



Protecting West African Marine Biodiversity  
from Offshore Oil & Gas Activities

# Expert workshop: governance of offshore oil & gas in West Africa: corporate social responsibility, public regulation, stakeholder awareness, Dakar, 20 March 2019

Authors

---

**Romain Schumm**, Researcher, Ocean and Offshore Oil and Gas Activities (IDDRI)

Date : 20/03/2019



Protecting West African Marine Biodiversity  
from Offshore Oil & Gas Activities

## Citation

---

Schumm, R. (2019). Expert workshop: governance of offshore oil & gas in West Africa: corporate social responsibility, public regulation, stakeholder awareness, Dakar, 20 March 2019, COBIA, 9 pp.

For any questions about this publication, please contact:

Romain Schumm – [romain.schumm@iddri.org](mailto:romain.schumm@iddri.org)

## About

---

COBIA is a multi-stakeholder initiative aimed at strengthening environmental management in the context of the development of offshore oil and gas activities in West Africa. The initiative is funded by the MAVA Foundation and coordinated by IDDRI.

<http://cobia-africa.com>

## Copyright © 2019 COBIA

---

The COBIA initiative encourages, subject to citation (bibliographic reference and/or corresponding URL), the reproduction and communication of its contents, for personal, research or educational purposes. However, any commercial use (in printed or electronic form) is prohibited.

Unless otherwise stated, the opinions, interpretations and conclusions expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily commit the partners of the COBIA initiative, nor the individuals or organizations consulted in the context of this study.



Protecting West African Marine Biodiversity  
from Offshore Oil & Gas Activities

## Table of contents

---

<b>Table of contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. Welcome, presentation of the work and round table</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Offshore development in West Africa: cross-fertilization of the different actors</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Boubacar Mbengue, Directorate of Hydrocarbons, Ministry of Petroleum and Energy Senegal	4
2.2 Mohamed Lemine Taleb El Vadel, Chairman of the National Committee of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) of Mauritania	4
2.3 Khady Sylla, Public Relations Manager, Total E&P Senegal	4
2.4 Abdoulaye Wague, Researcher, Mauritanian Institute for Oceanographic Research and Fisheries (IMROP)	4
2.5 Discussions	5
<b>3. Strengthening regional cooperation to ensure the sustainable development of offshore oil and gas activities</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Richard Dacosta, Programme Officer, Abidjan Convention Secretariat	5
3.2 Sanou Dakono, Legal Officer, Directorate of Environment and Classified Establishments, Ministry of Environment and of Sustainable Development, Senegal	6
3.3 Dylan Gélard, Regional Director of the EITI Standard for French-speaking West Africa	6
3.4 Philippe Barry, President and Founder, CSR Senegal	6
3.5 Christian Sambatra Ihariantsoa, Project manager mining sector, Madagascar Initiative, Transparency International	7
<b>4. Thematic discussions: mobilizing companies to promote the development of CSR approaches and structuring civil society to meet sustainability challenges</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5. Conclusion</b>	<b>8</b>



Protecting West African Marine Biodiversity  
from Offshore Oil & Gas Activities

## 1. Welcome, presentation of the work and round table

---

Salla Ba (MAVA Foundation) thanked the participants for their presence and stressed that marine ecosystems off West Africa provide invaluable ecosystem services. Faced to this ascertainment and in the context of the development of offshore activities, Salla Ba raised questions that irrigated the following discussions: how can corporate social responsibility (CSR) contribute to biodiversity conservation? How can companies, national institutions and civil society work together to conserve and protect marine biodiversity?

Julien Rochette (Iddri) recalled that the participants are bound by the common objective of reconciling the development of offshore activities with environmental protection and population development issues and that the elaboration of a collective strategy is necessary to achieve this objective.

## 2. Offshore development in West Africa: cross-fertilization of the different actors

---

### 2.1 Boubacar Mbengue, Directorate of Hydrocarbons, Ministry of Petroleum and Energy Senegal

Boubacar Mbengue offers a synthetic presentation of some of the key players in the offshore extractive sector in Senegal:

- The COS-Petrogas (set up in 2006) which supports decision-making at the state level on the evolution of the sector;
- The Ministry of the Environment in charge, in particular, of analysing environmental impact studies
- Petrosen, the Senegalese national oil company.

Boubacar Mbengue concluded by presenting recent legal developments in Senegal, highlighting in particular the adoption of a new oil code (25/01/19) and the law on "local content" (09/01/19).

### 2.2 Mohamed Lemine Taleb El Vadel, Chairman of the National Committee of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) of Mauritania

Mohamed Lamine Taleb El Vedel pointed out that the EITI has identified three main levers for institutional capacity building and is working in concertation with civil society, business and government representatives. These three levers are:

- Capacity building of the national committee itself;
- Capacity building of the multi-stakeholder group that constitutes the committee;
- Strengthening the technical secretariat of the committee.

### 2.3 Khady Sylla, Public Relations Manager, Total E&P Senegal

Khady Sylla points out that, even though the oil sector is emerging in Senegal, Total is still in the exploration phase and has not yet made any major discoveries. Khady Sylla then explained Total's commitments on social and environmental aspects: Total E&P has been in Senegal for 1 year, but the Total Foundation subsidiary has been present since 2013 and is developing several social actions (related to road safety, the purchase of mosquito nets, the education of young people and women, etc.). The company wants to wait for the results of the exploration before committing to a more detailed CSR strategy.

### 2.4 Abdoulaye Wague, Researcher, Mauritanian Institute for Oceanographic Research and Fisheries (IMROP)

Abdoulaye Wague provides an overview of the main marine ecosystems in Mauritania:

- Deep coral reefs with rich biodiversity, a place of refuge and habitat for many marine species;
- Coastal meadows that perform very important ecological functions;



Protecting West African Marine Biodiversity  
from Offshore Oil & Gas Activities

- Mangroves, the most important of which are located at the mouth of Senegal;
- Marine protected areas (MPAs). Abdoulaye Wague then specifies the impacts, linked to the activities offshore, to which these ecosystems are exposed:
  - During exploration, the main impacts are related to seismic activities (sound pollution with direct impact on mammals);
  - During exploitation, the impacts are mainly related to the issue of pollution (greenhouse gas emissions, pollution by oil spills, increased maritime transport which can impact certain marine species and/or other marine activities such as fishing).

Abdoulaye Wague concluded by demonstrating the need to develop a mapping of sensitive areas to better protect these ecosystems.

## 2.5 Discussions

The participants then discussed several aspects related to the development of offshore activities, including:

- Compliance with environmental requirements in terms of impact prevention and the rehabilitation of marine ecosystems. In particular, the EITI questions whether financial resources exist to meet these environmental requirements;
- The low capacity of countries to verify impact studies reflects a need for capacity building and good governance of the sector;
- How can environmental issues be better integrated within energy ministries?
- The need to transmit an information exchange system between oil companies and NGOs.

## 3. Strengthening regional cooperation to ensure the sustainable development of offshore oil and gas activities

---

### 3.1 Richard Dacosta, Programme Officer, Abidjan Convention Secretariat

Richard Dacosta presented the challenges of the Abidjan Convention offshore protocol. He recalled that expert workshops had been held in Abidjan in September 2018 to set up plans for the implementation of all the additional protocols to the Convention. The meeting of the plenipotentiaries, for formal adoption of the text, will be held in the first week of July. Discussions then focused on regional governance aspects and on relative dispositions linked to strategic environmental impact assessments.

### 3.2 Sanou Dakono, Legal Officer, Directorate of Environment and Classified Establishments, Ministry of Environment and of Sustainable Development, Senegal

Sanou Dakono presented the role of the Senegalese Ministry of the Environment in the field of offshore oil and gas. He specified the main stages of the impact assessment and presented the process for monitoring the assessment between the various stakeholders (oil company, Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, etc.). Sanou Dakono then explained that the Senegalese Ministry of the Environment is currently developing a strategic framework for the offshore sector that should frame these extractive activities, distribute skills among the various stakeholders and strengthen the integration of the environment into their development. Sanou Dakono concluded by stressing the need to structure civil society actors so that the Ministry can enter into dialogue with them more easily, identify their needs and include them in the reflections on sector governance.

### 3.3 Dylan Gélard, Regional Director of the EITI Standard for French-speaking West Africa

Dylan Gélard pointed out that there has never been this much information available on offshore in West Africa but that their exploitation is not optimal. To make the most of this information and feed national debates, it is necessary to strengthen monitoring and data sharing. Monitoring of funding and expenditure is also necessary for all stakeholders, including national companies.

Dylan Gélard also recalled that EITI reports should be gradually replaced by systemic and independent EITI government publications. This procedure should not simply be a diagnosis of transparency but a tool of public interest.

Dylan Gérard went on to explain that to lead companies and West Africa towards sustainable development, it is necessary to ensure a quality dialogue with all stakeholders and including all EITI scientific and financial data. Dialogue could become a criterion for measuring the success of a CSR approach: which companies are currently in dialogue with stakeholders? At the same time, how can we ensure that African civil society is organised and represented in this dialogue? In this regard, the EITI offers several frameworks to facilitate this dialogue, such as the ISO 26000.

### 3.4 Philippe Barry, President and Founder, CSR Senegal

Philippe Barry explains that a CSR approach, if it is to be relevant and incisive, must necessarily be the result of a dialogue between stakeholders, in this case oil companies and civil society actors, with local populations at the forefront. The challenge, continues Philippe Barry, is to establish a quality dialogue so that CSR responds to concrete needs identified by the populations. To that end, he stressed the need to create a platform to formalize that dialogue.

Philippe Barry then highlighted the issues relating to the links between oil companies and their subcontractors and explained that this dimension must be given increasing attention by all stakeholders. This relationship between oil companies/subcontractors must not escape the requirements and reflexions related to CSR.

Finally, Philippe Barry shares his experience on "successful" CSR initiatives, mainly in the tourism and hotel sector.

### 3.5 Christian Sambatra Ihariantsoa, Project manager mining sector, Madagascar Initiative, Transparency International

Christian Samabtra Ihariantsoa presents the actions carried out by Transparency International in Madagascar. In 2016, a platform for good governance of natural resources was created, bringing together twelve different entities. Several multi-stakeholder workshops were held in the oil and gas regions. This approach has yielded tangible results in terms of advocacy, transparency and consideration of environmental issues. Christian Samabtra Ihariantsoa explains that the success of Transparency International's actions was made possible thanks to the mobilization of civil society actors and that the dialogue/advocacy led by these actors was the key to success. Christian Samabtra Ihariantsoa concluded by saying that it was necessary to federate and structure civil society in order to create a technical and operational dialogue with oil companies.

## 4. Thematic discussions: mobilizing companies to promote the development of CSR approaches and structuring civil society to meet sustainability challenges

---

Matthieu Wemaëre (Iddri) recalls the principles of CSR and its main challenges:

- Align CSR with the real needs of local populations;
- Involve stakeholders;
- Coordinate CSR initiatives among themselves and with the various stakeholders;
- Define the role of national authorities and scientific research programmes;
- CSR is a complementary tool to public regulation. It cannot fill the gaps in public regulation, but it can be added to it.

Philippe Copinschi (Iddri) presented the role of civil society actors in the governance of the oil sector:

- The company, because it is part of society, cannot ignore its stakes;
- Primary need to create a dialogue between companies and civil society;
  - Importance of the balance of power
  - Ambiguity of the companies' positions in this balance of power/dialogue
- Civil society actors need to be structured to strengthen their role and the influence they can have. This structure must also be considered on a regional scale;
- Need to increase the transparency of information.

The discussions then focus on the modalities that a multi-stakeholder dialogue could hold with a reminder of the three key steps in the development of CSR:

1. Identification of community needs through dialogue to establish an appropriate diagnosis;



2. Planning and development;
3. Measurement of the real impact.

Reflections are emerging on the possibility of creating a monitoring committee/multi-actor platform bringing together representatives of civil society, national authorities and companies. Participants agreed that CSR should be co-constructed to implement actions in accordance with real needs. Questions will still need to be explored: How do we identify these needs? What is the relationship between self-regulation, co-regulation and public regulation? How can civil society be structured to participate in these dialogues? As CSR is voluntary, it is necessary to ensure that the company really seeks to meet needs - which could be identified by civil society - because the establishment of a dialogue will not bind private actors in any way and will not generate any legal obligation for companies to develop CSR measures.

## 5. Conclusion

---

The participants congratulated themselves for the discussions held during the day and undertook, within the framework of the COBIA initiative, to work towards their operationalization through, in particular, continuing exchanges with private companies for the coordination of CSR approaches and the structuring of a civil society capable of raising with a single voice the challenges of sustainability of oil and gas activities.