

Ken Kinney

THE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

ACCRA



Who are you and what is your background?

My name is Ken Kinney, I am Executive Director for The Development Institute and Coordinator for the Delta Alliance Ghana Wing. I've been working in the Volta delta for six years now, and my real passion is about sustainable management, which involves conservation, livelihoods and economic development. One of things I am advocating for is complete land use. This means all the available lands should be put to the use they are suitable for, and then there should be spatial planning. That can be the beginning of sustainable management of all the resources.

How is the Development Institute involved with the Tema port project?

We became involved through the Delft University of Technology, our role in the project is to facilitate local contacts and arrange logistics; and I also support Dutch

students who come to Ghana. The work of The Development Institute is not directly connected to the port expansion.

What is a Sustainable Port to you?

A sustainable port should involve places that are conserved. It should involve livelihoods for the communities that are around the port. And it should really, really bring about economic development. So in the absence of all these three components, even with the hard component of a port expansion in place, I would say it is not sustainable.

As Tema port stands now, it wouldn't be called a sustainable port. A lot of the development is just done with the technical issues in mind: How do we ensure we have space for ships to dock, have a place to keep our containers, and that the government derives maximum revenue. But there seems no thinking about issues concerning: How do we create areas for conservation? How do we connect the port to people's livelihoods?

How could sustainability in the Tema port area be enhanced?

Firstly, Chemu Lagoon and Sakumono Lagoon are both wetlands - the latter is even protected: it is a RAMSAR site. It is supposed to be a place for resupplying water and for migratory birds. And a place where communities should be able to do some level of fishing and recreation. But we see a lot of pollutants and encroachment, and the places have no regulation and management. Basically, the lagoon is being filled for housing. For Chemu lagoon there is not even a vent to enter the sea, so there is no recharge from the sea. That makes it a closed system, which is not the best. It is choked, it

needs to be dredged; this will increase fish life in the sea and the lagoon. We are looking into this with The Development Institute. Improvement is strongly needed for the people of Tema New Town. When they were relocated in the sixties, they used to have the Sakumono lagoon as a resource, and then shifted to the Chemu lagoon. Now, there are no resources left at all. We have found out that it is possible to do sanitation of the lagoon; but an adaptation fund still has to come through.

Secondly, it is very important to re-demarcate the boundaries of the lagoons. Make sure that regulations are strengthened, as there should be no more encroachment in these areas. If we need to use pillars and barbed wire totally around it to achieve this, government is to invest in that. There should be a couple of entrances for people to enter, but they cannot start building in the area. We need strong measures to prevent that and the fencing would regulate entrance. Tema municipality then could even collect fees, which can be used to develop or manage the lagoon. There can be recreational activities: fishing, relaxing and enjoying the nature. For that you need facilities, which the municipality should invest in; and there could also be some revenue out of that.

Finally, the Tema planning department should consider the Building-with-Nature concept. Now most of the houses are already virtually halfway in the lagoon, and not well built nor built with the right materials. People fill up the lagoons with sand, which is not sustainable because of the salt content. The salt easily overpowers and degrades all the cement. I think there is a system to ensure

*Images to right:
Mr. Ken Kinney with
The Development
Institute organizing
various high-level
stakeholder
meetings and
consultations.*

they could build specific kinds of houses that can co-exist with the entire ecosystem and not harm the lagoon.

What do you think the Tema port area will look like in 20 years?

Tema is expanding and if it does not start some conservation activities in its surroundings, but also in the city itself, air pollution will increase, pollution of water bodies will also increase, and eventually you will see that the city will collapse. That would also be very bad for the port. Human life and nature, there is a very interesting relationship. If there is no nature, people have no place to rest, no place to relax, and so the cycle of tiredness, disease and stress will eventually not help to make the city very productive. If nothing is done, the two lagoons will be dead in twenty years. There will be no animal life, it will be highly polluted, and serve as a source of epidemics, an inoculum for diseases.

What do you hope Tema port will look like in 20 years?

In twenty years, I envision a sustainable port and a city with the two wetlands restored and functioning properly full of life, plants, fish, with migrating birds coming in and out. I envision a well planned and restored city of Tema, with a lot of green areas. I envision people around the wetlands, relaxing and enjoying nature. I envision no poverty, because there is a complete development of livelihoods for the poor. I see economic development for the entire city of Tema, including the port and fishing harbour. Finally, I see Tema port connected extensively to the eastern part of Ghana, linked with rail, water and sea transport, well connected all the way to the Volta delta.

