education on environmental management and biodiversity protection.

ISLAND BIODIVERSITY DAY

In line with the challenges of the SAMOA Pathway and UN Agenda 21 of the sustainable development of Islands, our organization, IslandAid Sierra Leone, has been exerting every effort to promote the awareness on environmental management and biodiversity protection. This we normally do by celebrating Island Biodiversity Day on 22nd May with varied programmes relating to island marine and coastal management and protection.

This year's celebration will attract the twenty two Island communities in the country, NGOs, civil society groups, youth groups and others. The celebration will be held on Tasso Island at 11:00 am; and the following is the programme of events; and the theme being, **"Biodiversity and the Sustainable Livelihood of Island Communities"**

20TH-21ST May 2016 Radio and Television discussion programmes on biodiversity protection and island communities' sustainable livelihood; and the commitment of political leaders.

22nd May 2016 Island Biodiversity Day, Theme, **"Biodiversity and the Sustainable Livelihood of Island Communities"**

This shall be followed by another event, **"Island Youth Global Day of Action"** on 24th June 2016. This is to use the youth as the vehicle to create the awareness of positive social change in the islands, especially in the area of environmental management and Biodiversity protection.

And also to be part of the 13th meeting of the conference of the Convention of Biological Diversity (COB13) in Canum, Mexico from 4th-17th December 2016, our organization, IslandAid Sierra Leone, shall also do same in our way in line with the global theme. This we shall call **"Second National Island Development Conference"**

CONCLUSION

The management team of our organization, Island Aid Sierra Leone is made of Islanders that have passion for the sustainable development of the Islands in the country; and our working principles are enshrined in the various UN Resolutions adopted; viz, Barbados Programme of Action(BPOA), Mauritius Strategy Initiative (MSI)and Samoa Pathway.

In view of the above, we are advocating or imploring for the SIDS Model to be also extended to countries not island states but with Island territories or communities, like my country, Sierra Leone and others. Let it be a new approach to seeking global island solutions

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