

THE CUBANGO-OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN (CORB) STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT

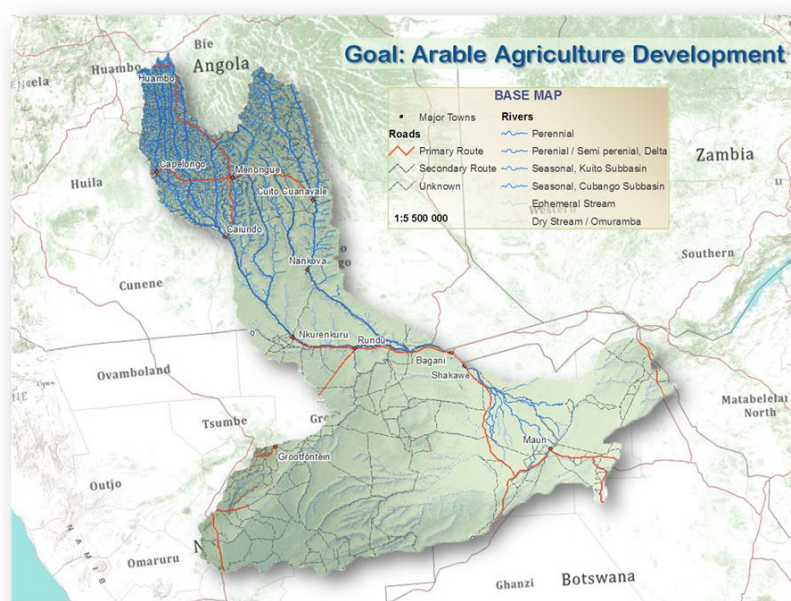


Figure 1: Extent of the Cubango-Okavango River basin

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through funding from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) supports the implementation of the OKACOM Strategic Action Program (SAP) through a four year (4) project aimed at strengthening joint management and cooperative decision-making on the sustainable utilisation of natural resources to address livelihoods and socio-economic development challenges in the CORB (Figure 1).

In 2008, a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) which assessed the positive and negative implication of possible future water resources development was conducted. The TDA identified key threats and their drivers (Table 1) which need to be addressed if the future of the CORB is to be assured, particularly its potential to provide the desired economic potential, benefits to the people, and its Fauna and Flora.

Table 1. Key Drivers and Threats

Threats	Drivers/Threats
i) Variation and reduction of hydrological flow	i) Population growth and urbanization;
ii) Changes in sediment dynamics	ii) Land use change;
iii) Changes in water quality	iii) Poverty; and
iv) Changes in the abundance and distribution of biota	iv) Climate change

Table 1. Key Drivers and Threats

The TDA informed the development of the OKACOM's 20-year SAP and the National Action Priorities (NAP), which advocate for sharing of benefits from natural water resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, in line with international conventions and national legislations, that guide for sustainable utilisation of these resources. UNDP-GEF is supporting OKACOM to address some key elements, threats and drivers with the view to support the socio-economic development of the Basins communities while sustaining the health of the ecosystem.

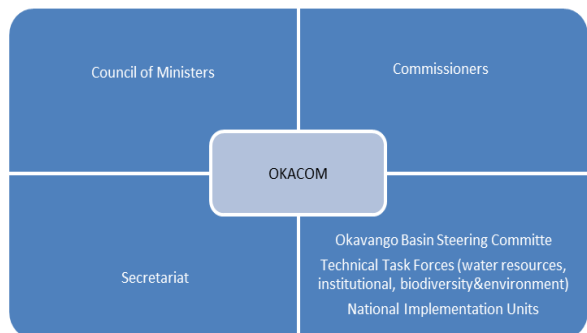
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The Cubango-Okavango River Basin is shared by the three riparian states: Angola, Namibia and Botswana, who formally committed to an agreement of 1994, leading to the establishment the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM). The OKACOM Agreement aims to promote coordinated and environmentally sustainable regional water resources development, while addressing the legitimate social and economic needs of each of the riparian states.



The three countries, differ in size, landscape and level of economic development, but all share social and environmental challenges related to poverty, deforestation, preservation of the river basin ecosystem, water scarcity, and contamination. Spearheading the implementation of OKACOM activities is the OKACOM governance structure (left).

The Council and Commission are the primary governing bodies of OKACOM, supported by the Okavango Basin Steering Committee (OBSC) and its technical committees. The Executive Secretariat of OKACOM (OKASEC) located in Gaborone, provides administrative, financial and general secretarial services to OKACOM.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

UNDP-GEF SAP implementation programme targets interventions that strengthen Institutional and Organisational Capacity Development through the establishment of a Basin Development Management Framework (BDMF) as described in the SAP. The project is assisting the three countries to achieve the global sustainable development goals, specifically Goal 1- No Hunger; SDG 6- Clean Water & Sanitation; SDG 13 on Climate Action and SDG 15 on Life on Land.



In support of the SDGs, UNDP-GEF SAP project links to the principles of addressing Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) issues, which stresses the need to balance economic, social equality and environmental objectives. Hence, OKACOM has then agreed on a basin-wide shared Vision for the CORB, *“economically prosperous, socially just and environmentally healthy development of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin”, spearheading future development of the CORB.*

Plate 1: Community of the Cubango-Okavango River

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

The project expectant results are presented into four outcomes as per SAP UNDP-GEF agreement.

Expected Outcome
<p>1. A shared long-term basin development vision and concept of a development space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Implementation of an agreed long-term basin vision, mission and values. b) Set boundaries for development space. c) Develop customized Decision Support Systems (DSS) d) Design an Information Management Systems e) Setting up payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) and the OKACOM Endowment Fund. <p>2. Strengthened management framework including enhanced OKACOM mandates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) M&E framework developed b) Revision of the OKACOM agreement to align its mandate. c) Strengthened technical capability to manage & operate DSS and IMS.

- e) Transboundary EIA Guidelines and procedures developed
- f) Implementation of Communication and Information & Stakeholder Integration Strategy
- g) Financial and Administrative capacity strengthened.

3. Environmentally sound socioeconomic development demonstrated in the basin to allow the basin population to improve their socioeconomic status with minimum adverse impacts to and enhanced protection of the basin ecosystem: Demonstrated and documented projects on:

- i) Community-based Tourism
- ii) Community-based fisheries & Co-Management;
- iii) Community-based climate change adaptation measures and;
- iv) Replication Strategies developed

4. The basin's states capacity to manage transboundary water resources based on IWRM principles enhanced, supporting the BDMF:

- a) Establish forecasting and yield assessment methodologies
- b) Assessment of groundwater resources;
- c) Assessment of hydro-meteorological monitoring
- d) Sedimentation Monitoring Programme
- e) Undertake Water quality baseline survey
- f) Basin wide biological monitoring and socio-economic monitoring
- g) Assessment of water quantity and quality developed
- h) Basin-wide IWRM plan

PROJECT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Jointly, a **Project Steering Committee (PSC)** has been established to take charge of the overall decisions related to the project. Members of the PSC were drawn from national focal points in all the three countries, representatives from the UNDP and members of the OKACOM governance structure form part of the structure.

To optimise benefit sharing, each country formed a technical working group in charge of the basin sectoral advice in relation to activities taking place in the basin.



Plate 2: PSC members 1st committee meeting in Luanda, Angola

Facts:

Population: 1,113,000million to increase by 1, 686,000 by 2020

Cover Area: 413550km²

Length: 1,100 km

Depth: 4m Deep, 200m wide

Livelihoods: Subsistence rainfed agriculture, conservation and dependence on other natural resources.

Contacts:

Ndahafa Nakwafila
 Communication and Outreach Manager
 Old Lobatse Road, Gaborone-Botswana
 Cell: +267 75691217-E: ndahafa@okacom.org



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