

Celebrations of the International Biodiversity Day Mozambique

Report

Executive Summary

In the last years, Mozambique has been experiencing a number of cyclical natural disasters. There is a severe drought hitting the southern part of the country for several years, and rains often come along with cyclones, followed by flooding. In 2007 Mozambique was hit by two major flooding in the center, water rising which affected all cities located along the costal line, and cyclones in the south. These consecutive natural disasters have motivated a public debate in order to see, at what extent, a man action was really responsible or not for the process of environment degradation. For many Mozambicans, to celebrate the Biodiversity International Day meant to participate in a process of figuring out the possible answers for the major consequences, which relate to climate change that are affecting people in Mozambique in a daily basis.

1. Introduction

This report, briefly, evaluates a number of activities that were carried on in several places in Mozambique to celebrate the Biodiversity International Day. The examination to be presented includes activities that took place at Provincial level, and in Maputo city. Taking into consideration a number of institutions that were involved, a significant number of young people who participated in many activities, and the coordinating system that were conceived from the Ministry for the Coordination of Environmental Affairs, the major conclusion is that, in Mozambique, the celebrations of the Biodiversity International Day in 2007 have increased, in a significant and crucial way, the people's awareness on the importance of preserving Biodiversity and the challenges which are imposed by Climate change in our planet, particularly, in countries with a pronounced financial constraints.

2. Activities

The major activities planned for Biodiversity International Day celebrations included:

- colloquia;
- debates on public and private owned mass media;
- academic communications in primary and secondary schools, and
- Tree planting in pre-selected affected areas of the country.

2. Description and Analysis of the Activities

In Mozambique, the 22nd of May, the Biodiversity International Day was celebrated involving a number of institutions. Several institutions have organized public activities that included academic colloquia, public debates on both private and public owned mass media, including TV and radio stations.

At the Ministry for the Coordination of Environmental Affairs (MICOA), two major Directorates, namely, the National Directorate for Environmental Management and the National Directorate for Environmental Promotion were responsible for delivering colloquia and facilitating public debates at the Secondary Schools in “Noroeste 1” and “Noroeste 2” in Maputo city. The significant number of students involved was those of 10th and 12th grades, including their respective instructors, since the main idea is that these young people should continue disseminating information among the youngest schoolboys and school girls.

The National Directorate for Environmental Management through the CONVENTION FOCAL POINT attended the “Café da Manhã” program (Morning Coffee), the widely National Radio Broadcasting System in Mozambique, and the Convection Focal Point also delivered a comprehensive statement on the International Biodiversity Day on “Janela Ambiental” (Environmental Open Window”, at the National Broad Casting Television of Mozambique (TVM).

At Provincial level, the total of ten provinces of Mozambique was fully involved on celebrations of the Biodiversity International Day. At this level, there were promoted public

debates, colloquium, and interviews of prominent people including scientists and politicians, and specialists on Radio and TV Broadcasting.

The activities of major impact were carried on in Schools and small communities, where apart from public debates on the consequences of climate change and the need of biodiversity preservation, there was implemented a national campaign of tree planting.

During the debates on public and private mass media, it was stressed the importance of biodiversity preservation (wildlife and flora), and the impact of climate change in the World. The debates have also emphasized on the need of restoration of the drought affected areas by planting more trees for carbon sequestration, as well as for minimizing the impact of the climate change. For instance, several examples were given to support the actual phenomena of climate changes in Mozambique, including water rising, and the recent flooding in central Mozambique.

One important issue that came out during the public debates was the relationship between the major three Rio Conventions. After discussing the relevance of biodiversity protection in drought lands in order to achieve the main millennium goals for CBD up to 2010, the participants assumed a public compromise of promoting biodiversidade conservation through education and a number of initiatives involving the entire society.

The program of the celebrations of the Biodiversity International Day included quizzes to very young people to stimulate their important role on biodiversity conservation. At the end, all young people who responded correctly the quizzes related to the major them of Biodiversity and Climate Change were awarded. In Maputo City, the wards included books, note books, pencils, rubbers, and ballpoint pens.

3. Conclusion

The celebrations of the Biodiversity International Day in Mozambique were a successful event. Two major achievements that can be pointed out were a massive participation of young people on the

public debates on the need of biodiversity preservation and a national campaign on tree plantation as illustrated in the pictures below.

Finally, it should pointed out that, at different schools on which students were directly involved in tree plantation campaigns, the respective school directorates have expressed their gratitude to the Ministry for the Coordination of Environmental Affairs (MICOA) initiative, and schools and communities have requested that MICOA should organize more debates and colloquia for students of lower grades. The reason why students of lower grades should be targeted in future actions is that the actual curricula of formal education for these levels include formally the subjects, which are related to environmental issues. The interaction between MICOA and schools it is believed that will facilitate the dissemination of major information on biodiversity preservation, at the same time will contribute for students to get better grades on the relevant subjects.

Schools and communities have also requested for more educative materials on conservation of Biological Diversity. One major constraint facing the development of such sustainable Biodiversity Preservation Education program is a financial constraint, because there is no gadget to cover a number of activities that could be planned focusing, specifically to young people generation.

In attachment pictures of some activities taken in celebrations of Biodiversity International Day in Mozambique.

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