

Project Update: December 2018

1.0 Project Area

The Keta Lagoon Complex Ramsar Site (KLCRS) was established as a wetland protected area on 14 August 1992. It is located within the South Tongu, Akatsi South, Ketu South and Keta districts of the Volta Region of Ghana. The KLCRS has an area of 101,022.7 ha which covers part of the Volta River estuary. The lagoon area of 30,000 ha is fringed by numerous settlements.

In addition to the mangroves that are globally threatened, the KLCRS contains a number of unique animal species that are relevant for conservation. Seventy-six migratory and resident waterbird species, including 21 globally significant species, numbering over 100,000 are found in the KLCRS. The vulnerable West African manatee or seacow (*Trichechus senegalensis*) and the West African sitatunga (*Tragelaphus spekii*), a swamp-dwelling antelope which is categorised as least concern by IUCN, have been spotted in the KLCRS before.

2.0 Project Site

This pilot project is being implemented in Agbatsivi, Salo and Agortoe communities in the Keta Municipality.

3.0 Project Background

Overexploitation of mangroves for fuelwood and mangrove conversion to other land uses has aggravated climate change impacts (coastal erosion and floods) in the KLCRS. Interventions have focused on mangrove restoration and community education on their conservation values. Nonetheless, fish processors and households do not have alternative fuelwood sources. Consequently, mangroves are continuously degraded.

In addition to education and awareness creation, this pilot project seeks to identify and train mangrove harvesters and community groups to establish and sustainably manage woodlots made of fast-growing coppice species (*Senna siamea*) to supply households and fish processors with fuelwood and restore mangroves and their ecosystem services.

4.0 Project Contribution

This pilot project is aimed at contributing to:

1. Restoration of the mangrove ecosystems in the KLCRS to provide ecosystem services to benefit the communities within the KLCRS.
2. Awareness creation in communities on the ecosystem services provided by mangrove ecosystems (especially flood regulation) and the need to conserve the ecosystems, and alternative sources of fuelwood (*Senna siamea*) for fish processing and use in households.
3. Provision of sustainable alternative sources of energy (fuelwood) to reduce pressure on mangrove ecosystems.

5.0 Implemented Activities in Second Quarter of the Project

Project activities in the second quarter included seedling production, mangrove ecosystem and ecosystem services restoration, and education and awareness creation.

5.1 Seedling Production

Equipment and tools for nursery establishment and maintenance, mangrove ecosystem restoration and woodlot establishment and maintenance were acquired and distributed to the nursery sites.

Two nurseries have been established in the Agbatsivi and Salo communities to produce *Senna siamea* seedlings and white mangrove seedlings. Over 3000 pieces of used drinking water (plastic) sachet littered around the communities were collected and used as polypots for raising the seedlings, and to contribute to alleviation of the plastic menace. So far, 2000 seedlings have been raised at the Agbatsivi community nursery whereas 800 seedlings have been raised at Salo community nursery.

In the next quarter, it is expected about 2000 *Senna siamea* seedlings and 1000 white mangrove (*Avicennia germinans*) seedlings will be raised.

5.2 Mangrove Restoration

In this quarter, 600 red mangrove (*Rhizophora racemose*) propagules were planted directly on degraded muddy or partially flooded sites at Agbatsivi. The red mangrove propagules are viviparous and already develops a sprout on the mother tree, making it suitable for direct planting.

In the next quarter, it is expected that about 3,400 propagules of red mangroves will be planted and about 1,000 seedlings of white mangroves will be planted in the last quarter.

5.3 Education and Awareness

The audio message recorded in local language on conservation values of mangroves and alternative sources of fuelwood was played on Jubilee Radio in Keta. The audio advert has also been shared with stakeholders on Whatsapp. Jubilee Radio will continue to play the audio message in the next quarter of the project.



Senna siamea nursery at Agbatsivi



Senna siamea nursery at Salo



Red mangrove planting at Agbatsivi