

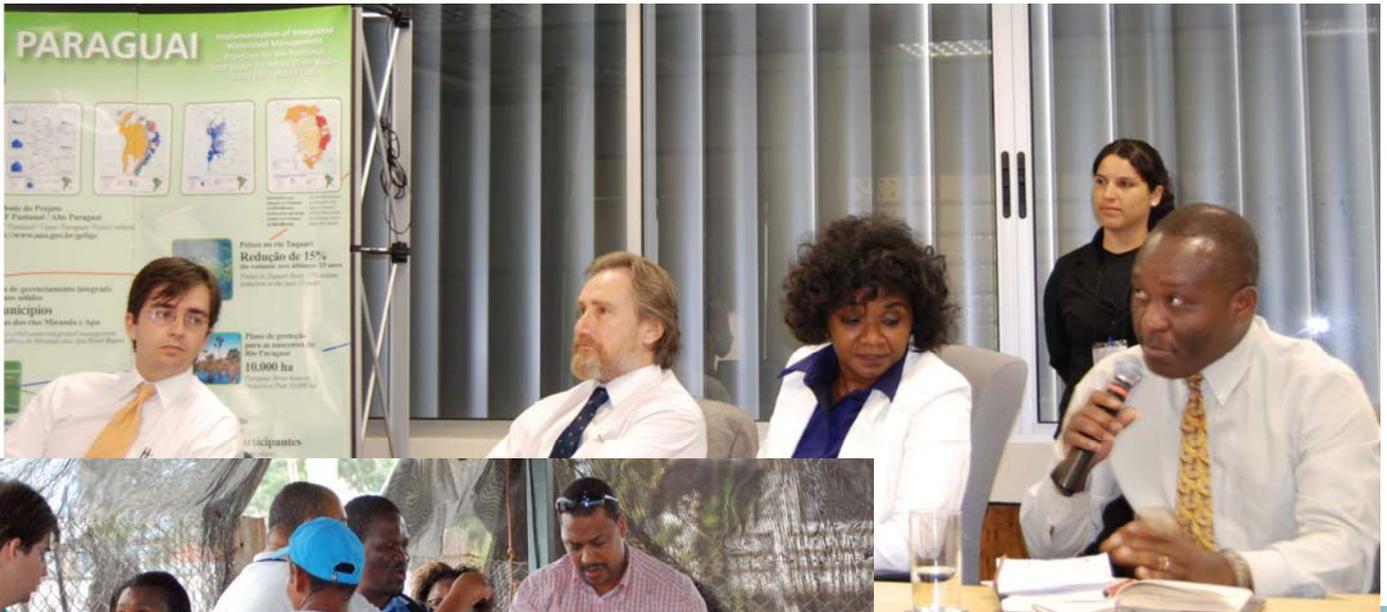
Technical Cooperation Visit

Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM)

and the

Agência Nacional de Águas (ANA) of Brazil

4-11 May 2008



This technical cooperation mission between the Okavango River Basin Water Commission and the National Water Agency of Brazil was organized by the Environmental Protection and Sustainable Management of the Okavango Project¹.

The mission was co-funded by ANA, the IW Learn Project, the FAO executed EPSMO project, UNDP and by OKACOM.

The Agência Nacional de Águas hosted the OKACOM delegation, organized a full repertoire of activities and presentations, accompanied the delegation on a number of extremely well selected site visits and ensured the highest level of representation from within ANA and civil society and government sectors.

From the onset this mission was organized with clear and targeted objectives. The main objective of the mission was to share knowledge on the execution of GEF Funded River Basin management projects. The ANA has extensive institutional experience executing basin management projects in a variety of situations. OKACOM on the other hand is in the process of implementing a comprehensive basin-wide project to develop a Trans-boundary Diagnostic Analysis and a Strategic Action Plan for the Okavango Basin. Furthermore, considering the Lusophone heritage shared between Angola (the upper Okavango riparian country) and Brazil this exchange presented opportunities to develop capacity and explore mutually beneficial training programs.

Furthermore, the Pantanal and the Upper Paraguay River Basin in Brazil has strikingly similar ecosystem characteristics to the Okavango system. But whereas in Brazil this river system is already under pressure from development activities, such pressures are only anticipated in the Okavango River Basin. ANA is currently in the process of developing a management system for Upper Paraguay River Basin thus providing a valuable learning opportunity for OKACOM.

The quality and relevancy of discussions and the high-level and involved participation by ANA especially marked this exchange visit.

Specifically, the exchange visit focused on the following:

1. common challenges currently facing ANA and likely to be faced by OKACOM in the management of the Okavango River Basin;
2. ANA case studies on the role of the TDA in understanding such challenges and in the development of solutions;
3. ANA case studies on SAP initiatives that can address these challenges and maintain the integrity of the river system;
4. a comparison of the dynamics of community and stakeholder participation in river basin management;
5. the role of the different actors in GEF International Waters Projects vis á vis Implementing Agency, Executing Agency, state actors, community organizations etc.,
6. project management in the context of river basin management, and,
7. a comparison on the role a flood dynamics on the preservation of the river biodiversity

¹ The Environment Protection and Sustainable Management of the Okavango River Basin Project is a joint initiative of the Governments of Angola, Botswana and Namibia represented by the Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) in partnership with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. This project is funded by the three governments and by a grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Results

The outcomes of the exchange are summarised below

1. the presentations made by ANA staff members on past and ongoing GEF projects provided the OKACOM delegation with clear understanding of the process and purpose of such projects. This will enable them to execute the Okavango project towards clear and defined goals,
2. likewise the presentations provided a clear understanding of the challenges faced by such projects ranging from the integration of multiple consultant reports to strategies for public participation,
3. the Brazilian institutional arrangements and the devolution of management responsibility to local levels informed possibilities for institutional reform among the three Okavango member countries,
4. a presentation on the role of ANA in the management of water resources in Brazil helped develop the role for OKACOM in its transformation from a Commission to a fully fledged River Basin Organization,
5. considering the near pristine status of the Okavango River Basin, the OKACOM delegation is now able to better appreciate the urgency to act and of the consequences of inaction. For an example ANA is now faced with the daunting task of reducing sediment and pollution inflow to the Pantanal. This requires negotiating with vested interests and involves an economic trade-off. Wise planning now can prevent a similar future in the Okavango.
6. OKACOM and ANA's experience in community participation in the execution of GEF projects in particular and in general river basin management resulted in a discussion that can lead to the development of better community participation strategies by both organizations,
7. a comparison and an increased understanding of the comparative advantage of and the role of research centres (i.e. the Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre and the Pantanal branch of the Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agro-Pecuária) in the management of river basins,
8. a comparison and an increased understanding of the comparative advantage of and the role of regional bodies (i.e. the Organization of American States and the Southern African Development Community) in the management of river basins.

Anticipated Follow-up Activities

This exchange visit was the first step towards a program of collaboration between ANA and OKACOM. The primary responsibility towards the continuation of this program lies with the OKACOM Secretariat.

Some of the possible collaborative activities include;

- Participation Angola National Directorate of Water staff in ANA training activities, especially in hydrology.
- Cooperation between the Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre (HOORC) and Pantanal branch of EMBRAPA (Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agro-Pecuária).
- Cooperation between EMBRAPA and Angolan research institutions

Program of Activities

03 May 2008: Arrival in Brasilia via São Paulo (for those members from Botswana and Namibia) and via Rio de Janeiro (for those members from Angola)

05 May 2008: Presentation at ANA, Agência Nacional de Águas

Dr. José Machado, ANA's President of the Board of Director, welcomed the OKACOM delegation to Brazil, Mr. Manuel Quintino, the National Coordinator for ANGOLA and staff member of the EPSMO PMU, made a presentation of the EPSMO activities in the Okavango River Basin.

After Mr. Quintino's presentation, officials from ANA made presentations on the following projects:

- ANAs role in the governance and management of Hydrological resources in Brazil - Sr. Paulo Verella
- Pubic Participation in the Management of Hydrological resources in Brazil - Sr. Wilde Gontijo
- GEF São Francisco – Sr. José Luiz de Souza
- GEF Amazonas – Sr. Humberto Gonçalves

In both presentations were stress the importance of TDA and SAP for the sound management on international rivers.

Topics like de-pollution of river basins and constitution of River Basin Committees were discussed as well.

The presentation resulted in a lively discussion that further involved a representative from UNESCO.

06 May 2008: Presentation at the ANA (continuation)

The second day included a tour of the ANA facilities and the following presentations and discussions:

- GEF Pantanal project - Sr. Humberto Gonçalves.
- Role of the OAS, Organization of American States in GEF projects – Sr. Nelson da Franca.

On the afternoon of 06 May 2008, the OKACOM delegation travelled to the city of Campo Grande, the capital of Rio Grande do Sul.

07 May 2008: Presentations at UCDB, Universidade Central Dom Bosco (Dom Bosco Central University)

After the welcome ceremony, Mr. Carlos Andrade of OBSC-Angola, made a presentation on OKACOM structures and its current activities. Afterwards, Mr. Manuel Quintino, the National Project Coordinator for Angola and staff member of EPSMO PMU made a presentation on EPSMO project.

After these presentations, the OKACOM delegation was presented on the following projects:

- Project “*Iscas Vivas*”(living baits) by the local NGO “*ECOIA*”. ECOIA works with a community of fishermen in Porto da Manga, in Pantanal area;

- River Tacuarí project. This project was presented by Dr. Filipe Dias, the head of GIS department at the UCDB;
- Integrated Management of River Basins. This project was presented by a representative of CIDEMA, *Consórcio dos Municípios dos Miranda e Apá* (the Consortium of Municipalities of the Rivers Miranda and Apá);
- Project on Continuous Environmental Education on Miranda and Apá River Basins. This project was presented by a representative of a local NGO “MUPAN” (*Mulheres em Acção no Pantanal*). MUPAN is a NGO actively working with women living in Pantanal area.

08 May 2008: Travel from Campo Grande to Corumbá

On the way to Corumbá, the OKACOM delegation had the opportunity to pass by Porto da Manga, and visit the results of activities carried out by local fishermen under the mentorship of ECOA.

09 May 2008: Visit to EMBRAPA Pantanal

The OKACOM delegation visited the Pantanal branch of EMBRAPA. EMBRAPA is the Brazilian enterprise in charge of Agriculture Research (*Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agro-Pecuária*).

Dr. Emiko, the Chief Researcher of Embrapa Pantanal, made a presentation on EMBRAPA’s Pantanal involvement on the Upper Paraguay River Basin

In the afternoon of this day the OKACOM delegation travelled back to Campo Grande.

10 May 2008: Travel to São Paulo (for members of Botswana and Namibia) and to Rio de Janeiro (for members of Angola)

11 May 2008: Trip back home

Members of the OKACOM delegation

ANGOLA

- Mr. Carlos Manuel Andrade
- Mr. Paulo Emilio Mendes
- Mr. Joaquim Pinto Tavares

BOTSWANA

- Ms. Portia Segomelo
- Mr. Kalaote Kalaote
- Ms. Tracy Molefi

NAMIBIA

- Ms. Laura Namene

UNDP – Angola

- Ms. Gabriela Nascimento

EPSMO PMU

- Mr. Chaminda Rajapakse
- Mr. Manuel Quintino