

THE LAND OCEAN INTERACTION IN THE COASTAL ZONES II OPEN SCIENCE MEETING.

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Media and Environmental Protection

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The Media or the Mass media

- These are means by which news and information is communicated to the public. Usually considered TV, radio, online sites (the electronic media) and newspapers, magazines (print media), referred to as the press collectively.

Environmental Degradation

- Environmental degradation is a major problem facing humankind. It results from the deterioration and destruction caused by human beings' bad attitudes towards the environment and its natural resources, which leads to damage to its basic components and disturbs the environmental balance.
- For instance, along the Kenyan coast the battle for fish shrimps, octopuses, squid and lobsters is escalating in the western Indian Ocean and is turning out to be a man made disaster.
- Some of the fish industries trawl right up to the Malindi coral reefs. The by-catch, which makes up to 70 percent of the haul, is usually discharged by the trawlers, since they need their cold-storage for the valued prey, leaving the sea surface covered with dead juvenile fish and other marine life forms.
- The destruction of in Mt Kenya catchments from where River Tana that flows into the Indian Ocean starts has grave consequences to the coastal ecosystem.
- An ecological and medical disaster is looming in Somalia courtesy of the dumping of huge tones of toxic wastes along her coast.
- Since early 1980s, because of protracted civil war and lack of central government to police the coastline, other nations have illegally dumped uranium, radioactive waste, industrial chemicals and heavy metals such as cadmium and mercury on the beaches around North Hobyo and Warshek.

- These could be classified as some of the worst forms of global environmental degradations with perilous consequences to the future of mother earth.

The Media.

- Through the media some of the worst forms of wanton destructions of the environment have been exposed and lessons can be learnt, e.g. the fight for sustainable environmental exploitation in Kenya.
- In Kenya the media has been very instrumental in exposing environmental degradations and thus playing pivotal role in its protection, but a lot still has to be done.
- In Africa environmental destruction has been spreading fast. The society has been reacting with less openness to the challenges posed by this happening, especially where high ranking individuals in the establishment are the culprits.
- The media must deliberately support scientific and technological research aimed at solving environmental problems and development of informed policies and legal instruments through consistent dissemination of such information.
- It must emphasise the culture and values of science in environmental protection as key to building a more rational and peaceful world community.
- All nations, whether industrialised or developing, face a broad array of challenges requiring the application of up-to-date scientific knowledge and technology.
- Such challenges include stimulating economic growth, mitigating environmental problems, safely adopting beneficial new technologies, and quickly responding to sudden outbreaks of new diseases.
- The media must facilitate access to credible, independent science and technology (S&T) research information to help develop informed policies. Sound scientific knowledge is fundamental to addressing the critical issues - such as economic transformation and globalization and the sustainable use of natural resources - facing the world today.
- The ultimate audience for the information is the publics. The media must humanize science and help involve lay people in science and technology through journalistic style easily understood by those not immersed in the environmental movement.
- It must be able to interpret environmental issues, current environmental thoughts and actions, and the dynamics of the earth movement-exploring the connections between environmental and other social change/humanitarian.
- It has a role in information transfer: So much new knowledge is pouring out of the millions of research projects and studies by scientists and other scholars that push the boundaries of man's knowledge to new heights almost daily and the public is not aware of the advancements because

- they are frequent and so specialized-difficult if not completely impossible for laymen.
- Science can lead to sustainable management of the environment including the coastal zones.
 - The media has become increasingly aware of their responsibility not only to keep the public informed about scientific developments but to also interpret their implications for the public.
 - There are challenges like of specialised training in specific areas, access to information, financial scarcity to enable them work effectively but these must be overcome and not to be left to hindering good flow of information.

Method:

- One-on-one interviews with experts.
- Investigative reporting,
- Reporting from workshops and seminars, websites.
- Profiling innovative environment conservation efforts

End Result:

- The few cases I have mentioned above forms part of new efforts aimed at addressing destruction of the environment and dissemination of relevant information including scientific research findings.
- Write-ups on environmental issues have continued to attract a wide reading across sex divides, political and religious inclinations, traditions and customs, professions, creeds and any other leanings in the country thus raising new and critical levels of awareness needed in combating the destruction.
- Educating the people on how to take care, including propagation of their rights to a healthy environment will assist in breaking down irresponsible exploitation of the environment, coastal zones included.

Conclusion:

- The media must continue to gather and disseminate accurate information on sustainable environmental use. It has a vital role to play and talking about the threat is extremely important if there has to be reduction in the destructions.
- The media - readable, visual and audible-should describe truth so as to become effective, impressive and capable of facilitating the required changes and help in growing new customs and conducts better for the environment
- Organizations such as LOICZ need to collaborate with media by involving journalists in their research activities right from the conception, planning to the execution stages. They should the role of media in their budgets.

THANK YOU