

VOTE OF THANKS ON BEHALF OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE LOME WORKSHOP FOR BRICKS MEDIA MEN ON PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT BY ADEBAYO THOMAS COMMUNICATION EXPERT NEWMAP PROJECT NIGERIA

Protocols

Bonsour Madame and Monsieur, it is an honour and privilege to speak on behalf of my co-participants here at this workshop. For the past five days, the Bricks Media Network have been in Lome – Togo in furtherance to the strategy of building partnership towards addressing issues of sustainable Land and Water management in the 12 SAWAP countries of of the BRICKS Sahel and West Africa Programme.

In advocating for a more robust collaboration and partnership we participants from Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan and Togo, over the past few (5) days have been taken through very interactive sessions of presentations on causes /interventions and definitions bordering on Land degradation, deforestation and other common environmental issues affecting sustainable development in the participating countries.

Madame and Monsieur, distinguished participants, this highly interactive capacity building workshop with the objective to effectively disseminate knowledge on integrated natural resource management, climate change and natural disasters and encourage understanding and accessibility of regional and global best practices, has been very successful judging by the general outcomes of knowledge shared and personal outcome of building blocks and collaboration among journalists and Communicators on the SAWAP project. On behalf of my co-participants, I therefore wish to extend salutations to the Facilitators, organizers, the Participants and the host Country, Togo.

For the **organizers**- IUCN and partners CILSS, OSS and the World Bank, we express our gratitude for the organization, the logistics and the workshop content. The objectives, methodology and approach was excellent, we cannot thank them enough!

The **facilitators** have equally been great right from the 1st day through the last day, with presentations from Abdulkareem Dankoulou, Bora Masumbuko (**Some definitions of key words: land degradation, deforestation, erosion, climate/climate change, mitigation, adaptation, desertification**); Arsène Sanon on **“Driving forces and causes of land degradation: why do lands degrade? - Potential consequences in socio-economic, environmental and cultural terms” and Potential roles and benefits of biodiversity in SLWM**”. Simply put all the presentations put together was great, far reaching and expansive. I do not want to fail to mention the art of storytelling as put together by Louisa Diggs and Peter Paul Van Kempen. The lessons learnt has further strengthen us as communicators towards the art of being convincing in telling our own stories; this will no doubt further accentuate the role of the media in environmental protection as well as scaling up the promotion of SLWM approaches in the GGW.

At this juncture special thanks to **Lilia Benzid**, of the OSS, Afiss Bileoma and Mathias Hamitouche (Open Vista Cabinet Consultants), for their roles in the practical process of the SAWAP Portal presentations. Most importantly I want to commend the efforts and roles of **Felicite Mangang**, and **Christophe Hien**. **These two individuals have been exceptional. Their efforts greatly contributed to the success of the workshop.**

Ladies and Gentlemen, as participants I want to thank you all for the commitment, contributions and comradeship over the past few days. We have all shown exceptional qualities and become friends. I therefore have no doubts that the relationship and bond of the past five days will further pivot the collaboration for the success of the BRICKS projects.

Finally many thanks to the host for their hospitality and warm reception. Our prayers as we leave Lome at the conclusion of the workshop is that God protect all and see to the success of the sustainable Land and Water management in the GGW. **Merci!!!**