Environmental Stewardship in DW Operations - Marine Biodiversity Management

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Agbami Field, one of Nigeria's biggest deepwater Assets is operated by Star Deep Water Petroleum Limited (Chevron) and is located in OML 127 and 128, offshore Nigeria in approximately 4800 feet of water.

With the full establishment of deepwater production in Nigeria, it has become imperative to have current data on marine biodiversity. Several impact assessments have clearly highlighted the need for current baseline data with which the impacts of deepwater oil and gas exploration and production activities can be evaluated and effective mitigation measures put in place.

Despite the enormous logistics challenges and the expense associated with such a complex operation, Chevron in line with her commitment to environmental stewardship have undertaken the task.

To do this Chevron obtained numerous seabed data from the Agbami field and other deepwater locations. Gaps identified in the available data were closed with a Fisheries survey carried out in April 2009 involving Chevron consultants as well as officials of Nigerian Institute of Marine and Oceanography Research (NIOMR). Data from Marine Mammal data via the Marine Mammal Observers (MMO) and Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM) which was deployed during the Agbami 3D/4D seismic Data Acquisition in November 2009 were also incorporated.
Results from the fisheries survey which focused on pelagic resources provided 'interesting" results in terms of diversity and abundance and the data obtained will be of utmost value for future impact assessment of other Chevron's deepwater operations and also as reference for other IOC's.

This presentation shares CNL experience gained as well the challenges faced in acquiring environmental data for deepwater operations. The need for proactive leveraging on available operational opportunities in acquiring much needed baseline data for future deepwater environmental impact assessments is also highlighted.

We recommend the continuous data acquisition to ensure extended data gaps and the need for government-industry collaboration and partnership to ensure a sustainable environment from deepwater operations.