

**AFRICAN GREAT LAKES INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ENTEBBE, UGANDA MAY 2017,**

BASIN GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING SESSION

**CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN
THE AFRICAN GREAT LAKES REGION**

**PROF ERIC.O.ODADA,
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI-KENYA**

CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND THE WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT OPENING REMARKS:

Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here together with you to attend the African Great Lakes Conference in this beautiful city of Entebbe. Water is the source of life. Water is also a threat to life when it turns into floods, droughts, and other water related disasters. Many disasters occurring around the world, such as the El Niño Floods in East Africa and droughts in Southern Africa. In my discussion today, I will focus more on the Climate Resilience and Water Management. In particular, on climate challenges to SDG 6 and Targets – Ensuring Sustainable Water Resource Management and Climate Resilience in the Great Lakes Region .

Prince Hassan of Jordan in his address to Arab ministers of water once remarked and I quote “ water shortages in the Middle East may spark violence worse than the Arab spring.” His reason was, there has been no cross- border thinking on how to address the water problems that affect the entire region.

Although I am not all that pessimistic as my good friend Sidi, over the next twenty years , the global requirements for water will be 40% more than today’s supply. An already precarious balancing act will be compounded by growing population demands , burgeoning middle class consumption and climate change.

The predicted 55% increase in energy demand to 2030 will add stress from this water hungry sector, as will climate change estimated cost to the world of as much as 5% in GDP each year much due to agricultural disruption.

Economic growth fundamentally and irrevocably depends on water . The path to achieving national economic goals and to world wide recovery and sustainability must include more effective use and management of water we do not have enough water if we manage it we do today; we can have enough water if we manage it better.

So what are the major challenges to SDG 6?

- Decisions about water management are made at the nation level. Global reports, recommendations and resolutions do not create national action.
- National water management is characterized by massive institutional fragmentations , and exceedingly difficult political choices . They are usually inadequately designed ,insufficiently resourced , and there is little capacity to implement reforms.

Now, I would like to specifically address the challenges of Water Governance in Changing Climatic World .

Frequency and duration of droughts in Great Lakes Region have increased and have almost reaching a crisis situation.

.Water is used in almost in every economic sector and is a crucial resource in African Great Lakes Region development. But the demand outstrips the available water in the region.

.How can we ensure sound management of water resources that is increasingly important for SDG 6 and Targets?

Shared Africa Water Vision and Sustainable Development Goals calls for equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty alleviation, social-economic development, regional cooperation and the environment.

How can we ensure or promote adoption of good governance, societal consensus, innovative technologies and well developed frameworks for cooperative action?

Water-Food-Energy Nexus

- . There is opportunity to grow food with the current available resources.
- .Water must not become the limiting factor for food and water security.
- . How can we build efficiency through investment in education and innovation, green technologies; multiple use of recycled products, and renewable energy sources?

Managing Transboundary Systems

- African Great Lakes Region has a number of international and national transboundary water systems.
- Successful transboundary water distribution depend on political cooperation between the involved riparian states.

- In the absence of strong rules and laws, treaties are the best forms of river/Lake Basin and aquifer management.
- How can African Union , for example strengthen cooperation among region economic communities and stakeholders to assure just and equitable distribution of water resources.

Global Change and Risk Management

- The policy for reducing disaster risk requires development planning, science knowledge, early warning system and effective mechanisms for disaster responses.
- How can African Great Lakes governments put in place strategies and policies to counteract the impact , and climate change adaption strategies?

Educational , Knowledge and Capacity Development

- General shortage of human resources for water management in the African Great Lakes region.
- Education, Knowledge and Capacity Building at all societal and institutional levels, as well as good governance is key for efficient and sustainable IWRM and resource development.
- How can we ensure capacity enhancement programmes at community, academic and institutional levels?
- How can we ensure support for knowledge –based strategies for water management amongst policy and decision makers across the science/management divide?

Water Resources and Infrastructure for Economic Growth

- African Great Lakes Governments should invest in water infrastructure operations and maintenance, promote effective use of water.
- How can they promote an enabling environment by appropriate legislation public-private partnerships, community involvement and economic incentive.

Water Governance and Management

- African Great Lakes countries need to streamline their efforts to promote good water governance, and invest in water infrastructure, human resources and institutions for proper management of the water resources.

- How can Governments, in collaboration with water managers and communities of users develop and implement transparent , evidence-based policy?
- How can they develop and implement legal and institutional frameworks that adequately address water issues (including governance, shared responsibilities and water securities)?

Financing

- Increase funding to build human and institutional capacities.
- Investment from both governments and private sector
- If water becomes a limiting factor, risk of downturn in economy and society well-being.
- Governments need to invest in water sector, based on real value water. Real value must include environmental, social, operational and construction components.
- How can water policy makers ensure proper allocation and achieve economic efficiency and environmental sustainability?

In Conclusion

- 1 . African Great Lakes countries need to establish governance mechanisms for the SDGs 6 and Targets, from global (UN) to regional, national and local levels.
2. African Great Lakes countries need to mainstream adaptation and resilient strategies for coping with the increasing impacts of climate change in the region.
3. They need to ensure access to affordable, sustainable and reliable modern energy services for all; and accelerate the implementation of environmentally friendly renewable energy.
4. They need to strengthen and enhance the means of implementation and global partnerships for sustainable development.

Finally, the IWRM perspective provides an informed and transparent framework for determining and resolving trade-offs to meet increasing demands without compromising sustainability. It is thus important to incorporate the IWRM perspective in the local , national and other international planning activities focusing on either , water, food or energy.

THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION.

Professor Eric. O . Odada
University of Nairobi, Kenya