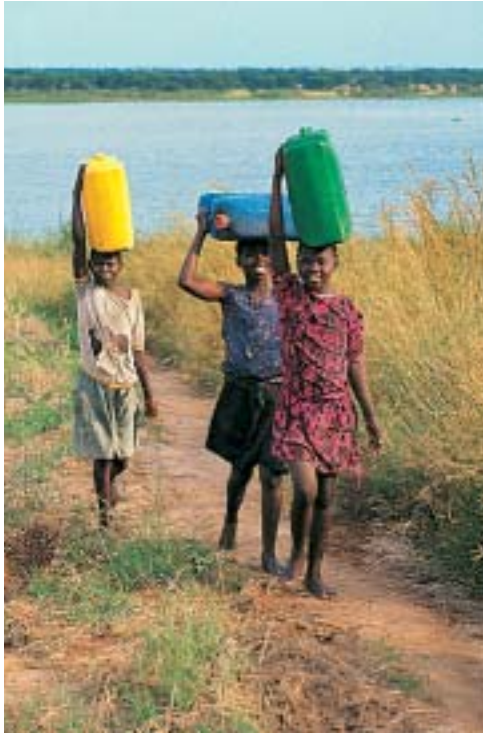


## Managing Transboundary Waters – New Opportunities for Africa



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## Editorial

Today some 1.2 billion people lack access to safe and affordable water. Twice as many have no decent sanitation. Ecosystems are being damaged or destroyed by pollution and by overexploitation of water resources. But this is not only a matter of social development and environmental protection; it is also a matter of economic development, peace and stability.

Finding solutions to the world water crisis is one of the most challenging tasks the international community is facing today. Competition over water resources is one of the most frequent causes of tensions and disputes among states. At the same time, transboundary water offers potential for regional cooperation. Based on experiences from

Europe, Germany has taken the lead in facilitating an international dialogue on preventing disputes over water and identifying mutual benefits in managing transboundary waters. In addition, the German government is supporting river basin organisations to find peaceful solutions for transboundary water issues in a regional setting.

This brochure provides information about the background and the strategies for German development cooperation in transboundary water issues, as well as information about the implementation of regional programmes in Africa to prevent water conflicts. Our experience clearly shows that water is a catalyst for regional cooperation.



*Dr. Manfred Konukiewitz*

*German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation  
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## Transboundary Water Management: A Challenge for German Development Cooperation

**“Whiskey is for drinking,  
water is for fighting over”** *Mark Twain 1835-1910*

Water knows no political boundaries. Over 250 water catchment areas in the world are shared by more than two states. Some 40% of the world’s population live beside transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwater reservoirs. Competition for access to and use of transboundary water resources holds great potential for conflict. Water is a matter of conflict in international disputes and often also impedes economic cooperation. At the same time, however, transboundary waters have turned out to be a catalyst for regional cooperation once countries have recognized the benefits of working together.

In the international debate, one side predicts wars over water while the other emphasizes the likely gains from cooperation over shared use of water. As yet, this kind of cooperation potential has barely been exploited. A major benefit of cooperation is to arrive at a common understanding on the minimum volume of water to which every riparian should have a right in order to prevent damage or hardship. Beyond the question of water quotas, efforts must also be made to derive concrete economic gain from cooperation. Energy production or tourism, for example, offer opportunities to benefit from cooperation. The environmental aspect should not be forgotten either. An intact ecosystem is in the interests of all riparians. Water pollution and the unchecked extraction of water resources always have negative impacts for all.

As a result of numerous international conferences and initiatives, and through the continuous development of international law, the international community has succeeded in identifying rules for the shared use of transboundary water resources and the peaceful management of water conflicts. However, several issues, such as monitoring of

water allocation and enforcement mechanisms for agreed rules, still need to be addressed.

Germany has made a decisive contribution in the area of transboundary water management by supporting fora for international dialogue (Box: Petersberg Process) and regional initiatives for the resolution of water conflicts. At the first Petersberg Round Table, held in Bonn in 1998, a series of rec-



ommendations were issued to prevent conflicts over transboundary waters. The core points of these recommendations were to support cooperation at regional level, to improve the institutional framework conditions for shared use of water, to promote partnerships between the state and the private sector, and to facilitate knowledge transfer through the exchange of experience. Its commitment in the sphere of transboundary waters has earned the Federal Republic of Germany a high level of international recognition as an ‘honest broker’. This culminated in the organisation of the International Conference on Freshwater in Bonn in 2001 (Box: Freshwater Conference).



**Box:**

**The Petersberg Process**

Growing competition over increasingly scarce water resources was the starting point for the Petersberg Process. The first round table, held in Bonn in 1998, stated that water should serve as a catalyst for international cooperation. This was based on European experience on the Rhine, Mosel, Elbe and Danube. The international success of the Petersberg round table led to the holding of three more international dialogues concerned with transboundary water management: one in Berlin at the end of 1998, and the other in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius in mid-1999. A third was held in Bonn in 2001. In Berlin, representatives of river basin commissions met to identify good practices and to exchange international experiences. In Vilnius, a round table discussion was held on transboundary water in the Baltic region. In Bonn, experiences from the Nile and Rhine were shared and compared. Germany has agreed to provide financial resources for the planning and management of transboundary water resources in Africa. This, however, is far more than pure water management. Cooperation among riparian countries has become the nucleus for broad political cooperation, stability and peace.

building through international cooperation is of pivotal importance for the riparian countries, and likewise for the implementation of concrete projects.

In future, development cooperation will concentrate more intensively than in the past on regional cooperation, since the problems associated with water bodies, such as water scarcity or water pollution, are regional in nature. Some very good approaches for solving these problems already exist. In view of the considerable potential for conflict, but also the great opportunities, it is critical to support regional cooperation. Germany has a wealth of experience to contribute in this area.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) accords special importance to the management of transboundary water resources. The German government views mediation in international conflicts and tension mitigation as a key activity area. The objective of these measures is to support coopera-



For constructive cooperation over transboundary waters, intergovernmental commissions are of key significance. Very positive results have been achieved in Europe, for instance on the Rhine and the Danube. The key themes of this cooperation are economic development, water resource protection and peaceful management of conflicts. Confidence-

tion between riparians. This also clears the way for cooperation in other areas such as economics, culture and politics. Consequently the BMZ supports the implementation of the recommendations of the World Commission on Dams (Box: Dams) and the development of river basin organisations.

Commissioned by the BMZ, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, German Technical Cooperation, has taken up the challenge to support crisis prevention and conflict management across transboundary



**Box:**  
**International Conference  
on Freshwater, Bonn 2001  
Water – A Key to Sustainable  
Development**

The German government worked closely with the United Nations to stage the International Conference on Freshwater from 3–7 December 2001 in Bonn, Germany. With this conference, Germany contributed to the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2002) and the 3rd World Water Forum in Japan (2003). The Conference Secretariat was organised by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH.

Water is a key factor for securing sustainable development and a more equitable and peaceful world. The conference devised recommendations on practical solutions to the global freshwater problem, which are set out in the Bonn Keys and the Bonn Recommendations for Action. At the same time, these were also conceived as a message for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, 2002. The Bonn Recommendations for Action genuinely represent a new strategy for action in that they focus on three cross-cutting areas: (1) Responsible governance, water management and partnership; (2) Mobilisation of financial resources; (3) Capacity development and knowledge sharing.

The Ministerial Declaration of the conference states that: "Safe and sufficient water and sanitation are basic human needs". The goal set by the United Nations Millennium Assembly is to halve the number of people who do not have or cannot afford access to safe drinking water by the year 2015. The Bonn conference made important progress in advancing towards achieving this development objective.

*More information*  
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waters. This is an area in which the GTZ has a long history of success. In the context of the Middle East peace process, in the 1990s it succeeded in bringing about a dialogue between the parties to the conflict, Israel, Palestine and Jordan, and in initiating a concrete examination of future water needs in the Jordan valley. The findings of the "Middle East Regional Study on Water Supply and Demand Development", concluded in 1998, are now acknowledged as the starting point for the development of water management in the entire region. In the environmental sector, quite different examples can be cited of support for environmental management along transboundary waters, such as the Mekong River. The foremost objective here is to work jointly to develop principles for the management of natural resources. This helps to avert potential environmental conflicts, which can rapidly turn into political crises.

The GTZ is building up its activity portfolio in Africa and is supporting the establishment of river basin management commissions (see article in this issue, "A Round Table for River Basins"). Its role is

**Box:**

**Dams – A challenge for shared river basins**

Storage and diversion of water on transboundary rivers has been a source of considerable tension between countries. The impacts on downstream countries are manifold: reduced flows and altered hydrological flow regimes have a significant impact on the riverine ecology, on soil fertility and fish abundance. Discharges are often insufficient to meet downstream water needs for irrigation and human consumption. This has in many cases triggered social and political conflicts.

Consequently, the World Commission on Dams (WCD) has given transboundary water issues high priority. The WCD was established as an independent, multi-stakeholder body in May 1998. With regard to transboundary waters, the Commission

emphasizes in its final report that national water policies have to adopt an approach which is based on equitable and reasonable utilisation, no significant harm and prior information. The report also recommends that riparian countries should focus on benefit-sharing.

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH supports the implementation of the recommendations of the WCD. The objective is to develop procedures and concepts to implement the WCD recommendations, to discuss the WCD report with various stakeholders, and to support governments in applying the WCD principles.

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to provide sectoral and organisational consultancy both to political decision-makers and operative units. Essentially this requires the GTZ to work in wholly new roles. Aside from conventional know-how transfer, it is called upon to facilitate decision-

making processes in social policy and to mediate in situations of conflict. Thus the GTZ works as a catalyst within a fundamental process of political reform.



## German Technical Cooperation: A Round Table for River Basins

Conflicts can easily arise where there is a scarcity of water or where it has been unfairly distributed by humans or by nature. Already, the World Water Council has postulated a world water crisis. But water shortage is not so much the reason for this threat. Rather, it is due to bad management, according to the World Water Vision report. The Scientific Advisory Council to the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) concludes from this that the situation requires “structural reform in order to achieve a more effective, efficient and nonetheless socially balanced and ecologically compatible water supply in developing countries”.

Again and again, there have been conflicts about water even in regions without an acute shortage of this vital resource. For example, when the Second World War was over, the Netherlands complained bitterly about the pollution of the Rhine. The high phenol and salt content of the Rhine’s waters created difficulties in water supplies to wide areas of the country. Since the water of the Rhine was heavily polluted when it reached the Netherlands, the Dutch became aware at an early stage that water protection is an international task. This is why they set up an international forum as early as 1950 in order to discuss, among other issues, the pollution and purification of the Rhine with Germany. And all this happened at a time when the aftermath of the Second World War was still causing considerable distress. Nowadays, dialogue between the riparian countries of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine is so well established that any need for regulatory measures has long vanished from public awareness.

### Riparian countries with a need for regulations

There is also a need for a regulation of access to water and its distribution in other parts of the world. For example, this is the case on the Nile, the world’s longest river. It influences the lives of around 160 million people in north-eastern Africa. The Nile Basin links up ten riparian countries. From its southernmost tributary, the Kagera River in Rwanda, to the Nile Delta in Egypt, the river system covers a route of 6,700 kilometres. Sustainable management of the water resources and a systematic promotion of strategies to avoid conflicts in the water sector have an immediate impact on consumers: both on their quality of life and on the livelihoods of the typically rural population in the Nile Basin, for whom water is a vital means of production.



The Nile could be used to a greater content to generate hydro power, grow food, carry goods and develop industry. But it is also very important to protect the river system from pollution. The Nile could have multiple beneficiary water uses. And there is a large potential for sharing benefits. Commissioned by BMZ, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH is supporting cross-border water resources management and institutional capacity-building in the





riparian countries of the Nile. Effective guidelines for integrated water resources management have to be co-ordinated, formulated and implemented. And then there is a second, no less ambitious development project: Technical Cooperation with the River Basin Organisations of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for the Limpopo and the Orange-Senqu.

In Southern Africa, there are 15 river systems that cut across borders. Thirteen are members of the SADC. Over the last few decades, there have been numerous bilateral and multilateral water agreements. Moreover, with the Limpopo





Basin Permanent Technical Committee (LBPTC) and the Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM), the SADC now has two organisations that can take action to ensure cross-border management of water resources. Nevertheless, the central problems still remain essentially unsolved. The inhabitants of the river basins do not have equal access to water, and the institutional regulations on the peaceful settlement of water conflicts are flawed. This is why hopes are high regarding the success of the GTZ's support.

### One project and ten partners

A number of hurdles had to be cleared as a preparatory measure. "The institutional structure of development cooperation is traditionally geared to bilateral projects," says the GTZ's Programme Manager Thomas Schild. For a project to be supported, there has to be a local implementing organisation. It may be one of the respective country's institutions or organisations, its government or an international organisation. Within the Nile Basin Initiative, GTZ is working together with the governments of nine riparian countries. Eritrea, the tenth riparian, still has an observatory status. An International Nile Commission with an international legal status that could act as a regional project partner is yet to be created.

Technical Cooperation in the Nile Basin is aimed at initiating sustainable, socio-economically balanced development by using common water resources fairly. A strategic action programme supported by the World Bank, UNDP and a number of donor countries is to put this vision into practice. One central element of this joint initiative is Technical Cooperation aimed at establishing capacities without frontiers. GTZ wants to fulfill its mission swiftly and unbureaucratically and, once again, do justice to its reputation of being an internationally experienced advisor on development issues.

### Building strong institutions

A few years ago, the 13 member states of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) signed a Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems. On this basis, river basin commissions are to be set up for all river basins of a cross-border nature. A commission of this kind already exists for the Orange-Senqu Basin. There are plans to upgrade the technical committee for the Limpopo into such a commission. The two river basins are the lifelines for around 15 million people in Southern Africa.

But this alone will not solve the distribution and usage problems. South Africa, whose gross national product corresponds to the sum of those of all the other twelve SADC countries, in the past substantially regulated water supply according to its own needs. Moreover, as a riparian country of the upper reaches of the river systems, it is in a strategically favourable position. Since the nineties, the country has entered into a dialogue with its neighbours.

The GTZ supports the Limpopo Basin Permanent Technical Committee (LBPTC) and the Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM) through capacity development to establish a system for integrated water resources management. In addition, the staff of the SADC Water Sector Coordinating Unit is being trained and upgraded to ensure that they can manage the SADC water sector in an effective manner. GTZ specialists are offering advice, providing independent experts and running specialist symposia.

### A moderator for the river basin

This will not be easy for the development enterprise. All forms of water policy affect vital interests of the countries concerned, the governments of which are not always on friendly terms. If the resource is to be distributed and used more fairly, the users must be able to have a say. Specialist competency has to be established and extended, and local, regional and transnational partnerships need to be formed. This requires trust that has yet to be



created. After all, the aim is to contain and manage potential conflicts.

These issues are being addressed in different ways on the Nile and in Southern Africa: by the Council of Ministers of the Nile Basin and SADC member countries, the river basin organisations of the Limpopo and the Orange-Senqu, the Nile secretariat and the organisations and associations of the user groups. In parallel, the GTZ helps to set up pools of advisors and think-tanks compris-





ing top-ranking scientists, specialists and practitioners. Their expertise is aimed to support the respective commissions in institution building and in the training and upgrading of specialists.

However, swift and immediate effects of Technical Cooperation on water management on the Nile cannot be expected. As a first step the formulation of guidelines on joint water management has to be achieved by an international dialogue. Specialist symposia in which politicians, scientists and practitioners of water management can exchange experience and practice in river basin management are central elements of water management on the Nile and in Southern Africa. Training and upgrading programmes are being run for the specialist staff in the countries involved and for the participants in the discussion processes. Specialists are advising local stakeholders on compiling studies and establishing data banks to monitor river basins. Efforts are being made to integrate European scientists and practitioners into the process, including experts from German water industry associations or the Rhine Commission. They can boast a wealth of experience.

One particularly important lesson that has to be learnt is that water management takes time.



Establishing cross-border water management in Central Europe did not make any rapid progress either. Thirteen years passed after the initiative of the Dutch to set up a forum to deal with common problems along the Rhine before the agreement of the Rhine riparian countries on the International Commission for the river's protection was signed.

### Cooperation requires knowledge

Ten years ago, six Nile riparian countries formed the Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin States. A second body, the Nile Technical Advisory Committee, was entrusted with the task of developing an action programme for water management along the Nile at the time. In 1997, the World Bank assumed the co-ordination of the procedure, which evolved into the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) in February 1999. The NBI aims to achieve sustainable socio-economic development by ensuring that the common water resources of the Nile Basin are used fairly.

A strategic action programme for the Nile is to help develop the common vision. The programme also covers environmental management, the energy industry and agriculture. At the first meeting of the international consortium for cooperation along the Nile, the Nile Basin Initiative and the World Bank presented the action programme to a larger group of potential donor countries and drew up a list of requirements for international financial support. Since the Nile Basin states are unable to finance the action programme on their own owing to the precarious financial situation of their governments, the conference approved 74.5 million dollars in June 2001.

Germany's contribution to the planning and management of water resources above all focuses on training and upgrading of specialist staff and on supporting a suitable institutional set-up. Water authorities, water industry companies and consumer groups expect the transfer of international expertise to result in acquiring know-how of their own. The development of organisations with regard to the management of the respective river area, the setting up of data banks, information and knowledge management, negotiating skills, crisis management and technical support in specialist issues are at the forefront of efforts being made. Once the regional and international institutions have been thus qualified, they are to seek and try out suitable forms of cooperation.



## Eschborn Symposium, 18–19 June 2002

### From Confrontation to Cooperation: International Collaboration for Transboundary Water Management

Poverty alleviation and sustainable development are the overarching goals for German development cooperation in the water sector. In this context, conflict prevention and regional integration have become a major focal point for German Technical Cooperation. As one of the leading countries in efforts to facilitate the international dialogue on water issues, Germany hosted the International Conference on Freshwater in Bonn in 2001. Its results were taken to the World Summit on Sustainable Development that took place in Johannesburg in August and September 2002, and will be presented to the Third World Water Forum in Japan in 2003.



and open debate between countries and between basin organisations and supports their long-term political processes. Commissioned by the German government, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH is supporting the international dialogue on water issues. GTZ has many years of experience in supporting national water resources management reform processes and providing assistance to river basin organisations.



Competition over limited resources – especially transboundary water resources – is one of the most important and frequent causes of crisis. Germany has intensified its support to transboundary water management in recent years. The German government has supported the Petersberg Process of international round tables and, for example, recently had the privilege of hosting a meeting of representatives of all Nile Basin countries, including most Ministers of Water Affairs, at the Bonn-Petersberg venue. This meeting served to exchange experience between the Nile and the Rhine – with the expectation that this kind of meeting aids frank

On 18–19 June 2002 GTZ hosted the Eschborn Symposium “From Confrontation to Cooperation: International Collaboration for Transboundary Water Management” at the GTZ Head Office in Germany. The meeting brought together experiences from river basin organisations in Europe and Africa and sought to

- Collect experience and good practice
- Identify needs and expectations of riparian countries for support by the international community

- Discuss the special role that bilateral partners, especially GTZ, can take in supporting collaborative riparian processes

**Germany – an honest broker**

“Germany has built an international reputation as an honest broker”, says Dr. Fritz Holzwarth, the head of the division for water resources management, soil protection and dangerous wastes in the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU).



As the country with the largest number of trans-boundary river basins in Europe (Rhine, Elbe, Danube, Oder, Mosel and Saar), Germany has collected, as a necessity, a great deal of experience in the management of these river basins. Through this experience Germany was and continues to be the convener of a series of meetings known as the Petersberg Process. Holzwarth further noted that Germany is committed to providing continuing support to the Petersberg Process, with GTZ as an important player. Specifically, the German government is planning to support further round tables on transboundary water management.

**The example of the Rhine**

Harm Oterdoom, the Secretary General of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR), introduced the Rhine Commission as a model for river basin commissions in developing countries. He noted that twenty million people are dependent on the Rhine as a source of drinking

water. Though the ICPR has existed since 1950, water quality continued to deteriorate until around 1970. This was mainly due to a lack of appropriate national legislation, the absence of a formal agreement for the protection of the Rhine, and a lack of regular meetings of relevant, high-level decision makers.

Among the strong points for success in Rhine collaboration are: the focus on politically relevant issues; strong expertise; mutual confidence and trust based on a long-term process; flexibility; accessibility; self-commitment and self-monitoring.



An important recent mechanism is the collaboration with the public and incorporation of the views of concerned groups, such as NGOs and industry, in decision-making.

What started with the development of a joint monitoring strategy in the 1950s and 1960s has led to the sustainable development of the Rhine today. This development was backed up by large investments, guided by a process of “learning by doing”, and influenced significantly by some major disasters (the Action Programme Rhine as a reaction to the Sandoz fire of 1986 and the Action Plan on Flood Defence in response to the floods of 1993 and 1995).

The Rhine is famous as one of Europe’s life-arteries. The example of the Rhine shows that cooperative management of water resources across national boundaries provides an opportunity to collaborate on broader issues beyond the river. In the Rhine basin, many conflicting uses of the Rhine have to

be balanced and trade-offs need to be identified. In transferring lessons from the Rhine and other northern European transboundary rivers, it is important to note that issues in these rivers have centred on water quality concerns and ecological integrity.

### Regional cooperation

“Countries that share international waters should also show the intention to closely work together in a transnational institution. Every country



should also prove that all interested stakeholders have the possibility to participate in the political decision-making process”. This call was addressed during the Eschborn Symposium to the politicians of developing countries by Zebediah Murungweni, water sector consultant to the Southern African Development Community (SADC). He further said that three aspects of sharing national or international water systems, namely political, legal/institutional and operational/technical issues, need to be addressed adequately. In his opinion, “the principles for cooperation with respect to water resources in any basin require a common basis of governance. The legal framework of basin states should incorporate the rules approved by the International Law Commission in Helsinki in 1966, recognise the principles for joint utilisation of transboundary rivers as contained in the Convention on the Law of Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses adopted by the UN on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1997 and, in the case of the SADC Region, should make reference to the Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems signed in 1995.”

### GTZ's work in southern Africa

Two new initiatives – the support of the Limpopo and Orange-Senqu river basin organisations in the SADC region and the support of the Nile Basin Initiative, were presented by Dr. Thomas Schild, Programme Manager for transboundary water



resources management in Africa at GTZ Head Office. He said that Germany's good reputation is of benefit for cooperation with river basin commissions. “GTZ takes advantage of its good relations with decision-makers in water ministries and water users in rural areas to invite all of them to round tables.” In this context GTZ works as a catalyst for regional cooperation which is much more than “technical cooperation”. Thus, “technical cooperation”, which is often confused with technical assistance, is becoming international cooperation. In the case of the Nile, GTZ is working closely with the World Bank, other EU partners and UN organisations.

### Getting the private sector involved

The Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce (DIHK), together with the Southern Africa Initiative of German Business (SAFRI), promotes initiatives for development in Southern Africa. “Tourism is among the fastest growing sectors and has a large positive multiplier effect by





creating local employment and spillover income opportunities”, says Dr. Michael Blank, Director Africa, International Economic Affairs, DIHK/SAFRI. Transfrontier peace parks provide investment opportunities and encourage the people living in these areas to work together closely. The motivation of this transboundary connection is to foster country-to-country dialogue and cooperation and to provide a more attractive tourism package and thus increased revenue. Projects and activities are designed in such a way that local communities participate in activities and income is created at the community level. The majority of currently identified peace parks are in regions of



transboundary rivers and lakes and are therefore of relevance in the context of cooperative management of transboundary water and related resources. Activities are aimed at increasing dialogue and promoting economic integration and benefit-sharing. Blank adds: “When we succeed in promoting the value of the peace parks to the inhabitants, the willingness of the people to care for the resources will be increased.”

### Lessons learnt

The Eschborn Symposium drew attention to the importance of strong transnational institutions for dialogue. The speakers gave an overview of the state of the international discourse and summarized major challenges and opportunities for the management of transboundary rivers. Presentations and discussions highlighted experiences from river basin commissions in Africa and Europe. The following lessons learnt were identified:

**Water as a catalyst for cooperation** – The experiences and the reports presented at the workshop indicate that cooperative water management can be an entry point for broader political and economic collaboration, despite major challenges and tensions. Areas of mutual benefit and gains from cooperation provide opportunities for engaging in dialogue and building trust among basin states, and contribute to regional stability and economic integration.

**National commitment** – National commitment is the key for successful cooperation in transboundary river basins. Facilitation and measures to build trust and confidence among basin states combined with identification of win-win benefits from collaboration, e.g. through transboundary projects and investments, can enhance the willingness to cooperate.

**Transparency and stakeholder involvement** – Cooperation among riparian countries needs to be supported by a broad stakeholder base in order to be sustainable. Transparency of the ongoing processes, not only in terms of exchanging information on the technical levels but also informing and involving the public in planning and decision-making, is needed to build lasting successes and sustainable collaborative programmes and projects. It is realized that successful public participation in often mainly governmental processes is a challenge. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH and international donors can play an important role by strengthening communications between basin



states on various levels. In this context, the GTZ is facilitating a complex process of interaction between civil society and governmental actors.

**Legal and institutional framework** – Experiences from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Rhine and other basin organisations have shown that the commitment to develop a legal and institutional framework for cooperation and forming basin institutions with a clearly defined mandate is essential. The international community can play an important role in supporting these processes in various ways, ranging from capacity-building measures to supporting a facilitated dialogue among basin states. Mandates and authorities of river basin organisations may differ widely: in the case of the Rhine, decisions taken by the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) are recommendations to member countries and leave implementation decisions to these countries, which are enforced largely by self-monitoring and peer pressure; while experiences from the SADC region point towards the need for a firm mandate for decision-making of basin institutions.

**Building capacity** – The process of developing a long-term legal and institutional framework needs to be underpinned by efforts to create comparable capacities in basin countries to allow for a dialogue on an equal footing and based on a similar information base. Levelling the playing field among basin countries and institutions can build trust and confidence. The GTZ can provide for capacity development to assist river basin institutions in becoming a focal point for regional integration. This includes not only technical support but also organisation development, moderation of decision-making processes, as well as mediation between the various stakeholders.

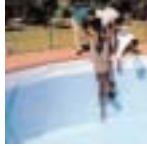
**A long-term process** – Strengthening relations between riparian states that have been in conflict and mistrust sharing resources is a long-term process. International cooperation partners need to commit to long-term support, realizing that

these processes are prerequisites for the successful and lasting cooperative management of river basins and development of win-win projects.

**A multi-sectoral approach** – Collaborative management of transboundary water resources and creating win-win opportunities needs to take a multi-sectoral approach and realize that political challenges and opportunities are multifaceted. Mutual benefits and real gains from cooperation are most likely to be gained in sectors related to, but beyond the management of water resources alone. In all cases a holistic view has to be taken.

**Common programmes and projects** – Joint development of programmes and projects between basin countries creates interaction and builds trust among basin countries. Early collaborative projects may focus initially on technical communication, monitoring networks and technical cooperation, as for example in the northern European experience with regard to water quality management. GTZ has traditionally been a key supporter in the dialogue between basin states, paving the way for broader economic and political cooperation.

**Investments and the role of private sector** – There are large financial needs to attain the Millennium Development Goals, which include improved access to safe water and sanitation, universal primary education and halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty. Large investments in water and other infrastructure measures and in their operation and maintenance will be needed in the coming decade, for example to provide drinking water and safe sanitation systems for rural and urban areas. While cost estimates to attain the Millennium Goals differ widely, it is clear that national governmental resources alone will not be sufficient. Public-private partnerships have an important and growing role to play. GTZ has already been successful in encouraging private sector participation in its partner countries.



## Links

BMZ – German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development  
[www.bmz.de](http://www.bmz.de)

BMU – German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety  
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The 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum, Japan  
[www.worldwaterforum.org](http://www.worldwaterforum.org)

International Conference on Freshwater, Bonn  
[www.water-2001.de](http://www.water-2001.de)

Transboundary Water Management in Africa  
[www.gtz.de/transwater](http://www.gtz.de/transwater)

GLOBWINET – Global Water Information Network  
[www.globwinet.org](http://www.globwinet.org)

UNESCO Water Portal  
[www.unesco.org/water](http://www.unesco.org/water)

GWP – Global Water Partnership  
[www.gwp.org](http://www.gwp.org)

The World Commission on Dams  
[www.dams.org](http://www.dams.org)

International Rivers Network  
[www.irn.org](http://www.irn.org)

NBI – Nile Basin Initiative  
[www.nilebasin.org](http://www.nilebasin.org)

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[www.sadcwscu.org.ls](http://www.sadcwscu.org.ls)

Orange River Homepage  
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[www.dse.de/ef](http://www.dse.de/ef)

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Bundesministerium für  
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