

A VISIT TO MONTEGO BAY - STRICTLY PROFESSIONAL



Montego Bay, Jamaica

Between 1st and 6th February 2017, I, Abdallah Ramadhani, the Coordinator for Tanzania Alliance for Biodiversity (TABIO), was invited by the New York based International NGO, Pure Earth, to join their team on a retreat in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Pure Earth is an international non-profit organization dedicated to solving pollution problems in low and middle-income countries, where human health is at risk.

The retreat brought over 50 participants from all over the world to discuss how human beings are exposed to pollution

and to look at solutions. Environmental exposure to pollution from hazardous waste sites is an understudied contributor to the global burden of disease. Increasing industrial development, urbanization and socio-economic forces have contributed to an increase in environmental pollution and the negative health effects resulting from exposure, especially in developing countries.

During the meeting, participants presented on the status of environmental pollution, directly impacting on human health, in their home countries. Artisanal gold mining through the irresponsible use of mercury; Used Lead Acid Battery (ULAB) recycling; leaking obsolete pesticides; and discharge of industrial wastes containing heavy metals, were observed as the main sources of pollution. Other participants shared their experiences about clean-up projects in their countries e.g. cleaning of a lead polluted site in Kabwe, Zambia to make the land suitable again after abandonment. Other participants from Mongolia, China, Kyrgyzstan, India, Philippines and Indonesia shared similar experiences. In West Africa, Lead contaminated soils in Ghana and Senegal are in the pipeline for cleanup.

In Tanzania, Pure Earth has been working on and off identifying polluted sites since 2009. Up to now over 120 sites polluted with mercury, cadmium, lead and chromium have been identified.

Lessons learnt

I see the connection between ecological agriculture and the work of Pure Earth. While ecological agriculture is promoting farming that is friendly to the environment, Pure Earth's work creates land free from pollutants which can be used in ecological and organic agriculture. There is therefore a need to forge a collaboration with Pure Earth in order to make our mother Earth a safe place to live in.

ONLINE BOOK LAUNCH: AGROECOLOGY THE BOLD FUTURE FOR FARMING IN AFRICA

22nd February saw the online launch of 'Agroecology: The Bold Future for Farming in Africa', an 88-page book with 15 success stories testifying for agroecology.

Launched by AFSA in collaboration with TOAM, the publication highlights the huge potential of agroecology to feed Africa, fix broken food systems and repair damaged landscapes, providing abundant healthy and nutritious food sustainably while increasing incomes and improving climate resilience. Download your copy for free from the [AFSA website](#).

