

Report from the technical session

“Integrated Approaches to Water Resources Management in Africa”

4th Africa Water Week, Cairo, Egypt, 16 May 2012

Organisers: EU Water Initiative-Africa Working Group (EUWI AWG), UNEP-DHI Center for Water and Environment, African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW)

Co-organisers: Africa Union Commission (AUC), Global Water Partnership (GWP)

1. Most Important issues discussed

- a. The progress made on the application of integrated approaches on water resources management in Africa since 1992, as manifested through the survey results presented in the “*2012 Status Report on the Application of Integrated Approaches to Water Resources Management in Africa*”¹ include:
 - i. 75% of the African countries report to be implementing water laws with an integrated approach to water resources management.
 - ii. 44 % of the African countries report to be implementing IWRM plans.
 - iii. 60% of the African countries report to have adopted and be implementing national river basin management plans.
- b. The need for a clear, strong, unified message for the African negotiators to take to the Rio+20 Conference. The Ministerial declaration of AMCOW from the 4th Africa Water Week, which incorporates some of the key findings from the “*2012 Status Report on the Application of Integrated Approaches to Water Resources Management in Africa*”, is supported, but there is a desire for a more consolidated message to take to the Rio 2012 conference.
- c. How integrated approaches to water resource management in Africa can be further developed, with case studies from Burundi, Mozambique and Tanzania.

2. Most Important messages of common agreement

- a. There is a need to develop more regular, objective, evidence-based reporting on integrated approaches to water resources management in order to create a benchmark for measuring progress, and to strengthen the awareness of politicians and other stakeholders. This is especially important in relation to the Rio negotiations around green growth and water for food and energy.
- b. The application of integrated approaches for water resources management is a long term process, while infrastructure development often has a faster pace. Efforts are needed to overcome this timing discrepancy, to ensure institutions being in place to address environmental and equity issues related to hydraulic development.

¹ Link: http://www.amcow-online.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=262&Itemid=141&lang=en

- c. Countries reported on the need to increase individual and institutional capacity, particularly at the transboundary level.
- d. Future IWRM plans for African countries need to better address drought and flood management as well as information sharing on water accounting, and decentralization of management responsibility to river basin and local levels.
- e. Financing for water resources management (as opposed to financing for infrastructure) lags behind other aspects of IWRM, and requires more attention.

3. Main areas of disagreement

- a. Whether a follow up survey should consist of the same questions as the 2012 survey or not, since there may be other interesting areas to explore, for instance the involvement of local governments.

4. Specific Comments

- a. Tools and indicators are needed to demonstrate impact of water on development, to help ascertain political and financial commitments. Putting infrastructure in place and adopting IWRM plans does not mean that issues of equity and environment have been addressed.
- b. Likewise, in the discussion on “green growth” at the Rio 2012 conference, it should be remembered that this concept does not automatically mean environmental sustainability or poverty reduction.
- c. The Water-Energy-Land/Food nexus should not be seen as contradictory to IWRM; in fact, the concepts are well aligned IWRM, as mentioned in the [2012 European Report on Development \(ERD\)](#)², launched on 16 May 2012.
- d. The “2012 Status report” will be useful also for individual countries to see where they are in relation to other countries, and how they should move forward. Dissemination of the report to all African countries is therefore important.
- e. A declaration on water, aimed at the Rio conference, was adopted at the World Water Forum in Marseille, March 2012. This can be complementary to the Ministerial Declaration from the 4th Africa Water Week.
- f. UNEP is currently developing water quality guidelines for ecosystems and tools for payment for ecosystem services, which can help African countries progress even further in the application of integrated approaches to water resources management.

5. Any Additional notes

- Lessons can be learned from agrarian societies, where an integration of water and land issues has taken place for a long time.

²Link: http://www.erd-report.eu/erd/report_2011/report.html

- The experience from Mozambique shows that sensitization and awareness raising of the local community is of crucial importance for putting in place institutional frameworks for IWRM at the local level.
- Focusing on benefit sharing as opposed to water allocation can be a way to reduce the risk for creating conflicts.

Session speakers

- Dr. Abebe Haile Gabriel, Africa Union Commission
- Mr. Bai Mass Taal, AMCOW
- Dr. Paul Taylor, UNEP-DHI Centre for Water and Environment
- Mr. Fred Mwango, AMCOW TAC (Kenya)
- Mr. Roger Calow, Overseas Development Institute
- Dr. Barbara van Koppen, IWMI Southern Africa
- Dr. Peter Bjornsen, UNEP-DHI Centre for Water and Environment
- Mr. Charles Hakizimana, AMCOW TAC (Burundi)
- Ms. Felizmina Antia, AMCOW TAC (Mozambique)
- Dr. Thomas Chiramba, UNEP
- Dr. Khaled Abu-Zeid, CEADRE
- Dr. Rashid Mbaziira, Africa Union Commission