



# STRATEGY FOR STRENGTHENING RIVER BASIN ORGANISATIONS IN SADC

PRESENTATION AT THE AFRICAN NETWORK OF BASIN  
ORGANISATION GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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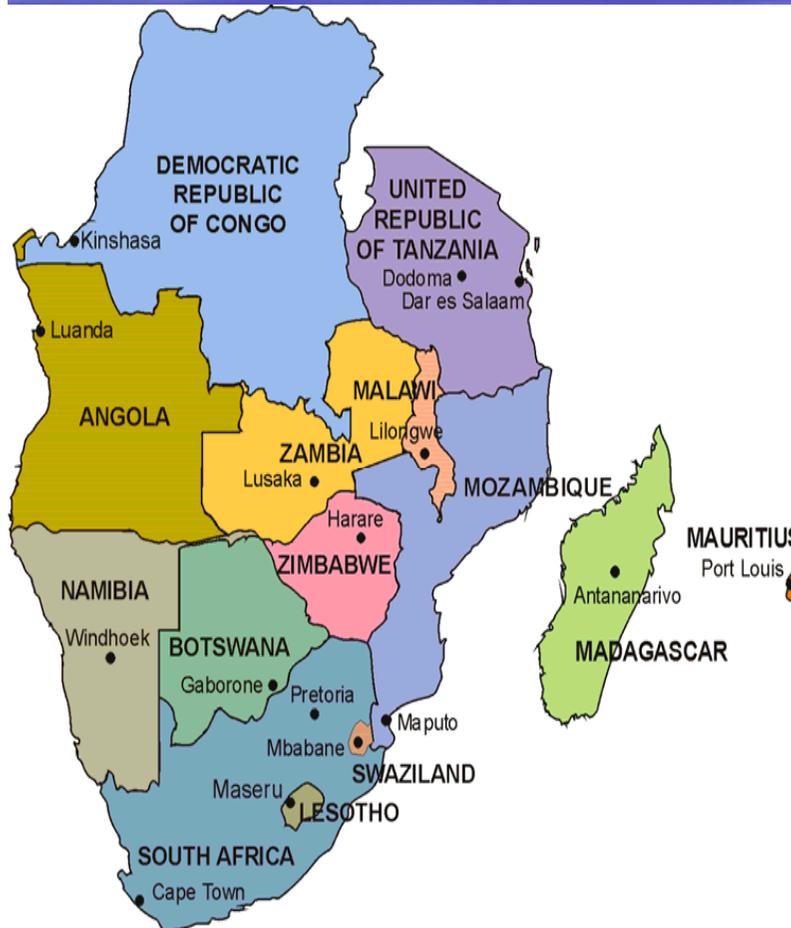
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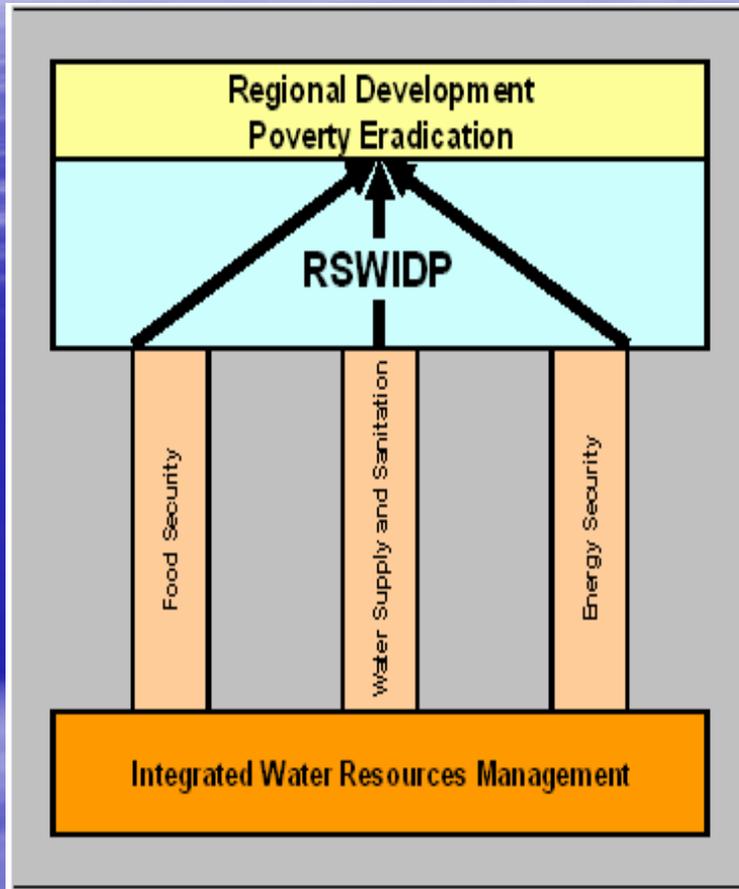
# BACKGROUND TO SADC

- SADC is a grouping of 14 sovereign states of Southern Africa, two of which are island states
- The Southern African region is characterised by a large number of transboundary watercourses – shared by two or more member states.
- The SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses (2000) and the SADC Regional Water Policy (2005) are the instruments that guides the establishment of various forms of shared watercourse institutions in SADC.
- These include bilateral technical working groups, joint project implementation agencies and basin-wide multilateral commissions;
- The mandates of these institutions differ, ranging from the development and operation of infrastructure to monitoring and data gathering to giving technical advice to member states.





# BACKGROUND TO SADC



The formation of R/LBOs is based on the Protocol on Shared Watercourses

The Main Objectives of the Protocol is to:

- “Foster closer cooperation for judicious, sustainable and coordinated management, protection and utilization of shared watercourses and advance the SADC agenda of regional integration and poverty alleviation”

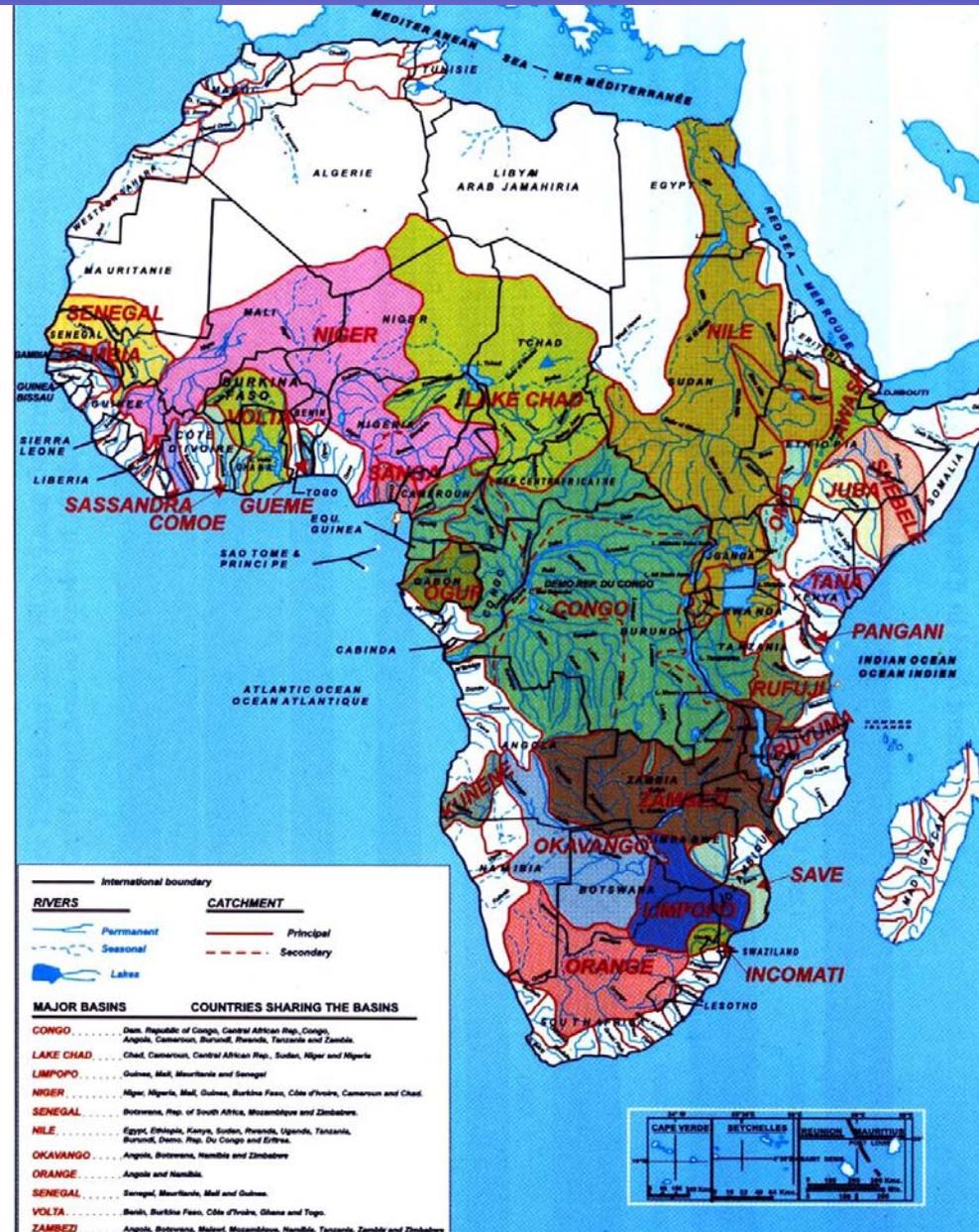
The establishment of shared watercourse organizations is provided for in article 5 (3) of the protocol;

These are seen as instruments in the effective implementation of the Protocol;



# REGIONAL INSTRUMENT GOVERNING WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

- Regional Protocol on Shared Watercourses:
  - Based on the SADC Treaty (Art 22 of the treaty)
  - Protocols spell out the objectives and scope of, and institutional mechanisms for cooperation in water
  - Protocol was developed as result of developments on Zambezi Basin Action Plan starting in 1993
  - Signed by 10 member states in August, 1995, in JHB, South Africa
  - Protocol came into force on the 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1998 (after attaining 2/3 ratification)
  - The establishment of a distinct and dedicated water sector august, 1996;
  - Adoption of the united nations convention on the law of the non-navigational uses of international watercourses, in april, 1997.
  - Protocol was amended/revised in 2000 to take on board development in international water law and address concerns of some member states
  - Revised protocol came into force in September 2003





# Progress on International River Basin Management

- **Move from mostly bilateral agreements toward a river basin approach:**
  - ZAMBEZI : ZAMCOM (2004)
  - ORANGE SENQU: ORASECOM (2000)
  - LIMPOPO : LIMCOM (2003)
  - OKAVANGO: OKACOM (1995)
  - Progress on various smaller basin
  - CONGO River: TBD
  - INCO-MAPUTO: WATER SHARING AGREEMENT (2002)
  - UMBELUZI
  - CUNENE/CUVELAI
  - ROVUMA (2006)



# REGIONAL WATER POLICY AND STRATEGY

- The policy was developed first through a highly consultative process involving all stakeholders;
- It sets a framework for member states interaction and co-operation in water resources management and development;
- Was adopted by member states at the highest level (SADC Council of Ministers) in August 2005
- It is premised on the SADC Treaty, the Water Protocol, the Vision for Water and the Dublin Principles on water;
- Recognise water as an instrument for peace, cooperation and regional integration;
- Promotes effective public consultation and involvement of users at all levels;
- Promote integrated people centered development;
- Promote joint planning and development strategic Regional Infrastructure;
- Efficient use of available water resources through application of best practices such as demand management polluter pays principle;



# THE PREPARATORY PROCESS FOR STRENGTHENING RBOs IN SADC

- Desk studies were conducted and information collected on the general characteristics and levels of development in each of the basins under study;
- The reports from this exercise were reviewed by an independent reviewer and used to develop a concept paper outlining the common issues and constraints in the various river basins;
- The concept paper was used as a basis to lead discussion in the workshop
- This was to be used as the basis for developing a regional support strategy for river basin organizations with input from the workshop.
- The workshop was organized into plenary and working group sessions covering several key issues



## THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE SADC RBOS WORKSHOP

- To promote the continuous improvement in effectiveness of these organisations in undertaking their mandates;
- To develop a structured programme directed at “Strengthening River Basin Organisations”;
- To define the scope and outline of the programme / strategy to assist in the strengthening RBOs;
- To have an opportunity for sharing best practices and experiences in dealing with various issues pertaining to shared watercourses;
- This was also in pursuance to the implementation of the capacity building component of the Regional Water program RSAP2



# WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

Challenges were identified under four key areas:

## 1. Resource Management:

- Spatial and temporal variability
- State of knowledge – disparities between basins & states.
- Different approaches to water resources assessment – technical issues (rainfall measurement, models etc)
- Freshwater availability per capita – highly variable.

## 2. Different stages of development

- Economic development and poverty
- Capacity for planning & inter-state negotiation
- Level of exploitation of resources
- Dependence on the construction of infrastructure – finance & skills needed.



# WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

- Environmental Sensitivity
  - Sensitive environmental features
  - Erosion
  - Pollution
- Other cross cutting issues
  - Stakeholder participation
  - Financial sustainability
  - Human resources – not enough people to effectively manage the basin issues
  - Varying Systems & procedures applied in the different basins
  - Disaster management



# WORKSHOP RECOMENDATIONS

## Possible SADC interventions to promote RBO strengthening

1. Stakeholder participation
  - Establish a stakeholder forum at regional level
  - Awareness creation & capacity building
  - Engage non-water specialists in stakeholder discussion for a
2. Political will & support
  - Develop a comprehensive awareness programme for politicians within and across sectors
  - Broker a process to achieve agreement on sticking points in RBO formation
3. Environmental issues
  - Encourage networking in environmental management and promote the adoption of good practices
  - Developing guidelines & procedures on environmental management
  - Develop standardised procedures for operations
  - Guidelines on water allocation & benefit sharing



## 1. Governance

- Harmonisation of policies and laws amongst member states
- Develop regulations for the guiding of implementation of the SADC protocol – eg establishing RBO secretariats

## 2. Institutional Sustainability

- Investigate & make proposals on financing mechanisms (government, private sector, users etc)

## 3. Capacity

- Develop exchange programme between RBOs and promote networking
  - Performance Monitoring
  - Develop a common programme
  - Collate and disseminate information
- All these issues will used as the element of program / strategy document for RBOs strengthening now being prepared



# THE ELEMENTS OF THE RBOS SUPPORT STRATEGY

- **BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE SEPTEMBER 2006 RBO WORKSHOP THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF FOCUS FOR STRENGTHENING WERE IDENTIFIED:**
  - A. RIVER BASIN ORGANISATIONS OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**
  - B. INTERNAL OPERATION PROCESSES OF THE ORGANISATION**
  - C. HUMAN RESOURCES CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**



# STRATEGY: OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT OF RBO

- **POLITICAL WILL AND SUPPORT:** the political will and support that have been extended during the process of establishing RBOs should continue and be sustained;
- **FINANCE:** RBOs requires funding for a number of issues including their operational programs and for projects.
  - assistance with investigating options for funding the activities of the RBOs to be provided;
- **CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES:** the work of the RBO's would benefit from a wider exposure to cross-cutting issues many of which are rooted in other sectors.
  - This should be through review of national policies and strategies and develop an inventory of cross-cutting issues that impact on the water sector.



## STRATEGY: OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT OF RBO...

- **NETWORKING:** This will involve internal and international networking with other RBO networks such as ANBO, INBO and AMCOW.
  - establishing contacts and creating forums such as communities of practice or a network of basin organisations, where networking can flourish.
- **PERFORMANCE MONITORING:** Assist the RBO's with setting up the procedures that will enable the RBO's to accurately report on their primary purpose namely the implementation of the Protocol;
- **WATER USE, HYDROLOGICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER INFORMATION MANAGEMENT:** Often the underlying hydrological data is inadequate and there are diverse ways in which calculations are undertaken.
  - Support to Standardised measurement, data collection and common approaches to hydrological monitoring such as through projects like SADC HYCOS, Assess of Surface Water and Regional Ground Water Management Program



## STRATEGY: ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES OF RBOs

- RBO can be strengthened if it is assisted with aspects of its internal organisation.
- **Participation and Outreach Programmes:** RBO's would be strengthened by greater involvement of stakeholders and the take-up of their inputs through organisational processes. Ideas include:
  - Regional stakeholder forums;
  - Information officers and community liaison officers in the RBO;
  - Information leaflets, newsletters and web-sites for all or individual basins;
  - Civil society structures that mirror and interact with the inter-state structures;
  - Nomination of a civil society representative to the RBO; and
  - Civil society observer status on the RBO.



# STRATEGY: ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES OF RBOs

- **ASSISTANCE IN INTERNAL PLANNING AND PROCEDURES:** SADC could promote planning and collect, collate and disseminate the lessons and experiences of RBO's in the region and internationally.
  - Development of operating procedures on the following topics should be undertaken:
    - implementing the SADC Protocol;
    - environmental management;
    - general RBO operations;
    - stakeholder participation; and
    - water-sharing and allocation.
- **MANDATE OF THE RBOs:**
  - facilitate the RBO's "pushing" the boundaries of their mandate.



- **A Sense of Organisation:** Most RBO's do not have a legal persona or sense of organisation.
  - SADC could publicise as role models the successes of the RBO's that exercise more functions for example through a secretariat.
  
- **Twining Arrangements:** twinning arrangements with RBO's from outside the SADC is a complex matter and strengthening mechanism are needed to assist RBOs in this process.
  - This may borrow from the current INBO twining arrangement which includes:
    - Define frameworks for joint action
    - Promote staff exchange between twinning basins
    - Capitalize on knowledge sharing in this regard



# HUMAN CAPACITY

- Elements that make up human capacity are competencies (skills), opportunities to build knowledge, access to information and practical experience:
  - A. COMPETENCY IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS CAN BE ADDRESSED:**
    - Integrated water resources management;
    - International water law;
    - Interpretation and application of the SADC Water Protocol;
    - Negotiation skills;
    - Inter-personal communication skills;
    - Conflict resolution;
    - Cultural diversity;
    - Diplomacy and international law as it affects treaties; and
    - Meeting procedures
  - B. DELIVERY MECHANISMS:** A number of approaches can be used including the following;
    - Colloquiums for the sharing of RBO experiences among peers;
    - Documenting and archiving case studies, lessons and best practices;
    - Promotion of communities of practice and interest;



## CONCLUSIONS...

- The river basin is seen as an appropriate unit for management and development of water resources especially in shared watercourses
- Water resources in SADC are seen as an opportunity for cooperation and peace rather than cause for conflict;
- River basin approach has been adopted as an implementation mechanism for regional projects;
- The instruments and the associated programmes that have been developed when fully implemented and adhered to will lead to regional peace and stability in the SADC Region
- All other sectors and role players should take part in the development of a safer SADC region and Africa as a whole