

Evaluation of the Socio-Economic Impact of Marine Debris in Coastal Nigeria

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Abstract : Marine debris from fishing nets to medical equipment to food packaging that play major roles in boosting the economy and protecting human health is now more than an environmental problem that can be solved by legislation, law enforcement and technical solutions. It has also been identified as a cultural problem that can only be addressed by identifying instruments that can be used to change human attitudes and behaviors. This may be through management approaches, education and involvement of all sectors/interests, including the public. To contribute to the sustainable development of coastal Nigeria, two case study areas (Ikoyi and Victoria Islands of Lagos State) were used to evaluate the socio-economic impacts of marine debris problem in coastal Nigeria. The following methods were used: (1) semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and businesses on beaches, waterfronts and waterways within the study areas and (2) observational study of beaches, waterfronts and waterways within the study areas. The results of the study have shown that marine debris is a cultural and multi-sectoral problem that poses great threat not only to the environmental sustainability of the study areas but also to the wellbeing of its citizens and the economy of coastal Nigeria. Current solid waste and marine debris management practices are inefficient due to inadequate knowledge of how to tackle the problem. To ensure environmental sustainability in coastal Nigeria and avoid waste of scarce financial resources, adequate, appropriate and cost effective solutions to the marine debris problem need to be identified and effectively transferred for implementation in the study areas.

Keywords : sustainability, coastal Nigeria, study areas, aquaculture

Conference Title : ICMSA 2014 : International Conference on Marine Science and Aquaculture

Conference Location : Amsterdam, Netherlands

Conference Dates : May 15-16, 2014