

Workshop report:

National Environment Forum – 8-10 July 2009, Bamako/Mali

Background

National Authorities in Mali identified that there is a lack of coherence and complementarity between their environmental policies and other national development strategies. They therefore decided to commission a consultation exercise aimed at reviewing through a SWOT analysis the existing policies and strategies as well as to propose new strategies in development areas where this is needed.

This resulted in a two/three month study leading to a national forum where all national development actors were involved. PEI-Mali as a UNDP/UNEP project has provided direct financial and technical support to the initiative enabling the review of 9 existing policies and the formulation of 12 new policies and strategies concerning various areas among them the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA).

The meeting was organized from 8 to 10 July 2009. The UNEP delegation was led by the ROA Director.

Main outcomes

a) The opening ceremony.

The opening ceremony was chaired by the prime Minister of Mali who highlighted the commitment of Mali government to mainstream environment to national development policies for the achievement of MDGs. He expressed to UNEP the gratitude of the Government of Mali for UNEP's participation & contribution to the preparation and the organisation of the forum and for UNEP's technical and financial support to Mali.

The ROA Director, taking the floor on behalf of UNEP's ED, expressed his words of thanks to the Malian authorities for the UNEP involvement at different steps of the event at a time when the formulation of UNEP biannual (2010-2011) plan of work was underway. He reiterated UNEP's commitment to pursue its cooperation with Mali to enable the country to achieve its sustainable development goals.

b) The plenary session.

The plenary session provided the opportunity to collect inputs from the participants for the finalization of the consultation report which focused on various areas among others natural resources management (forest resources, national parks, climate change, soil management, etc), environment mainstreaming into sectoral policies (promotion of the SEA approach, PRSP formulation, fishery, water & energy, mines, transport, industry, and tourism) and measures to consolidate environmental actions (research, education, environmental communication, environmental law).

The session ended with a donor meeting chaired by the Ministry in charge of Environment and Sanitation who expressed the need for capacity building for his department to make easier the operationalization of the recommendations emanating from the assizes. In response to this request, UNEP has offered to assist the Malian government to improve the five year action plan submitted by the forum.

The major recommendations that came out are as follow:

- 1- Improvement of the consultation report by establishing measurable indicators and milestones and also integration of climate change issues .
- 2- Take into consideration the management of transboundary ecosystems and sub-regional aspects into the document.
- 3- Use of the environmental indicators revealed by studies funded by PEI for the next PRSP review in Mali.
- 4- Involvement of strategic ministries, mainly those of Economy, Finance and Planning in the forthcoming PRSP greening and the budget allocation processes.
- 5- Development of a coherent and harmonized approach for UNEP's presence in Mali in collaboration with all stakeholders in order to increase the overall performance of UNEP projects at country level .