

## **Regional dialogue: GWP-WA and partners mobilize to accelerate IWRM progress towards achieving water related SDGs in West Africa**

On 25 September 2019, the regional dialogue on the theme "***Accelerating progress in IWRM implementation to achieve water-related SDGs in West Africa: challenges, innovative approaches and the roles of partnerships***" took place in Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso. The regional dialogue was organized by Global Water Partnership West Africa (GWP-WA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Sanitation of Burkina Faso, the ECOWAS Water Resources Management Centre and the West African Monetary and Economic Union (UEMOA)'s Commission in charge of Agriculture Water Resources and Environment.

The main objective of the regional dialogue of key stakeholders from countries and the sub-regional level was to contribute to advancing the implementation of the UN Development Agenda 2030 by improving water governance and ensuring water security to support the achievement of the SDG 6 and other water-related SDGs at the national, transboundary and regional levels in West Africa.

The official ceremony, under the patronage of the Minister of Water and Sanitation of Burkina Faso, was marked by several keynotes and speeches, including the welcome address by the CWP Burkina Faso, Mr. Robert NANA, the address by GWP-WA Chair, Prof. Amadou Hama MAIGA, the address by the Representative of the GWPO Global Secretariat, Mrs. Julienne ROUX, the address of the Executive Secretariat of the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum Dakar 2021, delivered by the Technical Advisor, Mr. Amadou NDIAYE, the address of the Commissioner in charge of Agriculture, Water Resources and Environment (DAREN) of UEMOA delivered by the Director of Environment and Water Resources, Mr. Christophe DAGUENON on behalf of the three regional institutions ECOWAS, CILSS and UEMOA; and the opening speech of the Minister of Water and Sanitation of Burkina Faso delivered by his Representative the Permanent Secretary of IWRM, Mr. Moustapha CONGO.

For the Minister's representative, "*The implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is an essential step in guaranteeing water security, which is essential for any sustainable human development*".

To justify the importance of co-organizing this event, GWP-WA chair, Prof. Amadou Hama MAIGA stated that "*many programmes are being undertaken or are at the formulation stage at community and state levels in the sub-region that involve multi-agency, multi-stakeholder, or even multi-country actions for achieving the SDGs and for adaptation and resilience to climate change. Those initiatives can be accelerated and made more efficient through enhancing the coordination of actions as well as synergies with other initiatives*".

Speaking on behalf of the three regional institutions (UEMOA, ECOWAS and CILSS), the Director of Environment and Water Resources of UEMOA, Mr Christophe DEGUENON, agrees in stressing that "*it is by combining our efforts and skills that we will succeed in the efficient implementation of the SDGs for the benefit of our Member States and the well-being of the populations*".

The representative of the Executive Secretariat of the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, Mr. Amadou NDIAYE informed the participants by indicating "*that this 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, the second of its kind to be organized on African soil, after Marrakech in 1997, is not in reality the Forum of Senegal, but rather that of all Africa, if we refer to the mobilization supporting this candidacy which led to its choice to host this Forum*".

The Regional Dialogue provided participants with an opportunity to learn about the current situation of IWRM implementation in the framework of the United Nations Development Agenda 2030 in West African countries and the sub-region.

### **A concerted action open to gender and youth**

To accelerate the pace of IWRM implementation for the achievement of water-related SDGs in the sub-region, participants recommended, inter alia, renewing and maintaining political will at the national and sub-regional levels, establishing and operationalizing sustainable and innovative financing mechanisms for IWRM implementation and water resources development supported by ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions and the States, strengthening technical and institutional capacities in countries and at the level of transboundary basin organizations and taking into account dimensions of gender, youth and sensitivity to the conflicts in IWRM processes and initiatives related to water security, climate resilience and adaptation to climate change.

Participants recommended ECOWAS, among other things, to ensure its leadership role in coordinating and facilitating water resources management and development initiatives in accordance with its mandate as the executive body (through the Water Resources Management Centre) of the Permanent Framework for Coordination and Monitoring and IWRM in West Africa. Water Resources Management Center of ECOWAS was invited as well to finalise and implement its Strategic Plan 2020-2030.

To WAEMU, it is recommended, among other things, to mobilize the necessary funding for the implementation of the IWRM Action Plan by involving national and subregional partners.

Participants recommended WAEMU, together with ECOWAS, to support initiatives bringing together national and subregional actors to share experiences by institutionalizing the organization every two (02) years of a regional dialogue on themes related to sustainable water resources management and development in West Africa.

The participants recommended that ECOWAS and WAEMU, together with the other sub-regional water structures, set up a memorandum of understanding with the Executive Secretariat the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in guiding the definition of the contribution and facilitation of the participation of national and regional stakeholders from West Africa in Dakar 2021. So, the participants recommend to the Executive Secretariat of the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Dakar 2021, to work to set up a communication approach / mechanism that will allow an active, coherent contribution of all West African actors working in the water sectors to the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in Dakar in 2021.

Participants recommended to States, inter alia, to continue efforts to develop, update and implement IWRM Action Plans and other planning instruments, to strengthen collaboration with CWP in the context of IWRM implementation/acceleration initiatives and efforts to achieve water-related SDGs.

The regional dialogue brought together about sixty (60) participants representing governments, regional organizations and partners, including the Ministries in charge of water resources management of ECOWAS countries; the Regional Economic Communities (UEMOA ECOWAS and CILSS); Transboundary Basin Organizations (NBA, VBA); Regional Organizations and development partners (FAO, UICN, Embassies, NGOs); Executive Secretariat of the 9<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, Dakar2021; GWPO, GWP-WA, Country Water Partnerships of Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Nigeria.



