



Namibian Water Resources Management Project

Country:	Namibia
Term:	2006 – 2013
Funding:	EUR 8,456,000 (current phase)
Partner:	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
Goals:	Improved management of Namibian water resources on the basis of IWRM

Context

Namibia is the most arid African country south of the Sahara. It has low and varied precipitation, ranging from a maximum of 650mm in the north-east to less than 50mm per year along the coast. It is estimated that only 2% of rain-fall ends up as surface run-off and a mere 1% is available for groundwater recharge. The remaining 97% is lost through evaporation (83%) and evapotranspiration (14%). Perennial surface water resources are found only in rivers shared with neighbouring riparian states. These rivers have to be managed and used in accordance with international water law. Scarce water resources fundamentally limit the country's socioeconomic development and represent an enormous potential for conflict.

Against this background, Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) has been identified as essential for the management of the water sector in Namibia as well as across borders. The 2010 Water Resources Management Bill is based on IWRM principles and provides overall guidance, but has not yet been implemented. Namibia's Vision 2030 provides the overarching framework for the water sector with its sub-vision, which states: 'Namibia's fresh water resources are kept free of pollution and are used to ensure social well-being, support economic development and to maintain natural habitats'.

The challenge

Practical implementation of IWRM will ultimately depend on existing water sector institutions' organisational efficiency, human resources capacity in these institutions and available financial resources. The current challenges are to:

- Create an adequate structure for the water sector;
- Provide a clear, feasible vision and strategy for the IWRM approach;
- Establish an efficient approach to water sector coordination;
- Implement the Water Act and
- Secure the support of top management at the custodian, the Ministry for Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF).

Implementing water management activities at community level should also be a priority in order for IWRM to succeed. The current challenges are to:

- Set up Basin Management Committees (BMCs) with clearly defined responsibilities and tasks in Namibian basins;
- Enable existing BMCs to create work plans independently and perform their tasks on a sustainable basis and
- Provide them with financial and technical assistance.

Project activities

Parliamentary adoption of the 2004 Namibian Water Resources Management Act laid the legal foundation for reorganising the Namibian water sector based on the principles of IWRM. GIZ actively assisted its formulation during the first two phases of this project. The focal point of the current third phase is to provide support during the implementation of the IWRM approach. The project's main regional focus is on the Cuvelai system, which is located in the





densely populated north-central part of the country. The European Union is one of the major donors in this component of the Project. However, IWRM initiatives in other basins are also included.

The project partners MAWF and GIZ are establishing Basin Management Committees in at least six of the twelve basins identified by the 1998 Namibian Water Resources Management Review. The Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) contributes to the project by providing important groundwater assessments. BMCs form the



core of decentralised IWRM, and their tasks and duties are described in the aforementioned legal documents. They include advising MAWF

on matters concerning water protection, development and conservation, and promoting community participation in water issues. The project also provides technical support for developing the BMCs' annual operation plans, which are consistent with their tasks delegated by the current 2010 Water Resources Management Bill and include HIV/AIDS and hygiene issues. At the end of the project, at least two water resources management plans will have been developed for the basins. The project also helps to assess and implement a sustainable financial system for the BMCs.

Alongside BMC structures, MAWF structures are supported with technical advice as well as human capacity development. After the MAWF has been restructured, a basin management support division should be created, together with a decentralised body from the directorate of water resources management.

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Results achieved so far

Eight Basin Management Committees including Sub Basin Management Committees have been established. Annual operation plans have been developed and executed for all BMCs. All plans included topics related to HIV/AIDS. One Water Resource Management Plan exists for the Kuiseb basin. Another plan for the Cuvelai-Etosha basin is about to be developed.

Stakeholder exchange and exposure trips are taking place. Awareness campaigns have been conducted and are ongoing. The participatory management approach, in which all stakeholders are invited to actively take part in forums, meetings and working groups of BMCs, has strengthened the operational capacity of the decentralised community services and structures. Financial assistance and bookkeeping training has been provided. A sustainable financial system to support BMCs has been presented and now needs to be agreed upon and to be piloted. Data for monitoring and management is constantly being collected. A national database with a decision-support system will soon be developed. The project has provided training and qualifications in IWRM for basin support officers. The proposal for restructuring the Ministry is with the Office of the Prime Minister for approval. The 2010 Water Resource Management Bill is with the Parliament and waiting to be passed and enacted.

A practical example

The Fish River Basin Management Committee has formed a working group on groundwater monitoring. They visit different hotspots where the community has raised concerns about groundwater pollution. The group investigates the location and takes water-quality samples. They talk to polluters and try to find practical solutions in collaboration with the community in order to conserve this resource.

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