



# ZAMBEZI



## TODAY



Vol 1. No 2

July- Dec 2022

## Zambezi Watercourse to benefit from global climate change fund

by June Nazare

**THE ZAMBEZI** Watercourse is set to benefit from a US\$350 million global fund disbursed through the Climate Investment Fund to finance nature-based solutions to climate change threats.

The 27th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Sharm el-Sheik, Egypt in November 2022 named the Zambezi Watercourse as one of the five regions to be funded by the Climate Investment Funds (CIF)'s Nature, People and Climate (NPC) investment platform.

The other four countries and regions to benefit from the CIF NPC fund are Egypt, the Dominican Republic, Fiji and Kenya.

Launched in June 2022, the CIF NPC aims to pilot and scale-up transformative nature-based climate solutions in developing countries.

A total of five out of the eight riparian states that share the Zambezi Basin will directly benefit from the fund – Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and Tanzania.

The fund will also provide some regional support to the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM), ensuring that the other three remaining riparian states also benefit from the support – Angola, Botswana and Zimbabwe.

ZAMCOM is an intergovernmental organization set up through the ZAMCOM Agreement of 2004 to manage shared water resources among the eight riparian states that share the Zambezi Watercourse.

The CIF NPC funds for the Zambezi Watercourse region will be directed at restoring 30,000 hectares of degraded wetlands, thus adding impetus to a multi-pronged, transboundary effort in managing the watercourse ecosystem.

ZAMCOM Executive Secretary, Felix Ngamlagosi said the support given to the region is a welcome development that will go a long way in addressing the impact and threats of climate change.

He cited the integrated and multi-sectoral investment initiative, Programme for Integrated Development and Adaptation to Climate Change (PIDACC) Zambezi as having “a significant and sizeable financial and technical resource requirement for the implementation of the planned climate change activities in the Zambezi Watercourse.

PIDACC-Zambezi is a huge investment programme covering eight riparian states, 13 sub-basins and touching lives of over 40 million watercourse inhabitants,” he said.

Ngamlagosi said the CIF funds will play a crucial role in reducing the financing gap and enable scaled development of climate change adaptation projects that bring development benefits, at the national level in participating countries, and at a regional scale across the Zambezi Watercourse.

He said the project in the five countries will be used to promote transformational change and great environmental sustainability in land management by establishing a shared vision based on a “nested” approach.

This approach considers not only each country's own national-level goals and commitments but reaches both ‘downward’ to key sub-national geographies and ‘upward’ across borders, with an emphasis on key trans-boundary watersheds and sub-basins, trans-boundary conservation areas as well as an upstream-downstream, systems-based approach that considers the needs of those that conserve and use/benefit from ecosystem services and how land use change may impact these.

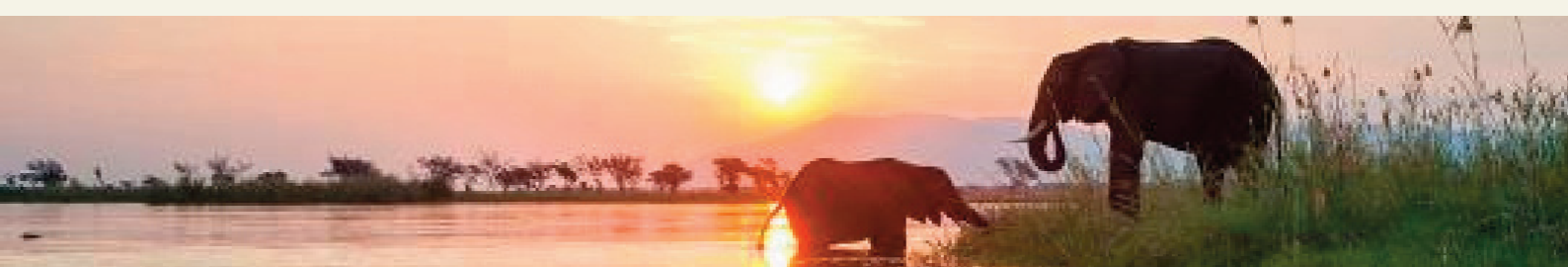
The five-country regional approach requires landscape-scale work in both sub-national and trans-boundary/regional geographies.

There is immense potential for transformational change that is highly relevant, delivering co-benefits for climate, communities, and biodiversity; systemic, using the multi-country partnership to address barriers to achieving climate-resilient development; and implemented at scale within and between countries and leveraging resources to focus on a landscape scale.

As part of the implementation of the ZAMCOM Agreement, the Riparian States, through ZAMCOM, have developed a 22-year Zambezi Watercourse Strategic Plan (ZSP) which runs up to the year 2040.

To roll out its implementation, ZAMCOM in collaboration with its strategic partners, namely the African Development Bank (AfDB), Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility of the United Kingdom Government (CRIDF) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), is mobilizing resources to finance the implementation of PIDACC Zambezi.

“In pursuing the ZAMCOM Council of Ministers (CoM)'s directive to the ZAMCOM Secretariat to mobilize resources for the implementation of the ZSP (2018-2040) and PIDACC Zambezi, the Secretariat is taking every opportunity that arises to seek financial resources from various funding organizations with the objective of meeting the expectations enshrined in the CoM's directive and in the ZAMCOM Agreement of 2004,” Ngamlagosi said. □





ZAMBEZI Today is published for the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) by the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) through its environment institute, the I Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (IMERCSA) and national partners in all the Zambezi Watercourse Riparian States.

**ZAMCOM**  
**Executive Secretary**  
Mr. Felix M. Ngamlagosi

**Programme Manager**  
**Information, Communication**  
**and Partnerships**  
Ms. Leonissah Abwino-Munjoma

**Partners**  
National Stakeholders Coordination  
Committees (NASCs)

**SARDC / ZAMCOM**  
**Editorial Team**  
Neto Nengomasha, Kizito Sikuka,  
Clarkson Mambo, June Nazare,  
Evans Kaseke, Hastings Chibuye

**Design**  
Tonely Ngwenya SARDC

**Photos and Illustrations**  
P1 natgeo, wikimedia, SARDC, GEF,  
ZAMCOM, commons.wikimedia.org;  
P2 ANDRES; P4 tanzaniainvest.com;  
P5 zambezicommission.org;  
P7 Admire Ndlovu, zncb;  
P8 St Francis Connect

Articles may be reproduced with  
credit to ZAMCOM and author

Contributions are welcome from individuals  
and organisations in and outside the  
Zambezi Watercourse in the form of articles,  
news items, and comments. Items will be  
reviewed for selection and may be edited for  
available space.

Correspondence should be addressed to:  
**ZAMBEZI Today**  
Zambezi Watercourse Commission  
128 Samora Machel Avenue  
P O Box CY118  
Harare, Zimbabwe  
Website [www.zambezicommission.org](http://www.zambezicommission.org)  
Tel +263-242-253361/2/3  
Email: [zamcom@zambezicommission.org](mailto:zamcom@zambezicommission.org)

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S DESK

# ZAMCOM embarks on Resource Mobilisation for ZSP Implementation

In 2019, ZAMCOM's top governing body, the Council of Ministers approved the Strategic Plan for the Zambezi Watercourse.

This is a framework that is expected to ensure that development in the Zambezi watercourse is undertaken in a planned and mutually agreed fashion.

The Strategic Plan for the Zambezi Watercourse (ZSP) equitably reflects the needs and aspirations of all the Riparian States and to which all parties consent.

The ZSP is an evidence-based, scientifically and technically sound Plan based on extensive hydro-economic modelling and draws on an existing body of previous studies, which has been widely consulted upon with stakeholders throughout the Watercourse.

Following its approval, the ZAMCOM Secretariat was directed to embark on the implementation of the ZSP.

Since then, the Secretariat has taken up the task and initiated ZSP implementation. One initiative being undertaken as part of ZSP implementation is the development of the Programme for Integrated Development and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Zambezi Watercourse (PIDACC Zambezi).

PIDACC Zambezi is an investment programme which is built to implement the Strategic Plan for the Zambezi Watercourse.

The main objective of the PIDACC-Zambezi is to, "Build strong communities that are resilient to climatic and economic shocks in the Zambezi Watercourse, through promoting inclusive, transformative investments, job-creation and ecosystem-based solutions".

The programme was developed through a robust multi-sectoral stakeholder driven process with extensive consultations anchored at the local, national, and regional levels where each Riparian State identified their priority climate smart investment areas based on the country needs.

In its ordinary meeting in April 2022, the ZAMCOM Council of Ministers approved and endorsed PIDACC Zambezi as a priority programme for implementation of the ZSP.

The endorsement was followed by a directive to the ZAMCOM Secretariat to engage various development partners and mobilise the financial and technical resources required for the implementation of the PIDACC Zambezi and the Strategic Plan in general.

During the past six months, from July to December 2022, ZAMCOM in collaboration with its strategic partners enhanced its engagement with potential development partners through different approaches.

The Key Strategic Partner Organisations supporting this initiative are the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility (CRIDF), which provided both technical and financial support during preparation of PIDACC Zambezi dating back from 2020.

The African Development Bank collaborated with ZAMCOM both as a financing institution and a lead financier to support ZAMCOM in mobilising financial resources from other development partners.

A number of engagements with the AfDB continued including conducting an Appraisal Mission and Negotiations between AfDB and ZAMCOM for financing PIDACC Zambezi.

Parallel to that, ZAMCOM continued engaging riparian States including conducting high level engagement meetings to raise awareness on PIDACC Zambezi as a multi-sectoral integrated programme as well as the financing modalities.

The AfDB is expected to provide financial support in the form of loans which will leverage with grants to the Riparian States for national projects and grants to the ZAMCOM Secretariat for regional activities.

To further strengthen the implementation of the nexus approach, ZAMCOM in collaboration with partners, is exploring other innovative financing mechanisms for the water, energy and food (WEF) Nexus and is considering blending private sector funds and climate funding, noting the limited availability of overseas development assistance due to current crises the world is facing.

Through this collaboration, ZAMCOM has already received interest from several development partners with grants on climate adaptation.

The initiation interest so far has been secured from the Green Climate Fund (GCF); Global Environment Facility (GEF); Climate Investment Fund (CIF); and the African Water Facility. Engagements with these institutions will be enhanced to firm up their financial commitments for the implementation of PIDACC Zambezi.

Resource mobilisation is critical for the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Zambezi Watercourse in general and PIDACC Zambezi in particular.

ZAMCOM will continue to explore funding mechanisms in the quest to mobilise financial support to ensure its objectives are achieved. □



ZAMCOM Executive Secretary  
Mr. Felix M. Ngamlagosi



# Promoting shared management of surface and groundwater resources

by Thokozani Dlamini and Neto Nengomasha

**THE ZAMBEZI** Watercourse Commission is making significant progress to attain equitable and reasonable utilization of water resources through promoting conjunctive or shared management of surface and groundwater resources in the Zambezi Watercourse.

For example, the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) Secretariat, in collaboration with the Southern African Development Community - Groundwater Management Institute (SADC-GMI) successfully implemented the Conjunctive Transboundary Water Resources Management in the Shire Basin (Con-Wat) project.

The project was implemented together with the Governments of Malawi and Mozambique, which share the Shire Basin.

The overall objective of the Con-Wat project was to identify and develop joint strategic conjunctive management activities of the shared surface and groundwater resources of the Shire River basin and aquifer system and contribute to the sustainable water management within the basin in order to help the region cope with the impact of climate change.

Considering severe climate change and increasing water demand, conjunctive management of surface and groundwater can never be overemphasized.

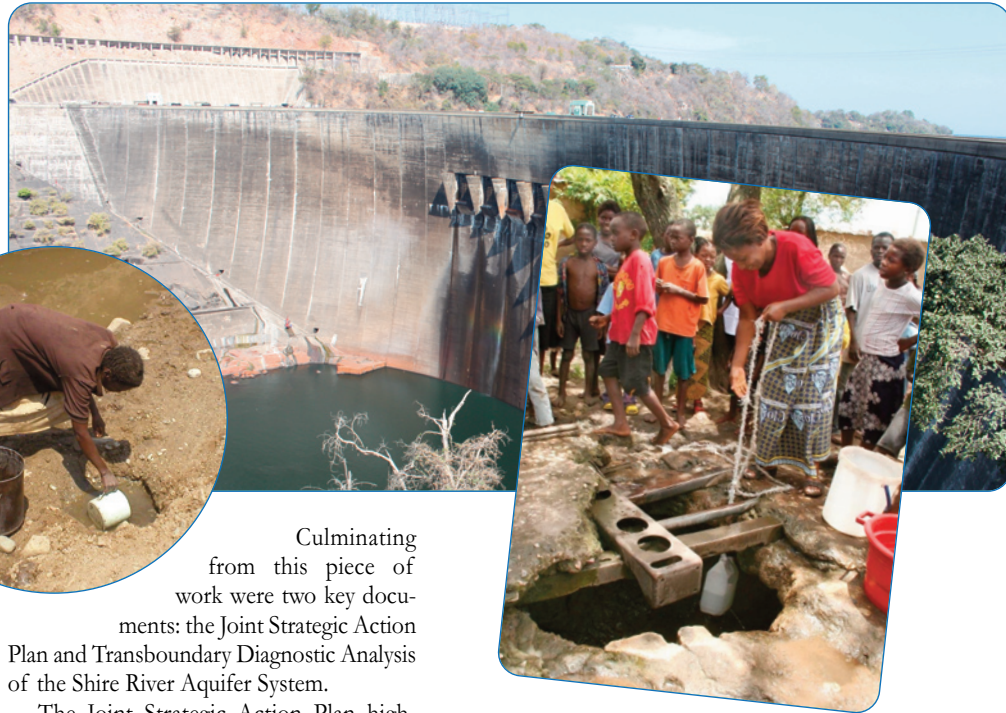
It is critical that groundwater and surface water resources in the region are fully understood in terms of how they can be utilized to improve water security, reduce poverty, and improve people's livelihoods.

The Shire Con-Wat project also aimed to contribute to the academic body of knowledge in the field of groundwater in the SADC region through conducting research on groundwater challenges and disseminating the outcomes thereof.

The Shire Basin was identified as an important pilot case to develop comprehensive assessment tools and joint stakeholder processes, which would inform conjunctive transboundary water management in the Zambezi Watercourse and more broadly in the region.

This work was inspired by the lessons learned from the Ramotswa Transboundary Aquifer (TBA) shared between Botswana and South Africa and the Stampriet TBA shared by Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa.

The project was implemented by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) on behalf of the SADC-GMI.



Culminating from this piece of work were two key documents: the Joint Strategic Action Plan and Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis of the Shire River Aquifer System.

The Joint Strategic Action Plan highlighted key activities both countries needed to undertake for the sustainable management of the shared Aquifer System.

The project required IWMI to conduct the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) of the Shire Transboundary Aquifer System in consultation with the Zambezi Riparian States of Malawi and Mozambique and the TDA was validated by the Riparian States at a joint workshop.

The Shire Con-Wat project was part of Phase 1 of the Sustainable Groundwater Management in SADC Member States Project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Trust Fund Cooperation in International Waters in Africa (CIWA) through the World Bank, and implemented by the SADC-GMI.

As water availability is critical for sustainable socio-economic growth and poverty reduction in the region, ZAMCOM leveraged on SADC-GMI's mandate and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for collaboration in "Promoting Sustainable Groundwater Management and Providing Solutions for Groundwater Challenges in the Zambezi Watercourse."

Through the MoU, the two SADC subsidiary institutions seek to promote the sustainable management of groundwater in the Zambezi Watercourse by utilizing the Zambezi Watercourse Technical Committee (ZAMTEC) Sub-Committee on Hydrology – Groundwater Subgroup.

At a joint planning meeting held in March 2021, the parties agreed to establish the sub-Committee as part of the MoU.

The Groundwater Subgroup will spearhead groundwater capacity-building initiatives in the ZAMCOM Riparian States and lead collaboration with key partners in the development of groundwater monitoring networks.

In addition, the committee will spearhead the establishment of groundwater information systems, generation, and dissemination of knowledge on groundwater activities and also advocate for groundwater-related infrastructure projects in the Zambezi Watercourse Riparian States with a focus on transboundary groundwater development.

The Zambezi Riparian States are also part of the Sustainable Groundwater Management in SADC Project Phase 2 earmarked for 2021-2025 and being implemented by the SADC Secretariat together with SADC-GMI.

One of the milestones already achieved under Phase 1 of this project is the improvement of data and information sharing through the establishment of the online SADC Groundwater Information Portal and the SADC Groundwater Literature Archive.

The 9th SADC River Basin Organizations/Shared Watercourse Institutions workshop held in August 2021, highlighted groundwater as a low-hanging fruit that should be capitalized on as it is less polluted and does not need extensive equipment for treatment.

As such, the meeting underscored for the need to strengthen the transboundary surface and groundwater investments for resilient water services and livelihoods. □

## Unlocking financial support for PIDACC Zambezi

by Clarkson Mambo

**UNLOCKING OF** multi-million-dollar funding will go a long way in supporting the smooth implementation of national and regional projects meant to promote climate resilience in the Zambezi Watercourse.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) and other Strategic Partner Organisations (SPOs) have already committed to availing the funding and technical support towards the implementation of the Programme for Integrated Development Adaptation to Climate Change in the Zambezi Watercourse (PIDACC Zambezi).

PIDACC Zambezi is an investment programme whose key objective is to build strong communities resilient to climatic and economic shocks, through promoting inclusive, transformative investments, job creation and ecosystem-based solutions.

Developed by the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM), the programme is aligned with the four pillars of the Strategic Plan for the Zambezi Watercourse (ZSP) to promote the realization of the desired social and economic benefits to Zambezi Watercourse communities.

PIDACC Zambezi's specific objectives include increasing feasible, climate-resilient infrastructure that would support livelihoods, strengthening and building the capacity of the communities with the view to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation and effectively managing water resources in a sustainable manner.

The programme also seeks to develop and improve livelihoods by strengthening agribusiness through investments in water, energy and food security sectors and enhancing institutional development and adaptive capacity to reduce vulnerabilities.

Implementation of the projects is expected to address perennial issues such as low resilience to droughts and floods, conflicts that exacerbate the vulnerability of local populations, food insecurity and growing land degradation in the basin.

To unlock the funding from the AfDB, all the eight Zambezi Riparian States - Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe - are supposed to submit letters of endorsement for PIDACC Zambezi to the AfDB.

Currently, six Riparian States have submitted the letters, with the remaining two still going through their internal endorsement process.



ZAMCOM's new Executive Secretary, Felix Ngamlagosi has said one of his top priorities is fundraising for and implementing the PIDACC Zambezi.

"My role is to ensure that the forged partnership around PIDACC Zambezi, between the African Development Bank, ZAMCOM's Strategic Partner Organisations-Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility (CRIDF), Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)-and other strategic partners is strengthened and that PIDACC Zambezi is implemented," he said.

The Riparian States have earmarked various projects under this initiative which include small-to-medium scale infrastructure development and increasing the availability of water for farmers by increasing the usage of climate-smart techniques for agriculture and agro-forestry, as well as building local capacity in sustainable land and water management.

The investments will therefore assist local communities to be more resilient and build their adaptive capacity to respond to various threats such as climate change and pandemics. □

### ZAMCOM hosts AfDB Preparation and Appraisal Missions

**ZAMCOM ON** 28 March to 8 April 2022 hosted the AfDB PIDACC Zambezi Preparation Mission with its partners who funded the PIDACC Zambezi pre-feasibility study.

The partners are the Global Mechanism for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Fund (CRIDF).

AfDB describes its preparation mission as a multi-disciplinary team, usually led by an expert responsible for reviewing a project to see if it is in line with the bank's guidelines using existing documentation such as feasibility studies, and cross-checking information with authorities.

The mission concretised prioritised projects and programmes for climate-smart investment at national and regional levels that AfDB plans to fund using a combination of loans and grants.

Before the funds are released, the projects go through AfDB's Appraisal Mission. The Appraisal Mission for PIDACC Zambezi took place from 5 to 16 September 2022 at both national and regional levels.

At the national level, the Mission took place in countries expected to participate in the first phase of PIDACC Zambezi. According to the Bank, the Appraisal Mission - in consultation with the government and other stakeholders - examines the project's technical, financial, economic, technical, institutional, environmental, marketing, and management aspects as well as potential social impact.

Detailed project risks and sensitivity analyses are carried out to assess the viability of the project. Loan terms, with conditions for loan effectiveness, are also discussed at this stage.

When this has been done, an appraisal report is prepared, with a memorandum of loan proposal from the Bank's president directed to the Board, following which a draft loan agreement for negotiation is drawn up.

Agreement on this with the Zambezi Riparian States will then allow for the release of funds, paving the way for the implementation of PIDACC Zambezi projects, most likely in 2023. □

## ZAMCOM Go-NEXUS partnership holds first Zambezi watercourse stakeholder dialogue

by June Nazare

**THE ZAMBEZI** Watercourse Commission in collaboration with the Go-Nexus Project held their first workshop for stakeholders in the Zambezi Watercourse to analyze critical issues in the development and management of the shared water resources.

Delegates drawn from the eight Riparian States attended the dialogue held from 12-13 October 2022 in Harare, Zimbabwe

The Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) Executive Secretary, Felix Ngamlagosi said the meeting was aimed at introducing the Go-Nexus project to key Water, Energy, Food and Ecosystems (WEFE) stakeholders in the watercourse, as well as to establish a basis for cooperation among the parties.

In pursuit of this goal, the dialogue sought to examine the interconnection or nexus challenges that the project shall tackle using the Go-Nexus methodology.

Stakeholders were informed that the ZAMCOM member states have developed the Strategic Plan for the Zambezi Watercourse (ZSP) running up to 2040, which focuses on four pillars. These are:

- Pillar 1 – Infrastructure Investment. Focuses on hydropower generation, agricultural water, water supply services and catchment and natural resources management.
- Pillar 2 – Livelihoods Support, seeks to improve livelihoods through addressing socio-economic, environmental, political and climatic challenges affecting the ability of communities to adapt or respond to shocks.
- Pillar 3 – Environmental Resources Protection and Utilization addresses degradation hotspots caused by poor land-use methods, deforestation, erosion, loss of soil fertility, overgrazing, etc.
- Pillar 4 – Water Resources Management, to ensure sound water resources management and development.

To enable the design of appropriate solutions, Ngamlagosi said effective implementation of interventions under these four pillars requires the availability of reliable information and knowledge of the situation in the Zambezi Watercourse.

He said climate change and population growth are posing a threat to the availability and distribution of freshwater resources, giving impetus to the need to invest in better understanding of water resources and their natural variability through further research, in addition to that collected from the existing Zambezi Water Resources Information System (ZAMWIS).

“We need to better understand cultural dimensions impacting water management practices and how they affect human behaviour in different societies in the Zambezi Watercourse,” he said adding that “such research projects are costly and require specialized expertise.”

“As such, ZAMCOM recognizes the importance of partnerships and that a strong partnership can bring about the changes needed to achieve its objectives in the watercourse,” he said.

Pursuant to this, he noted that the institution in collaboration with the European Union (EU) consortium of Research Institutions developed a research proposal titled, “Innovative Tools and Solutions for Governing the Water, Energy, Food and Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus, dubbed Go-Nexus.” The proposal successfully sought EU financial support for the research implementation, which started in June 2021.

Up until 2025, Go-Nexus will research to help balance the nexus trade-offs between water, energy, food and ecosystems governance.

Its approach combines advanced modelling with a participatory method to identify nexus challenges, bringing together stakeholders from different sectors in nexus dialogues.

Go-Nexus will conduct eight case studies delving into the WEFE issues. Of the eight studies, six are based on river basins in Europe and Africa, with two case studies tackling global and EU issues in a broader sense.

Of the six river basin studies, only two are in Africa. These are the Senegal River Basin and the Zambezi Watercourse.

The project comes at a time when the mounting socio-economic pressures on the watercourse, and climate change effects require a better watercourse-wide understanding and agreement on its opportunities and challenges.

Go-Nexus will assess the nexus concerns of the Zambezi Watercourse with help from local watercourse experts and stakeholders.

These issues range from modelling activities such as hydropower development and coordinated management, to agricultural development for food security and environmental protection, and ecosystem service provision.

The Go-Nexus project will also examine the impacts of mining activities and changing land use patterns under the stress of climate and population changes.

To achieve the expected goals, the Ngamlagosi stressed the importance of stakeholder participation as critical to ensuring ownership and the legitimacy of outputs and outcomes for sustainable cooperation within the watercourse.

The workshop was attended by ZAMCOM organs including the Technical Committee, National Multi-sector Stakeholders Coordination Committees, Watercourse-wide Multi-sector Stakeholder Co-ordination Committee and focal points representing ZAMCOM’s strategic partners organizations including the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

These actors are expected to play a major role in project implementation. □

## World Water Week ...appreciating the importance of water in the Zambezi Watercourse

by Kizito Sikuka

**EACH YEAR**, the global community meets to discuss the importance of effectively managing water resources since water is a key conduit for sustainable development and poverty eradication.

For example, the availability of water is critical for various other activities such as agriculture, energy production as well as human consumption.

On the other hand, the unavailability and mismanagement of water resources can also be a source of conflict and underdevelopment, hence an appreciation of its importance is key to sustainable development.

Therefore, the annual World Water Week which started as early as 1991 is a major global event that offers an opportunity to draw the attention of the world to the water crisis and the sustainable use of water.

The theme for this year's World Water Week held in Stockholm, Sweden on 23 August to 1 September 2022 was **Seeing the unseen: The value of water**, which was unpacked under three headings:

- *The value of water for people and development* – to consider how water and water management helps both the individual person and other people to achieve their aims;
- *The financial and economic value of water* – to explore and make a case to invest more in water management; and
- *The value of water for nature and climate* – to discuss the societal benefits of effective management of water resources.

This year's World Water Week noted that significant progress has been made by the global community to manage water resources.

However, more needs to be done as the resource is facing unprecedented pressure from fast-rising temperatures, consumption patterns and population growth.

In the Zambezi Watercourse, the coming into force of the 2004 Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) Agreement in 2011 and the establishment of the permanent Secretariat in 2014 is a key milestone in the history of water resources management in southern Africa.

"Water is a key strategic natural resource in the Zambezi Watercourse and as you can see, the mere establishment of ZAMCOM is by itself a big statement made by the Riparian States to ensure that water resources are a benefit and not an impediment to socio-economic development," said the new ZAMCOM Executive Secretary, Felix Ngamlagosi in an interview.

The Zambezi Watercourse which stretches across eight Riparian States of Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, is a massive and unique ecosystem that holds potential for cooperation in areas of socio-economic development and environmental management.



Through increased dialogue over the years, several agreements and strategies have been developed to facilitate communication and information sharing on various issues between and among Riparian States such as the ZAMCOM Procedures for Notification of Planned Measures adopted by the ZAMCOM Council of Ministers in February 2017.

The ZAMCOM Procedures provide clear guidance to Riparian States on detailed notification requirements such as timelines, format and required supporting information to ensure faster project development, approval and implementation and significantly reduce the possibility of disputes arising over the planned projects.

Information-sharing is part and in line with the Zambezi Water Information System (ZAMWIS) developed by ZAMCOM to support informed decision-making and planning processes in the Zambezi Watercourse.

ZAMWIS is an interactive, web-based data and information system using contemporary and historical spatial data, hydrological time series, earth observation information, knowledge products and other related information.

To reduce floods in the Watercourse, Riparian States have also made agreements that the opening of floodgates located on the Zambezi River, particularly at Kariba shared by Zambia and Zimbabwe should be properly communicated to the other Riparian States.

This communication is critical since the sudden inflow of water from the floodgates has the capacity to cause serious flooding downstream.

Furthermore, the ZAMCOM has managed to involve more local communities that live along the Watercourse to actively participate in decision-making processes since they are the most affected when resources are mismanaged.

"Local communities are now able to influence policy-making in the region as they have realized that there is more to be gained by working together. At the moment, communities in the Zambezi Watercourse are now utilizing their indigenous knowledge to manage water especially now when the resource is becoming scarcer as a result of climate change," said Leonissah Munjoma, the ZAMCOM Programme Manager Information, Communication and Partnerships.

The Strategic Plan for the Zambezi Watercourse (ZSP), which is ZAMCOM's flagship document also prioritizes the need to ensure sound water resources management and development.

The ZSP was approved by the SADC Council of Ministers in 2019, and Ngamlagosi has pledged to ensure that the plan is smoothly and fully implemented to guarantee the Commission and the Watercourse achieve its goals. □



# Investing in rain-fed agriculture to improve food security in the Zambezi Watercourse

by Neto Nengomasha

**STAKEHOLDERS** in the Zambezi Watercourse are working towards promoting investments in rain-fed agriculture to improve food security and address the impacts of climate change and variability.

The increasing frequency and severity of climate extremes occurring in the Zambezi Watercourse and the rest of southern Africa have left millions of people food insecure, with widespread poverty, particularly in rural areas.

To this end, the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) and the Swedish International Water Institute (SIWI) are jointly implementing a five-year programme known as the Transforming Investments in African Rain-fed Agriculture (TIARA) to increase investments in enhanced rain-fed agriculture across the Zambezi Watercourse.

The project is unique as it combines advocacy and action to establish a business case while creating an enabling environment and designing financial solutions to trigger investments in the agriculture sector.

To improve production, the TIARA project will focus on scaling up enhanced rain-fed agriculture models by building on existing approaches including landscape management, climate-smart agriculture and agro-ecology.

Some of the key agricultural practices or techniques to be prioritized include minimum tillage, contouring, bunding; in-situ and runoff water harvesting and storage; as well as groundwater recharge and use of organic manure to improve soil fertility and structure.

The practices are relatively cheap to implement while they increase productivity, food security and income generation and, as such, promote improved resilience and sustainable livelihoods.

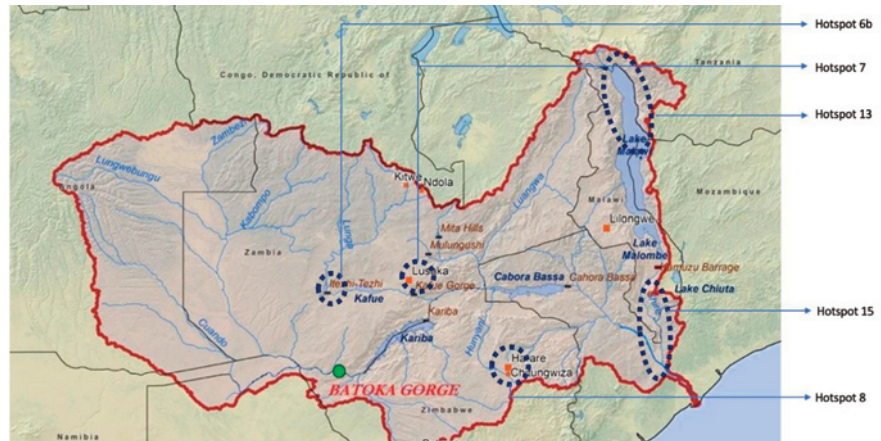
In addition, the approaches impact positively on the environment by increasing groundwater recharge, reducing soil erosion, as well as building landscape resilience to climate change, a key element of natural infrastructure or nature-based solutions.

The project is premised on the notion that increasing crop yields in rain-fed smallholder farming enables subsistence farmers to commercialize, thereby contributing to agricultural value chains while creating income and providing a route out of poverty.

Increasing crop yields at a farm-by-farm level at a sufficient scale also brings positive knock-on effects throughout the rural economy such as employment and health, enabling a wide range of related off-farm economic activities to develop.

The project has the cumulative macro effect of helping rural populations to contribute to national economies, bringing into play vast pools of human capital which is currently under-productive.

TIARA will bring together various stakeholders including technical experts, international institutions, development banks, corporates, regional economic communities and farmers to unlock the potential of enhanced rain-fed agriculture in the Zambezi Watercourse and beyond.



A total of five hotspot areas have been selected which will act as case studies to influence policy by showcasing the potential of enhanced rain-fed agriculture to improve and safeguard smallholder farmers' livelihoods in the Zambezi Watercourse. The five hotspots are:

- Itezhi tezhi in the southern Province of Zambia;
- Lusaka and its surrounding areas;
- An area covering the entire Harare province and extending into three other provinces of Mashonaland West, East and Central provinces in Zimbabwe;
- Lake Malawi-Tanzania Cross Border Site which covers most of Lake Malawi, extending north to the border of Tanzania, to the Southeast extending to Mozambique; and
- Malawi-Mozambique hotspot covering a narrow strip reaching the lower tip of Malawi along the Shire River and passing through the provinces of Zambezia and Sofala in Mozambique to the mouth of the Zambezi River.

The implementation of this initiative fulfills a number of watercourse-wide strategies as well as regional, continental and global goals.

At the watercourse level, the initiative is in line with the Strategic Plan for the Zambezi Watercourse (ZSP) pillar which seeks to improve livelihoods through addressing socio-economic, environmental, political and climatic changes affecting the ability of communities to adapt or respond to shocks.

It supports the implementation of the Programme for Integrated Development and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Zambezi Watercourse (PIDACC) component contributing to livelihood support by increasing the availability of water for farmers, increasing their usage of climate-smart techniques in agriculture and agro-forestry, and restoring ecosystem services at catchment level.

In addition, the programme complements the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) and the African Union Agenda 2063 which, among other things, seeks to eradicate poverty and build shared prosperity through social and economic transformation.

The initiative also contributes to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals particularly those addressing poverty, hunger, health, gender equality and climate change. □



## Towards gender equality in the Zambezi Watercourse

by Clarkson Mambo

**GENDER AND** water resources are intrinsically linked, with access to water being a matter of survival for every human being. In this regard, the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) is making steady progress to mainstream gender equality and social inclusion in development planning and implementation.

Since the establishment of its permanent Secretariat in 2014, ZAMCOM has progressed to promote and coordinate the cooperative management and development of the Zambezi Watercourse in an equitable, efficient and sustainable manner.

Towards attaining a future of equitable and sustainable use of water resources for communities, especially women and girls, ZAMCOM has prioritized gender equality and social inclusion as it relates to usage of natural resources within the Watercourse.

ZAMCOM's 2015 Gender Strategy, and its 2018 Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Implementation Plan express the organisation's commitment to promoting the goal of gender equality in the planning, development, management and utilisation of the resources in the Zambezi Watercourse. Ultimately the goal is to ensure sustainable and equitable water solutions for both people and ecosystems.

While ownership of the gender mainstreaming strategy and its implementation lies with the Zambezi Riparian States, the ZAMCOM Secretariat and its organs are entrusted with providing guidance on strategy implementation.

The goals of the ZAMCOM Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Implementation Plan are in line with those of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) which has made gender integration in the water sector an imperative through instru-

ments such as the Revised SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses, the SADC Regional Water Policy, the SADC Regional Water Strategy, and the Southern African Vision for Water, Life and Environment in the 21st Century.

Women are acknowledged as the major providers and users of water as well as guardians of the environment, but their role has not been amplified. Through mainstreaming gender and social inclusion, their role will be sufficiently reflected in the institutional arrangements for water resource development and management.

With the participation of both men and women in integrated water resources management seen as key in not only improving the effectiveness and efficiency of programmes and projects but also their sustainability, ZAMCOM, with support from its partners, has continued to push for gender equality and social inclusion in all its programme activities.

This recognizes that development efforts that exclude women are futile, and that all efforts to address the community's socio-economic needs to deal with poverty must boldly tackle gender issues.

For a variety of reasons, women are disproportionately affected by poverty due to societal inequalities that disadvantage them.

The majority of communities within the Watercourse survive on rain-fed subsistence agriculture, raising the need for new projects to sustain them.

In line with its commitment to engendering policies, ZAMCOM, together with the SADC Water Division, in partnership with the USAID Resilient Waters Programme and Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA) at the sidelines of the 9th SADC River Basin Organisation Workshop in September 2021, held a gender session under the theme *Integrating gender equality and social inclusion into water programmes of the SADC RBOs/SWIs and Member States*.

The workshop equipped gender, water, and related experts with the knowledge, skills and tools to integrate gender considerations into the design and delivery of water policies, programmes and projects.

Even under its new initiative, the Programme for Integrated Development and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Zambezi Watercourse (PIDACC Zambezi) which is being implemented under the Strategic Plan for the Zambezi Watercourse (ZSP), ZAMCOM has made gender issues a top priority.

ZSP is a development plan comprising a general planning tool and process for the identification, categorization and prioritization of projects and programmes for the efficient management and sustainable development of the Zambezi Watercourse.

While every effort is being made to mainstream gender and social inclusion in development planning in the Zambezi watercourse, it remains critical that policies and practise match, with periodic monitoring and evaluation to ensure no exclusion of women and other disadvantaged groups, which will be detrimental to the socio-economic development of societies living within the watercourses. □

