

DEVELOPING A SHARED VISION FOR A SHARED RIVER BASIN: THE CASE OF THE CUBANGO-OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IN LATE 2014, OKACOM initiated a process to develop a joint basin-wide shared vision. This process was built on the foundations of all prior outputs, and was concluded in early 2015. The output of the visioning exercise was an agreed joint basin-wide Vision that was developed by a multi-stakeholder consultation process in all Member States. The Vision provides a clear, stakeholder endorsed 'focal point' to guide the future development programmes of OKACOM Member States, OKACOM and their International Development Partners.

The rationale behind the need for basin-wide joint shared vision, builds from the recognition that the goals and objectives of OKACOM as stipulate on its 1994 agreement voluntary signed by the respective the riparian States may hardly be achieved without a commonly accepted motivational value proposition that triggers them to work together. Such a motivational value proposition should be inspirational so that riparian states with eventually diverging national development priorities may be willing to negotiate and harmonise those divergences in order to achieve globally accepted and respected human valued principles across political boundaries. A basin-wide regional scale event brought together the perspectives of basin stakeholders/resource users, local and national level government agencies, the OKACOM Secretariat, OBSC Members and OKACOM Commissioners. Material from this process has been translated into an OKACOM Vision, Mission Statement, OKACOM Corporate Values and Guiding Principles.

This document articulates a statement of the OKACOM agreed basin-wide shared Vision, clearly signalling the long term aspirations for the desired future status of the basin and the organisation. It subsequently captures the OKACOM Mission Statement by clarifying what the organisation does to achieve the Vision. It also states the set of OKACOM Corporate Values indicating how OKACOM as whole will behave as an organisation to realise the vision. It concludes with the re-statement of OKACOM Guiding Principles, ensuring that the OKACOM actions to convert the Mission into the Vision are conducted in the most effective way.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) was established by the Republics of Angola, Botswana and Namibia under the 1994 OKACOM Agreement. The mandate of the Commission is to advise Member States on matters related to the conservation, development and sustainable utilisation of water resources in the Cubango-Okavango River basin (CORB). It was the first river basin organisation agreement in SADC region. It pre-dated the 1995 SADC Water Protocol on Shared Watercourses (revised in 2000) but is consistent with the Revised SADC Protocol and draws from internationally recognised agreements such as the Helsinki Rules (1966) and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (UN Water Convention).

OKACOM has invested a considerable amount of time and effort in developing a carefully structured programme to build solid foundations for the equitable and sustainable planning and development of the basin. Outputs of these processes include the Transboundary Diagnostic Assessment (TDA), the Strategic Action Programme (SAP), the three National Action Plans (NAPs) and a Basin 'sustainable and equitable investment programme'. OKACOM is also currently developing a Multisector Investment Options Analysis to assist Member States in the selection and prioritisation of development options for optimum transboundary benefits.

OKACOM has also recently considered its governance and delivery structure through a formally approved Institutional Functional Analysis. The outcomes of the study resulted in the Revised 2007 OKACOM Organisational Structure Agreement to include the Ministers' Forum as the highest decision making body of the Commission and this was endorsed at the 21st meeting held in May 2015, in Luanda, Angola. The new structures will be designed to take stock of the challenges of SAP implementation as OKACOM moves from a 'cooperation and planning' phase to a 'delivery' phase.

METHODOLOGY

OKACOM's agreed basin-wide shared Vision was finalised in 2015 through a process that spanned all three Member States and involved a wide range of multi-stakeholders.

NATIONAL WORKSHOPS in each Member State at the basin level were held where the aim was:

TO AGREE A VISION AND IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CUBANGO-OKAVANGO BA-SIN TO GUIDE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SAP AND THE MSIOA STUDIES.

The specific tasks in relation to the three national visioning workshops was to facilitate and guide three National implementation visions that: i.Identified a 'desired socio-economic' state for the people of the basin which addressed their physical, economic and social needs;

- ii. Refreshes the existing 'visions' and outlines a desired future;
- iii. Included the need for monitoring of progress and performance (M&E) toward the vision;
- iv. Agreement and convergence on an 'acceptable level of change' in the basin; v. Takes account of the needs of all three Member States;
- vi. Made provision for investments in water use to improve livelihoods; and
- vii.Recognised the different consumptive vs non-consumptive uses in all three countries, and the different national interests at play.

REGIONAL WORKSHOP

The outputs of national workshops were used as primary inputs to a regional workshop where representatives of key sectors participated (10 participants from each country). The participants were drawn from the basin as well as national level. Some of the sectors represented included irrigation, livestock farming, mining, tourism and resource users at local level. The workshops were facilitated by an experienced facilitator with expertise in transboundary water management.

The aim and objective of the regional workshop were:

- 1. To develop a commonly accepted vision for the Cubango-Okavango River Basin that will serve as a framework for cooperation for the sustainable development of the basin. 2. To develop a vision for the Okavango River Commission that reflects its role as a supporter / facilitator /advisor for development within the wid-
- er SADC context. The specific objectives of the workshop were to;
- i.Outline the role and mandate of OKACOM vis-à-vis the national development objectives;
- ii. Outline the key outcomes of the 3 national visioning workshops; iii. Formulate a vision for the basin that provides a framework for development;
- iv. Outline how development in basin and in each of the member States will align with the vision;
- v. Formulate a vision for the Commission that reflects the role it will play in developments in the basin

RESULTS

National workshops: The point of departure for national workshops was the planned development plans for the basin were dominated by plans for agricultural expansion, with 6 commercial or smallholder irrigation expansion projects identified – which were not considered to be of significant transboundary concern. A range of other projects were identified, of which hydropower expansion (in Botswana) and mining may have transboundary implications.

- Delegates at the national workshops were then asked to discuss a possible visions for the other countries may be. Key elements that arose from these national visions were;
- The need for sustainable development, environmental protection and protection of goods and services; The need for common legal frameworks;
- The wise use of the basin, balancing protection and use; and

- The need to cooperate with the other countries, reasonable and equitable use and integrated planning; The urgency of suitable social actions and the reduction of poverty;
- Development of the basin to benefit the Countries.

Regional Workshop: In order to streamline the development of a vision, delegates were then asked to discuss this vision in groups, and adjust it to fit with their perceptions and expectations. They were also asked to outline steps or objectives that were necessary to active the vision.

A CLIMATE RESILIENT, ECONOMICALLY PROSPEROUS, SOCIALLY JUST AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND CUBANGO-OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN

OKACOM is mandated to advise Member States on a number of important issues as articulated in the OKACOM Agreement. A summary of

- the OKACOM mandate, derived from Article 4 'Functions of the Commission' is for OKACOM to advise the Member States on: The long term safe yield of water available from the basin;
- Reasonable demand scenarios from all consumers in the basin; • Conservation, equitable allocation sustainable utilisation of water resources of the basin;
- Planning, separately and jointly, for development of water resources, including the construction, operation and maintenance water infrastructure in the basin;
- Prevention of pollution, prevention and control of aquatic weeds in the basin and;
- Measures for the alleviation of short-term difficulties, such as droughts and floods.

OKACOM MISSION STATEMENT

- In order to achieve the basin-wide shared Vision, OKACOM will undertake a number of activities. The following Mission is derived from the OKA-COM Agreement and from the proceeds of the Visioning Workshop, the SAP and NAP's.
- OKACOM advises its Member States and basin stakeholders so they can plan and deliver equitable, just, sustainable and environmentally sound
- development and growth. It achieves this through: • Identifying best practices that build water and food security for poverty reduction and growth, which have minimal transboundary or environ-
- mental impacts, and to develop options to finance the implementation of these practices; • Developing Rules of procedure for effective implementation of the 'notification principle of planned measures' under the Revised SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses;
- Recommending the establishment of harmonised environmental policies and approaches;
- Working with the Member States to identify investments that align with both the basin vision and the national development trajectories to create employment opportunities and support growing economies, and advise them on measures to avoid, minimise and mitigate potential trans-
- boundary impacts;
- Work towards agreement on the establishment and monitoring of indicators of progress toward the vision;
- Develop a gender equity strategy that actively involves women and men in both the Commission's activities and which promotes women's involvement in development initiatives and required implementation strategies; • Establish a communications strategy that identifies and quantifies the benefits that accrue to the Member States and the people of the basin,