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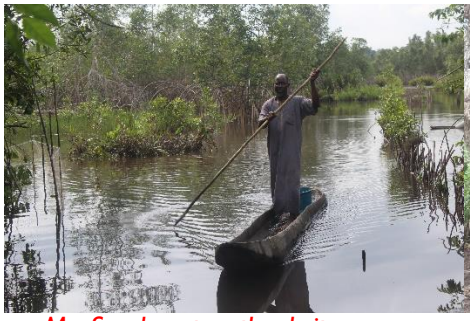
The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

57-YEAR OLD FARMER PLANTS OVER 2,000 MANGROVES

Some people believe that "conservation without compensation is conversation" but this is not the case for 57-year old Ibrahim Sunday, a conservation committee chairperson at Kamgbunli in Ellembelle district of Ghana's Western Region. Re-planting mangroves in degraded wetland areas is his hobby. Over the past two years, he has planted over 2,000 mangrove seedlings and as he put it, ***"I am ready to restore the entire mangrove degraded area in Kamgbunli"***. He uses the propagules to replant and tell residents, "***…it is very easy to replant, I pick the propagules on daily basis and plant"***. Mr. Sunday attributes his interest and commitment to this mangrove replanting effort to trainings on wetlands and mangroves conducted by the US Agency for International Development-funded Coastal Sustainable Landscapes Project (CSLP) and its partner, Hen Mpoano (a local NGO).



Mr. Sunday at wetland site

CSLP mangrove nursery site

Mangrove restoration site

Mangrove forests serve as part of Ghana's natural resources and provide many benefits including habitat for fisheries, monkeys and birds as well as protection against coastal storms. The trees also sequester about five times more carbon per unit area than any other forest ecosystem, including tropical rainforest, which is an important attribute given the global effort to address climate change caused by increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Preserving the important functions of these forests was one of the reasons the US Forest Service-managed CSLP supported conservation of the Greater Amanzule Wetland area in Ellembelle and Jomoro districts as well as selected wetlands in Shama and Ahanta West Districts of the Western Region.

In the Greater Amanzule Wetland area, the CSLP, Hen Mpoano and the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission work in 25 coastal communities to help conserve these natural resources. Activities include participatory mapping and ground-truthing of the forests, replanting of degraded sites, training of conservation committees and implementation of supplementary livelihood activities to incentivize conservation. Maps of community wetland resources as well as land use and land cover maps have been produced to show the extent of mangrove cover, areas where mangroves have been degraded and the extent of water bodies. Between 2015 & 2016, more than 20,000 mangrove seedlings were raised and successfully transplanted onto degraded sites. In addition, degraded sites were restored with over 2,000 red mangrove propagules. Currently, the CSLP and its partners have established three nursery sites where over 10,000 high quality mangrove and acacia seedlings are raised for restoration in degraded areas. The acacia woodlot plantation will serve as an alternative source of wood for mangrove harvesters and charcoal producers who harvest mangrove wood for charcoal production.

The CSLP is also collaborating with the Community Resource Management Areas (CREMAs) and the University of Cape Coast (UCC) Centre for Coastal Management in a wetland monitoring effort in Junior High Schools. These efforts are aimed at building co-management capacity of the local communities and district assemblies so that such conservation and restoration efforts can be maintained and strengthened moving forward. Given the importance of mangroves in the Western Region for cultural, social and environmental benefits, efforts such as those of Mr. Sunday are vital to ensuring the future generations can also enjoy the benefits of these incredibly unique ecosystems.

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