



Press Release:

SADC-GMI implements the “Integration of Groundwater Management into Transboundary Basin Organizations in Africa Training”

2018/07/10

Bloemfontein, South Africa – Addressing groundwater management in the river basin organizations is not completely new. It has been discussed at international events such as the Africa Water Week, Stockholm World water Week and other similar platforms over the years. The significance of Transboundary water management in Africa has been emphasized in the African Water Vision 2025. In Africa there are about eighty transboundary lakes and river basins and at least seventy transboundary aquifer basins. The African Water Vision stresses that groundwater is the major, and often only the source of drinking water for more than 75% of the African population especially amongst the poor rural communities. Consequently, broad consensus was reached within AMCOW and the African/International Network of Basin Organizations (ANBO/INBO) that groundwater must be addressed through integrated river basin management.

Transboundary Groundwater management has often been neglected, primarily because it is invisible and highly complex especially to quantify its potential to meet the water resources needs at all levels. Most African river basin organizations lack the technical skills and capacity to assess and manage transboundary groundwater resources. Given the huge importance of the groundwater resource in Africa, and especially in light of the growing impacts of climate change, it is imperative that wise management of groundwater at every scale begins without any further delay. To this end, there are already promising precedents in Africa that can provide helpful examples and experiences that other African river basin organizations can draw on.

The Southern African Development Community Groundwater Management Institute (SADC-GMI) was established as the Centre of Excellence for sustainable groundwater management in the SADC region promoting the equitable use and protection of the resource.

In a quest to address some transboundary groundwater management challenges facing the SADC region, SADC-GMI is currently collaborating with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on delivering training sessions on **“Integration of Groundwater Management in Transboundary Basin Organisations In Africa”**. The collaboration is aligned to both partners’ mandate which is to strengthen the River Basin Organizations institutional capacities. The forthcoming training sessions will introduce water practitioners to the importance of groundwater in transboundary water management in the SADC region. The training is based on the 11 module Training Manual



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that was developed in 2015 through a partnership of up to 11 institutions led by AGW-Net, BGR, IWMI, CapNet, ANBO and IGRAC. The training manual culminated from the needs assessment that was carried out in nine international river basin organizations in Africa, and the assessment revealed the varying needs in the different basin organizations for effective transboundary groundwater management. The findings led to the development of the Manual which is now used as the primary tool for the training. SADC-GMI received grant funding from GIZ to roll out the training manual to the RBOs in the 15 SADC Member States. The training sessions will be conducted in English, French and Portuguese. Already two English sessions have been lined up, Lusaka, Zambia, 27-31 August 2018, and Johannesburg, South Africa, 5-9 November 2018.

Specifics aims of the training include, highlighting the importance of groundwater in the livelihoods of African people, introducing river basin stakeholders to the existence and importance of transboundary aquifers in Africa, showing the complexity associated with quantifying groundwater in transboundary basins, and creating awareness on the threats that groundwater faces.

The training is targeted at water practitioners working in or with river basin organisations in the SADC region from River basin organisations' secretariats, Member State Ministries' staff responsible for transboundary water management, Organisations with an interest in groundwater management, and Organisations that promote integrated water resources management in the region.

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