

COASTAL ENVIRONMENT AWARD SCHEME REPORT

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CEAS Prizes Grace World Environment Day in Coastal Districts

Once again, the coastal districts of Pangani, Muheza, Tanga, Mtwara and Lindi graced the World Environment Day on June 5, with colourful ceremonies to highlight prize presentations to schools, groups and individuals who performed outstandingly in the now highly popular Coastal Environment Award Scheme (CEAS). Officiated at by District Commissioners, the ceremonies were accompanied by processions, songs, cultural performances and speeches, all advocating for coastal and marine environmental conservation.

The Coastal Environment Award Scheme was initiated by the Tanzania Coastal Management Partnership (TCMP) in collaboration with GreenCOM, the USAID Environmental Education Project and district authorities, in 1998, and is becoming an important tool in sustainable coastal resources management at the grassroots level. The scheme is not only contributing in awareness raising, but also in promoting learning by doing in various environmental and coastal natural resource based development activities.

The scheme is also being implemented in the districts of Mafia, Bagamoyo and Kilwa, with the aim to build community partnerships in enhancing environmentally friendly and sustainable resource use and management at local level. The scheme's specific objectives are to:

- * Increase coastal and marine environmental awareness
- * Promote increased public participation in coastal management
- * Encourage the use of environmentally-friendly technologies
- * Demonstrate national and local governments commitments in integrated coastal management
- * Rewarding people who participate in the scheme by carrying out appropriate resource management practices

The idea of presenting CEAS prizes on the occasion of the World Environment Day is to contribute to the global, national and local efforts in stimulating environmental awareness and enhancing community motivation in taking positive action.

Underlining the significance of presenting CEAS prizes on World Environment Day the Lindi District Commissioner Mrs. Fatuma Mikidadi, noted that rewarding outstanding environmentally friendly actions is the most logical way to celebrate this important day, which is globally dedicated to environment.

In all districts over 60,000 people participated in the award scheme this year as compared to 26,000 people in the previous year. The high increase of participants, according to district CEAS secretaries, is due to the support by district authorities and the tangible benefits being realised by participants.

"Apart from the motivation of winning prizes, people who are participating in the award scheme by undertaking development activities such as seaweed farming, beekeeping, vegetable gardening and other activities, are generating good income from CEAS projects," explains Mr. Kinyunyu, the District Natural Resources Officer and Mtwara District CEAS secretary.

All primary schools participate in CEAS in Lindi

In a move to enhance environmental awareness raising in villages and to attract community participation in environment management and protection, Lindi district has directed its focus in involving all primary schools in the Coastal Environment Award Scheme (CEAS).

"This year our priority in the implementation of the award scheme has been schools. With the great cooperation of the district education officers and teachers, we managed to attract 55 primary schools, which undertook various environmentally friendly activities. This move was purposely initiated to widen the scope of participation in the award scheme and to enhance environment awareness in villages where school children play a major role in education and communication," explains Mr. Ngaweje, the Lindi District CEAS Secretary adding:

"You see, in addition to projects like tree planting, cleaning of surroundings, construction of lavatories and other activities, school children make great impact in awareness raising within the village communities through songs and drama, which target at condemning environment destructive acts like bush fires, dynamite fishing, reckless tree cutting and other common undesirable activities," he added.

Apart from enhancing awareness raising within the village communities, according to Mr. Ngaweje, CEAS projects at schools will promote learning by doing as much as they will activate the fresh minds of the children who are the leaders of tomorrow.

"In the absence of environmental education in the current school curriculum, the initiated projects will not only provide necessary tools for learning by doing, but will equip the young minds with a sense of responsibility to environment protection," underlines the CEAS Secretary who is optimistic for future greater successes in the award scheme.

Messages by artists capture hearts at CEAS celebrations

Once again, communities in coastal districts had a memorable moment as they turned out in huge numbers to witness colourful ceremonies to award participants in the Coastal Environment Award Scheme (CEAS). In all participating districts the ceremonies were highlighted by scintillating drama, poems and cultural dance performances.

The performances were not only presented in thrilling mastery, but they were all laced with strong environmental conservation advocacy messages. To be precise, in some districts, the messages even completely overshadowed speeches by officials and political leaders.

At the village of Somanga in Kilwa district, the taarab group of Al-Musiba and the cultural dance of Mbanano literally captured everyone's heart with their mazingira hits. It was not surprising that

the event turned into a cultural frenzy as every body stormed the grounds to dance and to reward the artists.

In Bagamoyo, where school children and community groups excelled in drama and floor shows, Dr. Magnus Ngoile, the Director General of the National Environment Management Council (NEMC), found himself unable to read his prepared speech when he officiated at the ceremonies.

"I find myself with nothing more to say. I am literally knocked out. Whatever I had prepared in my speech has all been said and in a better and precise way by the artists. Sincerely, I am more than fascinated and impressed by the level of visionary understanding and awareness on environmental issues demonstrated by school children and community cultural groups in their performances," observed Dr. Ngoile after he was requested by the Bagamoyo District Commissioner to address the public.

The NEMC chief, who is a wonderful public speaker and experienced environmentalist, was quite right. The messages sent across through songs and drama were not only so touching, but they presented localized issues pertinent to environmental management of critical concern to government authorities at both national and local level.

The songs and poems lamented (with an artistic touch) of bush fires, rampant tree cutting, dynamite fishing, other destructive practices and other environmental abuses, which cause human health hazards and poverty among communities. These, apparently were the main points in Dr. Ngoile's speech.

"As a matter of fact, I have learned much more from the songs and poems, than what I learn from books and experts' researched work and papers. The groups have even taught me some new environmental terms and descriptions," explained the NEMC chief referring to some fascinating descriptions and terms used by the groups to send the message of environment conservation issues.

Terms like 'Mazingira ni kama mchumba wako mzuri, ukimtendea maovu akakukataa, utajuta milele', meaning 'Environment is like your beautiful bride, if you mistreat her and she rejects you, you will painfully regret for ever; 'Mazingira ni kuishi' - 'Environment is living', and 'Mazingira ni ustaarabu, ni utamaduni usio na mipaka' - 'Environment is civilization, it is culture without boundaries', had such an effective impact to the public.

53,000 people participate in CEAS 2001 competitions

The Coastal Environment Award Scheme (CEAS) completed its third successful year of implementation in Tanzania with participants raising to 53,000 people. In the previous year, the scheme attracted 26,000 people in seven districts, while 14,000 people participated in its maiden year (1999) in six districts.

According to reports by CEAS District Committee Secretaries delivered on the occasions of presenting prizes and awards to winners and participants, the scheme is not only becoming a

popular event among coastal communities, but also an important tool in promoting community participation in coastal resource management and associated environment conservation.

The district of Lindi where all primary schools participated enrolled the biggest number of participants (12,942). Lindi was followed by Muheza (10,143), with Pangani where 8,696 people participated ranking third. Also highly impressive was Bagamoyo which, despite of participating in the scheme for the first time enrolled 7,204 people.

In all districts schools featured impressively in the scheme with 158 schools participating compared to 103 schools last year. Individual participants also increased from 142 last year to 360 people, while community groups shot to 148 groups compared to 73 last year.

Institutions rose to 17 in all districts against 10 in the previous year. But like last year, Mafia and Lindi were not able to attract any institution.

Districts	Categories				Participants #
	Schools	Groups	Individuals	Institutions	
TANGA	10	8	34	4	3,480
PANGANI	29	11	20	2	8,696
MUHEZA	21	21	16	2	10,143
MTWARA	8	10	23	4	5,058
LINDI	54	33	30	0	12,942
KILWA	11	38	37	2	3,941
MAFIA	10	7	46	0	1,606
B'MOYO	15	20	6	3	7,204
TOTAL	158	148	360	17	53,070