

SUMMARY OF THE INECE REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

On 5 April 2008, INECE hosted a Regional Conference for compliance professionals from the sub-Saharan Africa region, in cooperation with South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. Over 85 environmental compliance and enforcement officials and experts from Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda, along with invited international experts, engaged in strategic discussions on advancing the implementation of environmental compliance and enforcement in the region.

The Regional Conference focused on the issue of pollution control and waste management. During session one, Melissa Fourie and Sabelo Malaza of South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) discussed proactive compliance monitoring and enforcement of pollution and waste legislation and permits. In session two, Stephen Kisamo, Lusaka Agreement Task Force; Jacques du Toit, Gauteng Department of Agriculture Conservation and Environment; and Elizabeth Mrema of the United Nations Environment Programme shared their experiences with designing and implementing strategies to facilitate cross-border wildlife cooperation. Session three panelists -- Robert Heiss, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Nancy Isarin, Ambiendura; and Jenny Van Houten, the Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment -- explored ways that enforcement cooperation can help limit illegal transnational movements of hazardous waste through ports.

Participants at the Regional Conference considered the types of tools necessary for strengthening environmental enforcement capacity in the region, including the benefits of a regional enforcement network. Guest speakers, including Angela Bularga, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; Elisea Gozun, Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network; Nawzat Ali, Legal Adviser to the Minister of Environment, Jordan; and Mihail Dimovski, Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession, shared their experience in identifying regional priorities across environmental compliance and enforcement programs.

In the final session of the Regional Conference, participants broke into three groups to discuss accomplishments and common priorities among enforcement programs in Sub-Saharan Africa and to explore opportunities for collaboration. Areas of commonality identified by participants included illegal trade in animals and animal products (e.g., abalone, elephant tusks, etc.); waste management; industrial pollution (air, water, and land); inadequate capacity to manage porous borders; inadequate inter-agency collaboration among police, customs, natural resources departments, judiciary, and other enforcement officials; protecting water bodies; and managing the impacts of the petroleum and mining sectors on the environment.

Participants strongly supported forming an informal regional network to share information and ideas. They identified the positive impacts of such a network to include: facilitating enforcement cooperation; supporting legislative and policy development; enabling information exchanges, including capacity building materials and progress reports on compliance and enforcement; motivating the adoption of good practices; and harmonizing environmental standards in the region. Participants emphasized the need to contact organizations already doing important environmental work in the region in order to explore potential partnering opportunities and the possibility of leveraging resources. Examples of such organizations include the Southern African Development Community, whose work on environment has included coordination of environmental norms; the Basel Secretariat Regional Centres; the Lusaka Agreement Task Force; the UNEP Regional Seas Program; and the Southern African Customs Union.

Following the Regional Conference, the participants reconvened on 10 April 2008 and agreed to establish the Sub-Saharan African Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement.

Participants agreed that the objective of this network would be to enhance environmental compliance and enforcement in Sub-Saharan Africa by sharing information and experience. Participants agreed that the network should be divided into four subregions, each of which should have a subregional focal point:

Subregion	Subregional Focal Point
Eastern Africa	Kenya
Southern Africa	South Africa
Central Africa	Cameroon
West Africa	Ghana

The countries that have designated national focal points include: Kenya (Mr. Benjamin Langwen, NEMA), Uganda (Dr. Henry Aryamanya Mugisha, NEMA), Tanzania (Eng. Bonaventure Baya, NEMC), South Africa (Sabelo Malaza, Director: Compliance Monitoring, DEAT), Botswana (Desire Rubadiri), Ghana (Mr. Jonathan Allotey, EPA), Nigeria (Dr. Ngeri Benebo), and Cameroon (Horline Njike, Last Great Ape).

Initial activities of the network will include identifying key documents to share with other members (training materials, policies, legislation, information on technology, inspection report formats and other templates, case studies); contacting focal points in countries not represented at Conference and inviting them to join the network; and, facilitating information exchange via the INECE web site. To register to participate in the network, please send your name, organization, contact information, and email address to inece@inece.org.

Excerpt from the Proceedings of the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement's (INECE) Eighth International Conference, Linking Concepts to Actions: Successful Strategies for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement, held 5-11 April 2008, in Cape Town, South Africa.

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