

# “The East African Integrated River Basin Management Conference”

## Morogoro, Tanzania, 7 – 9, March 2005



### Background

In Sub-Saharan Africa, institutional reforms are being developed to implement Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) at the basin level. However, these reforms have paid little attention to the nature of Africa's hydrological environment, in particular its economic water scarcity. Water resources are available, but the economic and technical means to improve water productivity, distribution and predictability are often lacking. Various conditions warrant specific responses to render reforms in water management effective. These include: physical conditions (variable and unpredictable climate, geo-physiography), socio-economic characteristics (the predominance of agriculture for economic growth and poverty eradication), and the legal-institutional context (local communal water tenure arrangements, under-resourced governmental line and administrative agencies, strong donor presence, and many transboundary basins).

A critical evaluation of ongoing water reforms in Sub-Saharan Africa in the light of conditions and goals is vital to render future policy, law formulation and institutional design and implementation more effective.

### Aim of the conference

The aim of the conference is to bring together river basin professionals and researchers to critically discuss the tools of IWRM applied at the basin level. The conference organisers feel that recent research demonstrates that certain fashions in River Basin Management (RBM) may be outmoded or require new thinking. Emphasis will be on innovative solutions; “thinking outside of the box”, and in rigorous analysis of existing approaches. We are also interested in ideas that strongly challenge or defend the very notion or building blocks of integrated river basin management.

### Themes of the Conference

There are 6 ‘Themes’ for papers and presentations and one workshop for discussing the status of the Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture.

#### Theme 1: Water productivity – methodologies and management

This theme will explore the definition, measurement and theory of water productivity as well as giving space to case studies that demonstrate how water productivity might be increased. Productivity includes ideas of water efficiency and covers all sectors of water utilisation (e.g., agriculture, environment, etc.)

#### Theme 2: Environmental flow assessment

This theme of the conference will be devoted to the science and practice of determining and meeting environmental flows. Papers will be accepted that enrich the understanding of environmental water needs for Eastern and Southern Africa. Emphasis will be given to papers that report on successes in this managerially-difficult field.

#### Theme 3: Rainwater harvesting and micro irrigation

The organisers see rainwater harvesting and micro-irrigation as leveraging more benefits from water in a basin. This theme will address the impacts on poverty, livelihoods, and incomes, innovative strategies for scaling up such technologies, and potential externalities, from an integrated basin perspective.

#### Theme 4: Water governance and institutions (conflicts, legal framework, tradeoffs, dialogue, community level management)

This theme of the conference is wide in scope, intended to attract papers that progress the debate on water governance and institutions. The organisers are looking for contributions that discuss the ‘institutional fit’ that

exists between different levels of formal and informal organisations, relationships between local level, basin level, and other institutions in river basins, how to provide a 'voice' to poor people in river basin institutions, the role and future of statutory and customary law and institutions for resource management and laws which in turn mediate the efficacy and success of water interventions found in river basins. We hope to hear from researchers who are able to suggest better ways of managing water from these perspectives.

#### **Theme 5: Water economics and livelihoods**

The conference is interested in how water may be allocated between different sectors on the basis of determining their relative economic and livelihood benefits. Thus, of interest, will be papers that explore the methodology and measurement of water valuations and that present innovative theories or practices of allocating water based on sectoral assessments of value.

#### **Theme 6: Modelling and Decision Aid Tools**

A major problem facing decision-makers in complex river basins is decision-making when faced with a wide range of information, dynamics and determinants. Assisting decision-makers at all levels is therefore a key contribution to the practice of river basin management. This theme would like to receive papers that explore various dimensions of tools, methodologies, formats, programmes and models that facilitate decision-making, conflict resolution and public deliberations.

#### **Workshop: Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture**

The CA ([www.iwmi.cgiar.org/assessment](http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/assessment)) is entering a synthesis phase, piecing together research, practice and ideas into an assessment of water, food, livelihoods, and environment. The assessment will contain information and policy-relevant messages on trends, present conditions, possible response options, and future scenarios and their implications for poverty and environment. Topics include rainfed agriculture, water productivity, fisheries, river basin management, water policies and institutions, with poverty,

environment, gender and health as cross cutting issues. This is a special CA discussion session to develop and debate assessment messages. You are welcome to join us to build an assessment that will help guide future investment decisions.

#### **Call for papers**

Abstracts, not exceeding 300 words, are invited on any of the conference themes. The abstracts should include the following information: Title, name, postal and email address of author(s) for correspondence and communication. Posters are encouraged as an alternative to papers. The deadline for submitting abstracts is 1st September 2004. Authors whose abstract has been accepted will receive instructions for preparation of a full paper. There are no strict rules for participation; but we favour contributions from those working in Africa who submit thoughtful, innovative 'policy-friendly' analyses. Abstracts should be copied to the two email addresses below.

In summary, the conference is expected to attract decision-makers, policy-analysts, academics, practitioners, NGO's, researchers and consultants who are interested in establishing a platform for the appropriate and carefully considered design of river basin management in Sub-Saharan Africa. We welcome your participation and support in making this conference a success.

#### **Venue**

Institute of Continuing Education, (ICE) Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro (Tanzania) is situated 200kms west of Dar Es Salaam (about 3 hours drive).

#### **Organizers**

Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) Henry Mahoo  
Soil Water Management network (SWMnet) Nuhu Hatibu  
International Water Management Institute (IWMI) Barbara van Koppen  
Overseas Development Group (ODG) Bruce Lankford  
Comprehensive Assessment (CA) David Molden  
Challenge Program for Water and Food (CPWF) Francis Gichuki

#### **Funding Organisations**

- Department for International Development (DFID)
- Comprehensive Assessment (CA)
- Challenge Programme for Water and Food (CPWF)

**Conference fee**

The fee for presenting a paper or attending the conference is expected to be US\$ 50, which covers meals, refreshments and photocopies, with participants covering all other costs such as accommodation and flights. The organizers reserve the right to reduce the admission fee for some participants (e.g. students).

**Key dates**

Deadline for submission of abstracts:	1 September 2004
Notification of acceptance:	1 October 2004
Distribution of Preliminary Programme with Registration Form:	1 December 2004
Submission of final manuscript:	1 January 2005

**For more information contact:**

**Website:** <http://eng.suanet.ac.tz/swmrg/rbmconference.htm>

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