

**THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROFILE OF ANLO BEACH: SHAMA DISTRICT
(WESTERN REGION OF GHANA)**

Johnson, Victress A.

2000

ABSTRACT

An eight-month study was undertaken to ascertain the scale and scope of degradation in the coastal wetland of Anlo Beach and its community, as well as the benefits derived by the community from the wetland. Seasonal records of some physical parameters of the wetland, namely water level, transparency and temperature were taken, as were data on some chemical parameters. Data on the exploited coastal biodiversity resources were also obtained. In addition, surveys were conducted with the aid of structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews on the inhabitants' perception of degradation in the wetland. The study revealed that the waterbody is generally shallow (0.25-1.5 m) with fluctuating hydrology and chemical parameters. Temperature was generally found to be high and varied between 22.2-35.4 °C and transparency between 14-47cm. Nutrients were found to be low, with orthophosphate concentrations varying between <0.001-0.096 mg/l. Algal counts and zooplankton diversity were lower than average for similar coastal ecosystems. The study confirmed the importance of the wetland to the community. It also confirmed that the resources contained within it are under threat from both anthropogenic and other stresses mainly as a result of poor wetland management practices. Fish species diversity was low and the sizes of certain species were smaller than expected, an indication of over exploitation. The socio-cultural study confirmed that all groups of people, owners, managers and users, in the community are important stakeholders in the use, management and conservation of the coastal biodiversity resources of the wetland. They are aware of the degradation occurring in the wetland and have adopted some coping strategies to mitigate the effect of the degradation and dwindling coastal resources on their livelihoods. Management options, including the co-operation of all stakeholders within the context of Integrated Coastal Zone Management are discussed.

SUPERVISORS:

Dr. Gordon, C.

Prof. Vanderpuye, C.J.

Dr. Awumbila, Miriam