

# Integrated Transboundary River Basin Management for the Sustainable Development of the Limpopo River Basin

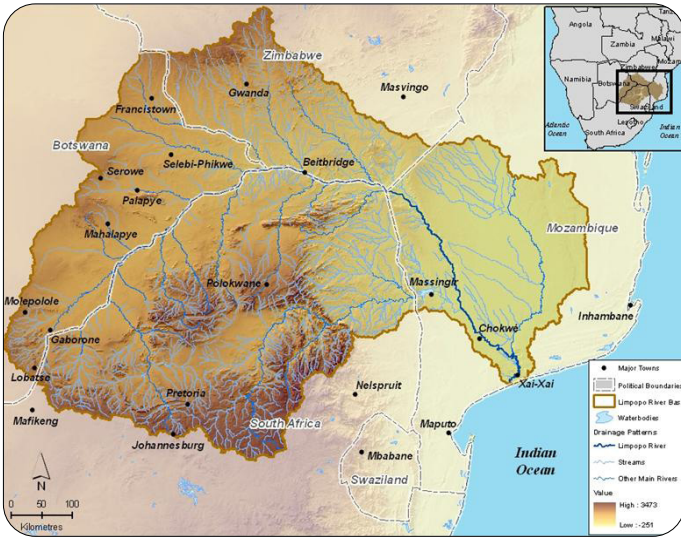


<b>Project Name</b>	Integrated Transboundary River Basin Management for the Sustainable Development of the Limpopo River Basin
<b>Financing</b>	Global Environment Facility (GEF)
<b>Duration</b>	2023-2027
<b>Implementing Agency</b>	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Africa
<b>Project Value</b>	USD 6 million
<b>Executing Agency</b>	Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA)
<b>Focal Custodian</b>	Limpopo Watercourse Commission (LIMCOM)
<b>Geographical Location</b>	Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe

The “Integrated Transboundary River Basin Management for the Sustainable Development of the Limpopo River Basin” project is being implemented by the Limpopo Watercourse Commission (LIMCOM), supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Africa as the Implementing Agency, and the Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA) as the Executing Agency.

## Background

The Limpopo River Basin (LRB) is home to an estimated 18 million people in the four Riparian States that share the basin namely Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Projections are that the population will reach over 20 million by 2040, putting more pressure on the transboundary water resources that support various socio-economic activities in the four countries. Map 1 shows the LRB.



Map 1: Showing the Limpopo River Basin

The Basin, which has an estimated catchment area of about 408,000 km<sup>2</sup> is under severe water stress, with the high level of hydro-climatic variability in the basin resulting in both frequent floods and droughts, and the limited availability of water impacting the economic and social welfare of the basin's population, particularly that of poor and vulnerable groups.

Key threats to the socio-economic and environmental services of the LRB include increasing water scarcity and hydrological variability, exacerbated by climate change, water quality degradation, land degradation, and increasing pressures on groundwater resources.

## Project Objectives

To achieve its goal of uplifting the living standards of the basin's population and conserving the basin's resources and ecosystem services, the project will undertake a suite of activities designed to strengthen joint management and planning capacity and practices at the transboundary basin level. The project intervention logic is structured around five main components.

### Component 1

Capacity Building of LIMCOM and its Member States for joint planning and the basin-wide Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and IWRM implementation.

### Component 2

Filling critical knowledge gaps to support joint planning and future development scenario analysis.

### Component 3

Informed Strategic Planning and Decision Making to implement the basin-wide IWRM (Science-to-Governance).

### Component 4

Participatory IWRM Sustainable Land Management (SLM) implementation pilots.

### Component 5

Knowledge exchange with other River Basin Organizations and information sharing for replication and upscaling.

Improved water resources management, including the equitable allocation of water between upstream and downstream areas and among urban and rural users, is essential to counter the challenge in the basin and for the future development of the LRB.

This is particularly important as there are several barriers already affecting basin-wide cooperation including limited institutional, technical, and financial capacity for joint planning and management at the transboundary basin level.

The **“Integrated Transboundary River Basin Management for the Sustainable Development of the Limpopo River Basin,”** project seeks to achieve integrated, cross-sectoral, ecosystem-based management of the Limpopo River to uplift the living standards of the basin's population and conserve the basin's resources and ecosystem services.

The project contributes to Objective 3 of the GEF International Waters (IW) Focal Area Strategy, which is to **“enhance water security in shared freshwater ecosystem.”**

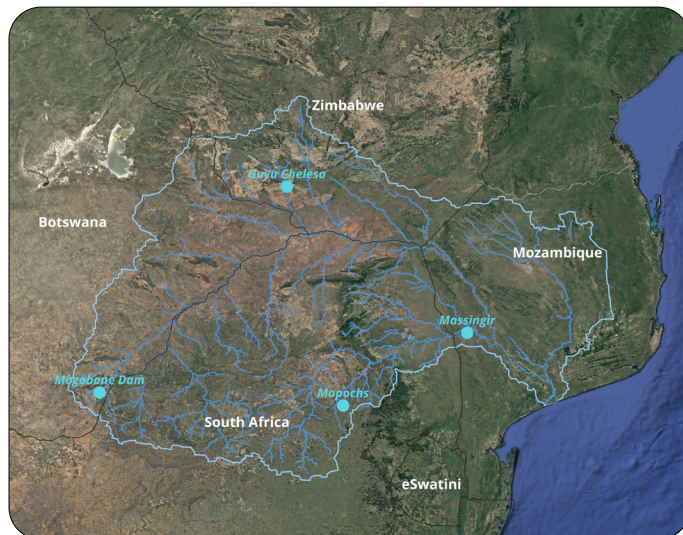
GEF investments under this objective seek to, inter alia, improve policy formulation processes, IWRM implementation and conjunctive management of surface and groundwater resources, as well as apply nature-based and innovative solutions to improve water quality and freshwater ecosystem health and implement a source-to-sea approach.

## Expected Benefits Of The Project

The project will strengthen LIMCOM's institutional, technical and coordination capacity so that it can function effectively as a hub for harnessing, coordinating and channelling political and economic interests from both public and private sectors in the basin. Through the development of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and Strategic Action Plan (SAP), Member States will agree on a set of transboundary priorities for the basin, which will guide both transboundary and national investments in the future.

The project is also supporting LIMCOM in working with its Member States to undertake a transboundary joint basin survey to aquatic assess ecosystem health, assess status of groundwater dependent ecosystems and alluvial aquifer management. In addition a transboundary sediment monitoring frameworks is also to be developed. Importantly the project will provide for agreed transboundary ecological flow requirements that will be factored into basin planning. Future water resources development scenarios will also be developed and will provide the basis for planning and investment following the Limpopo TDA-SAP.

the Middle Olifants sub-catchment in South Africa; and the **Guyu-Chelesa irrigation scheme** in the Shashe sub-catchment in Zimbabwe. The main aim of implementing SLM activities at a pilot scale is to reduce land degradation and sedimentation and improve land productivity at the pilot sites whilst promoting replication and up-scaling through socio-economic beneficiation opportunities inclusive of payment for ecosystem services models.



Map 2: SLM Demonstration Sites

## Key Project Activities

Several activities have been linked up as part of project implementation these are:

### Sustainable Land Management

Land degradation is one of the environmental problems affecting the LRB system, resulting in the reduction of ecosystem productivity, widespread poverty, and poor health status of the basin population. The project has thus identified four pilot sites -- one each in the four Riparian States for the implementation of the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) demonstration pilots. Map 2 shows the four identified SLM sites.

These are the **Mogobane Dam** in the Notwane sub-catchment in Botswana; **Massingir Dam** in the Lower Elefantas sub-catchment in Mozambique; **Mapochs** in

### Stakeholder Engagement

The success of the project calls for continued cooperation among all the stakeholders. The project will establish National Stakeholder Coordination Committees (NASCs) and a Basin-wide Stakeholder Committee (BASC) to serve as major vehicles linking to existing stakeholder structures for information dissemination in the LRB.

### Gender Mainstreaming

Guided by the LIMCOM Gender Action Plan, the project will undertake deliberate actions to prioritize the inclusion of both women and men as well as the youth and people with disabilities in the management of transboundary resources of the basin.



An aerial view of gully erosion near the Mogobane Dam in Botswana

## Progress To Date

- In-country project launches made in all the Riparian States.
- Communities living in the Basin embrace the project and pledge their support.
- Field visits to all SLM pilot sites undertaken.
- Basin-wide aquatic health surveys are underway, with a focus on water quality, ecological flow harmonisation, and alluvial aquifer-dependent ecosystems.
- Exchange programme with other RBOs initiated.
- The process to draft a LIMCOM Data and Information Sharing Protocol and Environmental Monitoring Framework has commenced.
- Stakeholder participation and consultations in decision-making is integrating gender equity and social inclusion.
- Conceptual design of a revised institutional structure for LIMCOM.
- Efforts to strengthen the Limpopo Early Warning and Flood Forecasting System are underway.

### Contact the following for more information about the project



**Limpopo Watercourse Commission**  
Secretariat (LIMSEC)  
DNGRH Building,  
Rua da Imprensa 162, 1st Floor,  
P.O Box 1611, Maputo,  
Mozambique



**Global Water Partnership**  
Southern Africa and Africa  
Coordination (GWPSA – Africa)  
333 Grosvenor Street  
Hatfield Gardens, Block A  
Pretoria, South Africa



**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in South Africa**  
UN House Level 9  
Metropark Building  
351 Francis Baard Street  
PO Box 6541, Pretoria, South Africa



[www.limpopocommission.org](http://www.limpopocommission.org)



[www.gwp.org/en/GWP-SouthernAfrica/](http://www.gwp.org/en/GWP-SouthernAfrica/)



[www.za.undp.org](http://www.za.undp.org)



+258 87 531 1302



+27 12 430 2121/2/6/7



+27 12 354 8329



[limcom@limcom.org](mailto:limcom@limcom.org)



[gwpafrika@gwpsaf.org](mailto:gwpafrika@gwpsaf.org)



[communications.za@undp.org](mailto:communications.za@undp.org)



@LIMCOM\_SEC



@GWPSAF



@UNDPSouthAfrica

In Partnership With

Supported by



"Integrated Transboundary River Basin Management for the Sustainable Development of the Limpopo River Basin."

