



RESEAU AFRICAIN DES ORGANISMES DE BASSIN
AFRICAN NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANIZATIONS
RED AFRICANA DE ORGANISMOS DE CUENCA



RESEAU INTERNATIONAL DES ORGANISMES DE BASSIN
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANIZATIONS
RED INTERNACIONAL DE ORGANISMOS DE CUENCA

**GENERAL ASSEMBLIES
OF THE AFRICAN NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANIZATIONS AND
OF THE NETWORK OF TRANSBOUNDARY BASIN
ORGANIZATIONS**

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**JOHANNESBURG (SOUTH AFRICA)
4 to 6 MARCH 2007**

FINAL RESOLUTIONS

"Water has no boundary"

71 delegates of governmental administrations, responsible for managing water resources, of basin organizations and international organizations coming from **19 countries** :

Angola
Belgium
Botswana
Burkina
Faso
Chad
Democratic
Republic of
Congo
Ethiopia
France
Germany
Ghana
Kenya
Lesotho

Mali	Senegal	Swaziland	Zambia
Niger	South	Tunisia	
Nigeria	Africa	Uganda	

and from the International Commissions or Transboundary Organizations for Congo-CICOS, Gambia, Komati, Liptako – Gourma, Niger, Orange-Senqu, Senegal, Lake Chad, Lesotho Highlands, Incomati, Lake Victoria, Volta, Zambezi, met in Johannesburg (South Africa) from 4 to 6 March 2007, under the auspices of AMCOW and at the invitation of the African Network of Basin Organizations (ANBO), of the International Network of Transboundary Basins Organizations (INTBO) and of the African Union, in the presence of bi and multilateral cooperation organizations, United Nations Agencies and large Non Governmental Organizations concerned and with the support the Comati BWA, of German and French Cooperations.

The meeting was hold in the conference center at the Kopanong Hotel, under the High Patronage of HE the Minister of Water Affairs and Forests of South Africa.

PREAMBLE

It was reminded that many represented organizations are already members or observers of the African Network of Basin Organizations (ANBO), created in 2002 in Dakar to enable the mobilization of the real and practical experience of decision-makers and professionals of the administrations and organizations concerned, directly responsible for the effective implementation of integrated water resource management at the level of river, lake and aquifers basins or wishing to implement it in their respective countries.

ANBO is open to all relevant organizations that wish to become members. They are all welcomed: International Commissions and organizations responsible for integrated management of river basins and aquifers, in particular the transboundary ones, governmental administrations in charge of water in the countries involved and interested in implementing basin management, bi or multilateral cooperation and regional organizations and United Nations Agencies supporting activities to establish institutional structures at the level of large river basins or aquifers, especially Transboundary ones.

Non Governmental Organizations or Research, Information and Training Centers may participate in the Network activities as Observers.

ANBO is the Regional Networks of INBO in Africa,

ANBO is especially mobilizing for better management of African transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers.

Indeed, there are 263 transboundary rivers or lakes and hundreds of aquifers over the world, the basins of which are shared by at least two or more (18) riparian countries, and 59 of them are located in Africa, the basins of which covering more of 62% of the continent superficity.

Indeed, water has no boundary and appropriate integrated resource management of the basins of rivers, lakes or aquifers, shared by several riparian countries, is now of strategic significance.

Cooperation agreements need to be initiated or signed between the riparian countries for these large transboundary river basins and aquifers, inland or international seas.

Such an integrated management obviously requires, in addition to specific agreements between the countries concerned, suitable methods for observation, management, protection and development.

Their specific situation should be better taken into account in the debates and multilateral agreements on a new governance of water resources.

Although many agreements were signed in the past centuries between riparian countries to ensure free navigation on transboundary rivers or sometimes to share river flows or prevent floods and, since the end of the 19th century, to build hydropower dams, **today, there are still too few agreements, conventions or treaties dealing with pollution control, aquifer management and a fortiori the integrated management of shared river basins.**

However, in cooperation with international organizations and programs, several countries have already established, for a long time for some of them, a real basin organization and a large number are considering doing so.

In West Africa for example, riparian countries of Niger and Senegal rivers have respectively created joint basin organizations since the sixties. OMVS is today a reference, especially concerning the transboundary legal aspects. NBA action plan, including several big dams, will be approved in early 2008. Other efforts are notable within SADC (South African Development Community) and more recently on the Congo basin.

The European Water Framework Directive, other example, proposes to the Member and Candidate States of the European Union to delimit « International Districts », in which « good ecological status » should be achieved before 2015, and leads to the harmonization of management practices and to the development of better tools between riparian Countries, including those not, or not yet, members of the EU. Its implementation will be an interesting experience to be followed by all the organizations interested of other continents.

The United Nations Convention on uses other than navigation in international river basins has unfortunately not yet been ratified.

This is the reason why, with the support of INBO and ANBO, **« an Network of International Commissions and Transboundary Basin Organizations »** was created in Thonon-les-Bains, on the side of the Lemane Lake, on 25 and 26 November 2002. It aims at allowing the executives and technicians concerned to better know each other throughout the world, and to exchange their real field experiences, to

compare their approaches and methods and thus to facilitate the creation and the strengthening of the best suited organizations for a new integrated water resource management of transboundary basins. It held its second assembly in Dakar on November 2004.

Several international organizations have fortunately launched, during the last years and more recently on the occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development of Johannesburg, initiatives for promoting and facilitating the creation or strengthening of international basin commissions and, thus, generate significant scientific, technical, economic or institutional cooperation with such a purpose.

In Evian in 2003, INBO, jointly with several large NGOs concerned, especially drew the attention of the G8 Heads of State and Government on the stakes of a better governance of transboundary basins. They retained this issue among their priorities for future actions in the water sector, in Africa in particular.

The international Conference « Earth citizens » which was just held in Paris, has particularly underlined the necessity of reinforcing the cooperation between riparian countries of transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers to implement an integrated resource management in their respective basin.

ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

In addition to the presentation of the strategies of bi and multilateral cooperation institutions involved and to the study of several real cases of organization on the scale of transboundary basins, **the Johannesburg Assembly widely dealt, in 3 workshops, on central topics for the implementation of IWRM:**

- 1) statutes and responsibilities of transboundary basin organizations,
- 2) preparation of basin management plans and action programs, financing basin organizations and their programs,
- 3) monitoring and information systems in the management of transboundary basins.

38 papers were presented during the Johannesburg meeting and followed with discussions.

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS

The participants noted with appreciation the progress made allowing a better management of transboundary basins on the one hand, and, on the other, the significant progress already made in the implementation of policies and real actions at this level.

The participants expressed their wish to continue exchanging their experiences through four complementary activities:

- Organizing regular meetings, either plenary sessions on a yearly basis or topical workshops whenever necessary. Apart from an exchange of experiences, these meetings will result in the identification of the main concerns of basin organizations involved in the field.
- Developing the common project of the African Water Information System, AWIS, driven by OMVS, as ANBO PTS, and founded by the European Water Facility and the French Cooperation, and which will aim at regrouping case studies and documents produced by basin organizations (abstract in English and French, links with the sites of the basin organizations).

The AWIS Web site would also include current information, a forum for discussions and frequently asked questions, links towards new documents and information produced at the international level. Interfaces will be also developed in English, French, Arabic and Portuguese languages.

- Promoting training programs for executives and staffs of Basins Organizations, especially through the GEF-supported « IW-LEARN » project.
- Participation in the African working group of the European Water Initiative (EUWI), particularly concerning the Euro-African Infrastructure Partnership,

- Establishing twinning arrangements between basin organizations of different countries facing common problems, notably within the « TWINBASIN » project or already existing agreements.
- Studying the feasibility of a kit of performance indicators of 10 pilots African Basin organizations, on the basis of the new founding just obtain for the European Water Facility;
- Reinforcement of ANBO Network and PT Secretariat with the support of the African Water Facility.

The organizations represented expressed their support to Pilot River Basins exercises, such as those developed within the framework of the European Water Initiative for instance, within that of GEF and in several and in more and more countries. They recommended to propose additional pilot basins for widening the exercise to adapt it to the African context.

The Delegates also wished to enlarge the direct dissemination of Pilot River Basin results to all other African basin organizations.

As regards transboundary basins, it seems necessary to support the creation of International Commissions or similar organizations and to provide better means to those already existing, and to reinforce cooperation between the neighboring countries of each of these basins.

The role, responsibilities and the means available to the international commissions, authorities or transboundary basin organizations already existing were broadly discussed, as well as their working methods, which are often similar, their decisions obtained by consensus, appropriation, dialogue and understanding among partners, their possible role for preventing and regulating conflicts.

The participants recommended to make use and strengthen the existing international structures or to create new ones where they do not yet exist, because:

- good results have already been obtained by member countries with such an approach,
 - good experience has been gained in collecting, exchanging and using coordinated data for the assessment of resources, pressures and impacts,
 - necessity of joint management of common hydraulic infrastructures, most of them having to be created in Africa,
 - the international benefit of a common assessment of measures adopted in each basin has been proven,
 - the politically, socially, environmentally, technically and economically added-value compared to independently taken measures.

As regards the specific aspects of the prevention and control of floods and droughts, which heavily affect many countries, the delegates confirmed that there is a need to better exchange information and know-how and that it is essential to harmonize the control plans between the

countries of transboundary basins. They support the proposal to initiate exchanges between operational Centers for flood control and prevention.

In particular, they recommended to build reliable and effective systems for quick warning against floods and droughts and to create mechanisms for prevention and action to face the natural disasters caused by water and to protect human lives and properties, disasters which could be aggravated by climate change.

Consistency of the water monitoring and information systems, harmonization of data and Geographic Information Systems and the use of common models are essential for sharing information and following up actions in transboundary basins.

A joint thinking on the methods and means for consulting and mobilizing the populations is urgent. It would also be very useful to jointly formalize strong and easily appropriable arguments likely to justify a real interest and an effective participation of the populations, whose approval is essential for the successful implementation of the projects related to water policy in the basins that are still expecting tangible results.

The participants also drew the attention of the proper Authorities on taking adequate measures to prevent the introduction and the dissemination of invasive aquatic species which cause considerable ecological and economic damage and of which new specimens are continuously discovered.

They wished a better participation of the transboundary basins supported by GEF in the Network activities and they asked the INBO member organizations to get actively involved in the activities initiated during the operational phase of "IW-LEARN" Project with GEF support.

IN PARTICULAR

➔ ANBO proposes to all interested organizations of the water sector, of Southern, Central, North, East or West Africa, to governmental administrations, basin organizations, either existing or being created, bi and multilateral cooperation organizations, to become a member to jointly develop a true common African expertise on the management of the sixty, or about, transboundary river and lake basins of Africa.

The statutes have been adapted especially to strengthen the links with the African Union, ANCOW and the regional economic cooperation institutions. See Annex.

➔ ANBO proposes to the European Union, to the bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies involved and to the countries concerned, to assist in the implementation of action plan. It proposes, in particular, to create and facilitate a internal « Permanent Technical Committee » of the African Basin Organizations, especially the pilot basins of the European Water Initiative and GEF-supported projects, in order to allow the managers of these basins to regularly exchange their experience, to

evaluate their projects, identify the best practices adapted to the African contexts, to define the encountered problems and to make the syntheses necessary for disseminating the lessons learned on the whole African continent.

The delegates thanked the African Network of Basin Organizations (ANBO), the Authorities of South Africa, the DWAF in particular, the African union Commission, the German and French Cooperation, and the International Network of Transboundary Basin Organizations for having initiated this very fruitful meeting and for their perfect organization of this meeting and their warm welcome in Johannesburg.

They thanked the Organization for the Development of the Senegal River (OMVS) and especially Mrs Amayelle Ka NDIAYE for the very useful and efficient way it manages the Technical Permanent Secretariat of ANBO from the beginning. The mandate of OMVS has been renewed for the next coming period of four years and it will design its representative.

The delegates thanks and felicitated NBA, especially Mr. Oumar OULD ALY for his very efficient presidency of ANBO from the 2002 Dakar assembly and his strong efforts to develop the Network in Africa and within INBO at the international level.

The ORASECOM (Orange-Senqu River Commission) organization, which will design its representative, will chair the African Network of Basin Organizations up to its next plenary assembly.

The places of the next meetings of the Bureau and General Assembly will be designed.

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED IN JOHANNESBURG ON 6 OF MARCH 2007

For the General Assembly

The President