

Launching of the Buzi, Pungwe, and Save Water Courses Commission (BUPUSACOM)

Remarks by Alex Simalabwi, Executive Secretary, GWPSA

19 July 2023

Beira Terrace Hotel, Beira, Mozambique, and online

The Deputy Minister of Public Works, Housing, and Water Resources of Mozambique, Honourable Cecilia Francisco Chamutota.

The Deputy Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, and Rural Resettlement of Zimbabwe, Honourable Davis Mharapira

The Provincial State Secretary of Sofala Province, Honourable Stela Zeca

The National Directors of Water for Mozambique and Zimbabwe, Engineers Macie and Mawere

SADC Secretariat represented by Dr. Patrice Kabeya

The Executive Secretaries for ZAMCOM, ORASECOM, SADC GMI

Representatives for USAID, UNESCO, IUCN; and other delegates

Distinguished Delegates and Participants.

All Protocols observed.

The Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA) is honoured to be associated with this event, a momentous occasion to celebrate the birth of Africa's newest transboundary Commission.

Allow me to add my voice to the many voices here applauding Mozambique and Zimbabwe on the official launch of the Buzi, Pungwe, and Save Watercourse Commission; BUPUSACOM.

In my capacity as the Executive Secretary of GWPSA and on my own behalf, I can attest to the commitment and collaboration that brought us to this juncture, the commitment by Member States, International Cooperating Partners, SADC, and others.

This is a milestone event towards the efforts for water security for all and not leaving anyone behind.

This is another key milestone for the region in terms of increasing transboundary cooperation and operationalising the Revised SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses, and indeed creating an enabling environment for accelerated water investments in the region.

Allow me, in my remarks, to briefly reflect on the road that we have travelled to this juncture, but more so on the important work that lies ahead.

Distinguished delegates allow me to take you through the roadmap to the establishment of BUPUSACOM

The event that has brought us here began 20 years ago.

In 2002, the Governments of Mozambique and Zimbabwe established the Joint Water Commission (JWC). Apart from being the cooperative instrument between the riparian states and the technical advisory to the parties on all matters relating to the development and utilisation of transboundary water resources, it also provided the much-needed framework for engagement with International Cooperating and development partners on regional and transboundary water issues.

From 2002 to date, several cooperating partners including SIDA, AfDB, CRIDF/DFID, GIZ, and lately IUCN and GWPSA have actively supported the implementation of a roadmap that has led us to this juncture. Some of the good outputs and outcomes that emerged from this support have already been alluded to by previous speakers.

GWPSA provided the development of the Monographs and Joint IWRM Strategies, the technical studies aimed at increasing the understanding of water use requirements and prioritisation of infrastructure, and the establishment of a stakeholder forum.

While we all deserve to pause a moment and celebrate these milestones at different parts of the journey, emerging threats such as climate change manifesting through the increasing frequency of cyclones, Eline, Japhet, Idai, and Freddy, mean that the needs keep growing more urgent.

GWPSA's response is the current GEF-funded BUPUSA Project focused on:

- **strengthening water-related risk management through the reinforcement of monitoring**
- **enhancing ecosystem services through quantitative water management, including operationalisation of environmental flows**
- **the development of a regional Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and the Strategic Action Plan.**

The project has facilitated the final deliberations that led to the signing of the agreements that birthed BUPUSACOM.

We applaud the Member States on this significant milestone and are proud to be associated thereto.

What next after the BUPUSACOM Launch: GWPSA's Commitment to support BUPUSACOM

In response to the request by the two governments, GWPSA commits to do 2 things:

1. Support the implementation of the BUPUSA roadmap
2. Support resource mobilisation and development of the BUPUSA Water Investment Programme. This will include and align with the GEF Funded Strategic Action Plan (SAP).

The BUPUSA Water Investment Programme will be developed within the framework of the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP), which aims to close the water investment gap in Africa by mobilising USD 30 billion annually by 2030.

We take this call upon development partners, public and private sector, RBOs, and other partners to join this effort and support the BUPUSACOM.

GWPSA is committed to the further implementation of the BUPUSA Roadmap.

Thank you.