

Exploring Cape Three Points and Princess Town

The Coastal and Marine Conservation Drive Project (COMADRIP) is a one-year site search project for the design and development of a Marine Protected Area (MPA) management strategy in the greater Cape Three Points area that can serve as a blueprint for the national coastal conservation process in Ghana.



Report by Denis Worlanyo Aheto

The project aims to promote the conservation of coastal habitats and livelihoods in Ghana through the establishment of marine protected areas.

COMADRIP aims to facilitate the development of a formal site and conservation management plan for the establishment of a marine protected area in the greater Cape Three Points area in the Western Region of Ghana. This will increase stakeholders' awareness of the value of ecosystems and the services they provide for their livelihoods. In this way, the livelihoods of fishermen in the area will be improved as alternative sources of income are identified for possible livelihood diversification.

COMADRIP will also strengthen community-based natural resource management groups and facilitate the institutionalisation of management rules for the conservation of the area. Prior to undertaking the main activities envisaged for COMADRIP implementation, the project team visited the communities in the project area to conduct a mapping exercise. This report provides a summary of the activities and observations made by the reconnaissance team during the two-day exercise.

Purpose of the reconnaissance tour: On 29 and 30 June 2021, five members of the project team, consisting of three researchers from the Centre for Coastal Management, a driver and a representative from Hen Mpoano, visited communities in the project area to conduct a reconnaissance tour.

The research was conducted:

- to familiarise community leaders with the project and to seek their consent to proceed with the research in their communities.
- to familiarise themselves with the current state of the ecosystems and livelihoods and to study the relevant problems of the communities in order to take them into account in the implementation of the project.



Das Projektteam fliegt mit einer Drohne über die Projektgemeinden.

Community input

The project team met with the leaders of the various Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAS) in the Princess Town (PT) and Cape Three Points (C3P) communities and introduced them to COMADRIP and its objectives. These leaders, who are key decision makers and traditional stakeholders in the communities, were asked for their approval and support for the project. The leaders of both communities nodded their approval to the project. They pledged their full support throughout the life of the project and thanked the Centre for Coastal Management and Hen Mpoano, as well as their sponsors, for choosing their communities to improve the protection of their resources and for involving them in the process.

Situation report

With the help of community field assistants, the team conducted a walk-through of the commu-

nities to familiarise themselves with the current state of the ecosystems and livelihoods in the communities. The team also conducted various activities such as drone flights and interviewing selected community members to understand the current state of the environment and the prevailing human activities.

Key observations in the selected communities

Efforts to renew Ghana's fisheries have led to the introduction of a nationwide closed season for



Verklappung von Plastikabfällen im Mangrovenwald bei Cape Three Points.

fishing. The visit took place a few days before the start of the closed season for the fishery, which was scheduled for 1 July 2021. Some fishermen the team spoke to in the communities expressed concern about the impact of the measure on their livelihoods.

However, they affirmed that the closed season for fishing was necessary to rebuild fish stocks and secure their livelihoods. The ban on deep-sea fishing meant that they had to resort to inland ecosystems for resource exploitation. This could have implications for the over-exploitation of inland ecosystem resources. The need for a more comprehensive approach to conservation management of coastal and marine ecosystems should be addressed.

Cape Three Points

The problems identified by the C3P team were:

- Gradual accumulation of sargassum on the beaches;
- heaps of rubbish (mainly plastic) along and within the mangrove forest;
- Increasing human encroachment as construction projects in the community are increasing in number
- Construction of roads and drainage systems in the community.
- Complaints about the recent decline in fish catches, leading to loss of livelihood.
- It was observed that the number of mangrove trees had increased compared to what was observed in 2018.

for the implementation of the project. The information gathered during the reconnaissance will be compiled and presented to the stakeholders during the sensitisation meeting.

Princess Town

Issues noted by the team in Princess Town:

- Deforestation of coconut trees along the coast from Akatakya to Princess Town to extend power supply to other communities.
- Gradual accumulation of sargassum on the beaches.
- Pollution of the estuary from illegal mining activities resulting in brownish colouration of the water.
- Enhuli lagoon remained protected by traditional community rules at the local level.
- protected.
- The number of mangrove trees has increased compared to the observations made in 2018.

Conclusion

The exploratory survey was carried out successfully. It was an important step in the implementation of the project. The community's consent to the implementation of COMADRIP is a crucial building block for the overall success of the project. The key issues identified during the survey will be considered and duly addressed during the implementation of the project. The project team will continuously work closely with the communities and other relevant stakeholders to achieve the objectives of COMADRIP.

Next step

The team plans to hold an inception meeting with all stakeholders (from government, academia, private sector and civil society) to formally inform them about COMADRIP and request their support

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Project Partner:

University of Cape Coast
Centre for Coastal Management
Prof. Denis Worlanyo Aheto
Cape Coast
Ghana