

TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE VOLTA BASIN ORGANIZATION (VBO)

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PRESENTATION FORMAT

- **1. BACKGROUND**
- **2. STEPS TAKEN**
- **3. WHERE WE ARE**
- **4. NEXT STEPS**
- **5. CONCLUSIONS**

BACKGROUND

The Volta Basin

- **shared by 6 riparian countries – Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, Togo, Mali and Ghana**
- **remains one of the few transboundary river basins in Africa without formal legal and institutional arrangements for managing its water resources**
- **Ghana and Burkina occupy about 84% of the basin, remaining 16% shared amongst the other 4 countries**
- **Ghana and Burkina thus hold the key to establishing the Basin Organization**
- **45% of the land mass of Togo lies in the Oti arm of the Volta basin; contributes significantly to the inflow to the Volta Lake**

STEPS TAKEN

- **Accra Declaration**
 - **21 September 1999 Accra: Meeting of experts of riparian countries; declared implementation of Integrated Management of Water and Land Resources of the Volta basin; and to take steps to form a Basin Authority**
- **July 08 to 11 2002: Workshop on IWRM also in Accra, by SISCOA; recommended formation of a Volta Basin Technical Committee (VBTC) to guide the process towards establishing a Volta Basin Organization to manage the resources of the Volta basin.**
- **August 2002, Green Cross International Workshop in Accra; led to a Volta Basin Declaration proposing a set of key principles for the peaceful management of conflicts related to the shared water resources of the Volta River.**
- **April 2004 , Accra: Joint meeting of Ministers in for water in Ghana and Burkina Faso; Declared readiness to efficient management of the water and land resources of the two countries through an MoU**

In furtherance of the above,

- **An expert meeting of the 6 riparian countries met in Ouagadougou, 29-30 July 2004, and resolved to establish a Volta Basin Technical Committee (VBTC)**
- **VBTC is a consultative committee to perform activities including but not limited to the following:**
 - Identifying all the issues and obstacles in the establishment of a Volta basin body;**
 - Collecting, pooling and exchanging all relevant information;**
 - Advising national authorities; and**
 - Directing partner support for the setting up of the basin body.**

STATUTES

At the Ouaga meeting, the statutes of the VBTC were adopted.
Some of the highlights are:

- Official working languages shall be French and English.
- VBTC is to guide the process towards the establishment of a Volta basin organization

Structure:

The VBTC shall consist of the following:

- Expert Committee
- Coordination

Expert Committee –

two representatives; the National Focal Point and one other expert

Coordination-

vested in the President and his Vice, and a Secretariat.

- The VBTC shall hold its ordinary meetings twice a year. The chairperson shall convene such meetings.
- Extraordinary meetings of the VBTC can be held at the request of, at least, two-thirds of the member countries.

WHERE WE ARE

- **VBTC has been formed awaiting ministerial approval**
- **National Focal Points have been identified by virtue of appropriate section of the Statutes**
- **Coordination of the activities has been invested in the President, Vice President and the Secretariat. (The Presidency is held by Burkina Faso with Ghana as the Vice)**

NEXT STEPS

- **Meeting of Ministers for Water Resources to formally endorse the establishment of VBTC**
- **Preceding the ministerial meeting, should be the 1st Session of VBTC**
- **Prepare Action Plan for the VBTC**

CONCLUSIONS

- **Though awaiting ministerial approval, VBTC has come to stay and is affirmation of the resolve of the riparian countries of the Volta basin to come together to establish a permanent body to effectively manage the water and land resources in an integrated and sustainable manner**
- **Recognizing the fact that such an endeavor would require both financial and human resources, the VBTC would mobilize the needed resources through partnership with institutions such as INBO/ANBO, EU, GEF and other UN agencies and donors**
- **Finally, with this presentation it is hoped that the VBTC will be admitted to membership of the Network of Basin Organizations**