

# West Africa:

## Water, Climate and Development Programme for Africa

### Water security for development



West African economies depend heavily on agriculture. At the same time, the region has one of the fastest growing populations in the world, and soaring populations put considerable pressure on already constrained water resources. West Africa covers a large portion of the Sahel region, where water scarcity is chronic and periodic severe droughts often devastate those who depend on livestock grazing and agriculture for their livelihoods.

Conflicts between water users are frequent because of this scarcity. Poor sanitation is exacerbated by uncontrolled urban development, as waste water is dumped into rivers, lakes and oceans without any treatment. West Africa has advanced on the path of regional integration in the management of water resources since the Ministerial Conference on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in March 1998.

The Volta basin is predicted to suffer major climate change impacts, such as rising temperatures, decreasing rainfall and availability of other water resources, deteriorating water quality, and the potential spread of water-related diseases. While water resources are already stressed by non-climatic factors such as rapid population growth and development, pollution and deforestation, the impacts of climate change will further aggravate the situation.

#### The Water, Climate and Development Programme

In November 2010 the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) adopted a decision recommending that the Global Water Partnership (GWP) and partners operationalise the Water, Climate and Development Programme (WACDEP).

WACDEP aims to integrate water security and climate resilience into development planning processes, build climate resilience, and help countries adapt to a new climate regime through increased investments in water security. The 5-year programme, which is implemented in eight countries, four transboundary river basins and one shared aquifer, runs from May 2011 to April 2016.

**The goal of WACDEP in West Africa** is to improve economic growth and human security by promoting water as a key part of sustainable regional and national development. WACDEP is implemented in Burkina Faso and Ghana, and in the Volta

transboundary river basin, in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Volta Basin Authority (VBA) and the Regional Technical Advisory Committee of the African Ministers' Council on Water for West Africa.

With respect to major climate change impacts in West Africa, the programme is being implemented in tandem with several water- and climate-related initiatives in the region, as well as with initiatives on groundwater management.

At the regional level, the programme supports the implementation of the Regional Policy on Water Resources of ECOWAS and mainly contributes to the Integrated Water Resources Management in West Africa projects. At the transboundary level, the programme mainly contributes to setting up an AMCOW Action Plan for sustainable development of the Volta basin and promotes the development of a master plan for the Volta basin.

### Expected outcomes

- Water security and climate resilience integrated into development planning and decision-making processes in ECOWAS, the VBA, Burkina Faso and Ghana.
- Enhanced capacities of partnerships, institutions and stakeholders in the target areas to integrate water security and climate resilience in development planning and decision-making processes.
- No/low regret investment and financing strategies for water security, climate resilience and development formulated and implemented. In addition, fundable projects for water security, climate resilience and development defined and shared with development banks.

### Activities undertaken and progress

- Assessment of the current situation on water management and climate change in the Volta basin.
- Interventions and activities planned for the regional and transboundary work with ECOWAS and the VBA.
- Baseline study on water security and climate resilience developed in Burkina Faso and Ghana.
- Draft documents written that identify fundraising projects.
- Knowledge shared at the regional level through exchange meetings with key partners through the development and dissemination of printing materials.



- Knowledge-sharing activities implemented in Burkina Faso and Ghana.
- Management and coordination structures of the programme established at the regional level and support to the countries initiated.

### Financing management

Initial funding is provided through GWP's financing partners. AMCOW and GWP are committed to building the funding base by engaging additional partners. The Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (Danida) are the main financial partners of the programme.

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