



Statement for World Clean Up Day

The African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries (CAOPA) has invited its local partners, notably those of the Mbour department, including the Joal Town Hall, the Directorate and Management Committee of the Joal Protected Marine Area, and the Town Hall, to celebrate World Clean-up Day on 19 September 2020. This initiative was launched in September 2018 by 150 countries, following the precursor, Estonia in 2008, which mobilized 50,000 people to clean their country in five (5) hours.

The World Clean up Day is a civic movement currently present in 180 countries that have chosen the date of 19 September to clean up their country's beaches, rivers, forests and roads in one day.

CAOPA, based on the basics, principles and values contained in its Charter, «**Protecting the marine environment and coastal ecosystems against any form of pollution or degradation that is detrimental to the resource**'' (article 1.3.13), invited its local partners to the celebration of this Day.

Noting that the sea, beaches and coastal areas have become dumping grounds, the confederation has taken the initiative to direct its first action towards the Joal-fadiouth Protected Marine Area because of the importance that this site represents in the economic and cultural activities of the region's coastal communities.

CAOPA has committed itself to clean up the rubbish, especially plastic waste on the beach in the town of Joal-fadiouth. The environment, water quality, human and animal health are all affected by the ubiquitous presence of plastic. According to Erik Solheim, head of the United Nations Environment Agency, “by 2050, there will be more plastics in the sea than fish”.

This symbolic clean-up day will be dedicated to Joal-fadiouth PMA because, according to the Curator, this period coincides with a vital time for the preservation of marine turtle resources.

When they come to lay their eggs on the beaches of the area during this season, they are disturbed by the presence of plastic in the sea (confused with jellyfish) and on the sand (preventing them from digging holes to place their eggs). Strict measures must therefore be adopted to greatly reduce or even eliminate the unnecessary use of plastic and its dumping at sea.

Considering that PMAs are an essential tool to restore, protect and enhance the biodiversity, productivity and resilience of the oceans, but also to enable present and future generations to continue to enjoy its resources and services, we are betting that PMAs can save the oceans.

If they are well protected, as in the case of Joal-fadiouth PMA with its mangrove swamp, they are a source of food, employment and protection for coastal communities: they are a favorable environment for the reproduction, growth and development of many water species (fish, shellfish, crustaceans, birds, mammals...) and an important area for trapping greenhouse gases.

We, CAOPA, Joal-fadiouth PMA and Town Hall, therefore declare that in order to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, wetlands and the living resources they contain:

- ✓ we commit ourselves and invite our authorities to preserve the health of our oceans and seas, for the sustainability of activities essential for the survival of coastal communities;
- ✓ we recognize the urgency of the threat posed by waste (especially plastic waste) and we commit ourselves to encourage awareness campaigns on plastic waste among young people, women and relevant partners: CAOPA has already initiated such activities with the Network of Francophone Fishing Schools (REPF) in Senegal and hopes to extend them to all of Africa;
- ✓ we urge the state authorities of our countries as well as the populations concerned to accompany us in this initiative so that it is retained and extended with a view to eradicating the threat posed by waste to our ecosystem.

Done at Joal- Fadiouth on 19 September 2020