

## MID-Term Review of NAP

Mid-term review of National Action Plans for ecosystem preservation beginsBy Olu Sarr

ACCRA 12 July - Environmentalists from 16 west and central African nations began Monday a two-day review of their progress in developing National Action Plans vital for the safeguarding and sustainable management of their marine ecosystems that are blighted by pollution and the depletion of resources.

“This meeting will enable us to know where we stand with the ongoing work,” Dr Jacques Abe, the environment scientists at the Interim Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem, told the 18 participants present at the start of the workshop in Accra, capital of Ghana. Each country’s Action Plan will include proposed policy and legal reforms, investments needed and economic instruments. Some of these elements already exist in other action plans such as the National Biodiversity Action Plan, the National Programmes of Action on Land Based Activities, the Fisheries Management Plan, and the Integrated Coastal Area Management Plan.

Each National Action Plan aims at an integrated national approach to planning and implementation which involves many sectors, various ministries and other governmental agencies. When ready, each country in the Guinea Current region will pass by-laws to back their National Action Plan.

A regional Strategic Action Programme forms the basis for the development of the National Action Plan. The Strategic Action Programme is a negotiated policy document under the Guinea Current Commission (which ministers of the environment on 2 July agreed to create) that describes policy, legal and institutional reforms and investments needed to attend to the trans-boundary priority problems of the Guinea Current region.

Successful execution of the National Action Plans by all GLCME countries would lead to the achievement of the three broad goals of the agreed Regional Strategic Action Programme: which are to recover and sustain depleted fisheries, restore degraded habitats and reduce land and ship-based sources of pollution.