



# Outcomes of the 6<sup>th</sup> SADC Multi-stakeholder Water Dialogue



On:  
Exploring the water, energy and food nexus

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# Overview of the 2013 SADC Multi-Stakeholder Water Dialogue

The theme of the 2013 SADC Multi-stakeholder Water Dialogue was “**Watering Development in SADC: Exploring the water, energy and food nexus**”. The Multi-stakeholder Water Dialogue focused on the inextricable linkages between resources linked to water, energy and food sectors and on how the nexus approach can be used to enhance regional cooperation and development.

The nexus is how and where these three systems intersect, how these actions are related to one system and can impact one or both of the other systems. A nexus approach supports better resource use, efficiency and greater policy coherence. Conventional policy and decision-making is structured in 'silos' which makes it difficult to build synergies across sectors – a nexus approach allows for better interactions and synergies. With the current water, food and energy insecurities, business as usual is no longer an option if the SADC region is to achieve its goals of growth, poverty alleviation and regional integration. In implementing the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach in the region, the nexus perspective provides an opportunity to help interpret the interactions and further the application of IWRM on the ground. Improved water, energy and food security can be achieved through a nexus approach – which integrates management and governance across sectors and scales. In simple terms, food production demands water; water extraction, treatment, and redistribution demand energy and energy production requires water. Environmental pressures and climatic changes, as well as growing economies and populations, both intensify the existent relations between the three systems.

The Multi-stakeholder Water Dialogue is an annual event organised by the SADC Water Division to provide a forum for practitioners in the Water sector in the region to have a dialogue with water using and water influencing sectors. The Dialogue has been held since 2007 under the broad theme of: Watering Development in SADC and has been premised on raising the awareness and understanding of how IWRM can contribute to 'socio-economic development and poverty eradication' by ensuring a water secure region.

Stakeholders at the dialogue provide solutions and recommendations aimed at ensuring that water continues to enable socio-economic development in the region. The outcomes from the dialogue are taken forward into programmes and responses at different levels.





## OUTCOMES FROM THE 2013 LUSAKA DIALOGUE

### Nexus in the SADC region

The nexus discussion in the SADC region where most of the countries are developing is different from one in the developed countries. In the SADC region the discussion will focus on infrastructure development and strengthening institutions that can use the current resource endowment in order to grow economies. The nexus approach is therefore context based and in the SADC region enables growth and development. A number of policy instruments have been developed at the regional level which, take into cognisance the nexus approach. A number of policy documents, the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, the SADC Regional Water Policy, and the SADC Regional Infrastructure Plan all recognise the need for water, food and energy responses to be more integrated. However, it was recognised that more needs to be done in breaking down silos towards integrated planning and implementation of development imperatives.

### Stakeholders noted that:

The nexus approach and IWRM are not mutually exclusive and the nexus approach is a tool and not a dogma. It provides the region with an opportunity for coherent and well planned development and use of water, energy and food resources. Both policy and economic instruments (like pricing) are important in driving the nexus approach.

In order to drive the implementation of a nexus approach in the region the following issues were raised as key:

#### Identifying champions to drive the nexus approach

There is need to work with champions at different levels who can drive the nexus (like development planning at the national level and trade at the regional level).

#### Creating integrated platforms

For planning and implementation of the nexus integrated platforms, working within existing institutions need to be created. The platforms can lead in planning, managing and developing resources in the water, food and energy nexus. There is need to deepen the understanding of how these mechanisms can function at the different levels by learning from where it's working.



### **Engaging the private sector**

Private sector as a main user of the resource will need to be engaged actively in the nexus discussion. However, there is need for clear policies and regulations for engagement with private sector in order to protect the social responsibilities that governments have. The Water Stewardship Programme (WSP) being implemented by SADC and GiZ will go a long way in enabling the engagement with private sector. This interaction with private sector and government needs to be initiated through dialogues so as to drive implementation.

### **Reviewing the need to expand institutional mandates**

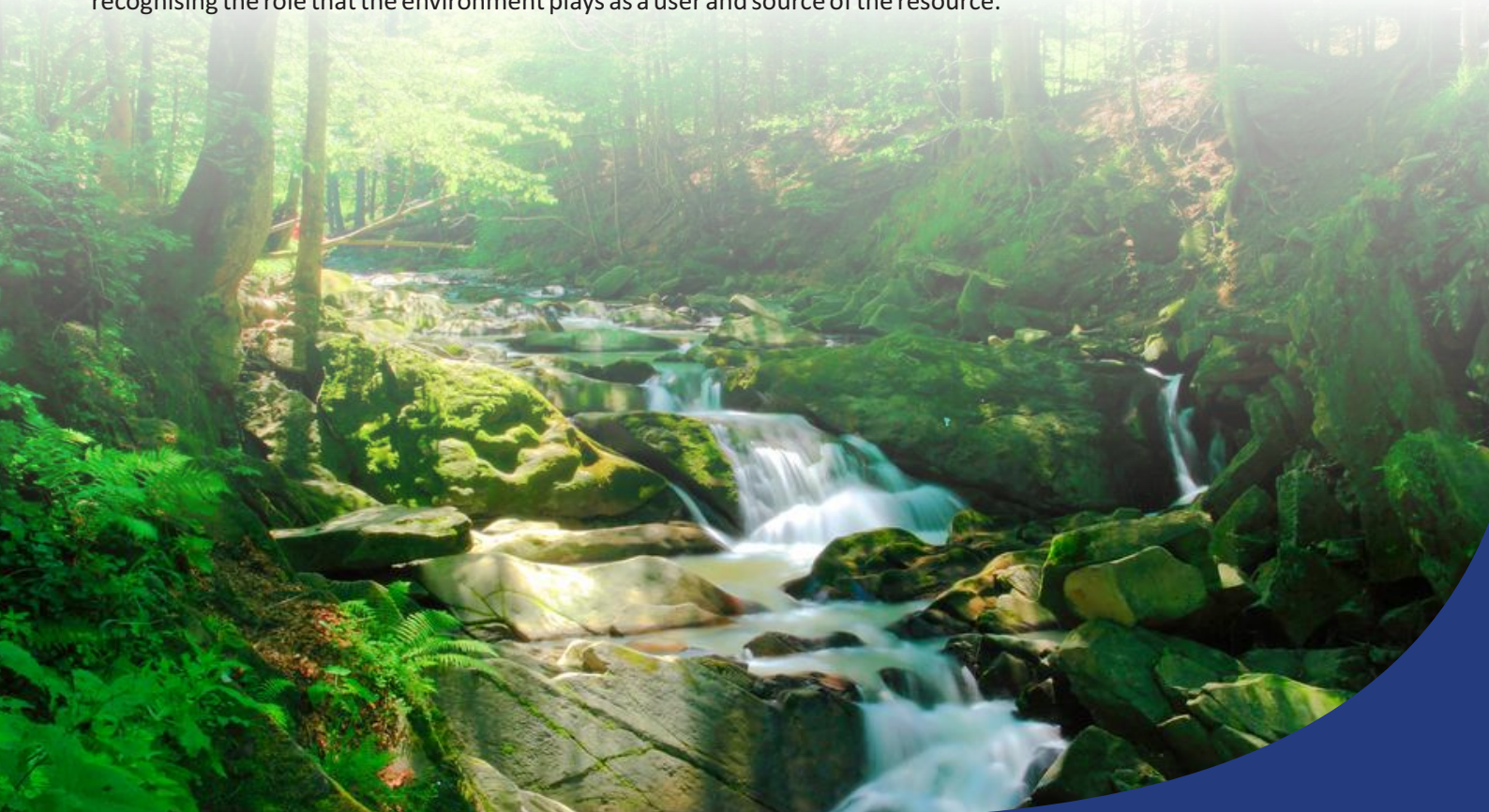
To be able to drive the nexus approach there is need to look at the potential of expanding the mandates of regional institutions like the RBOs. Expanding their mandate will allow these institutions to also contribute to basin wide development planning with other sectors like agriculture and energy.

### **Promote integrated research on the nexus approach**

In setting the research agenda there is need to bring the different sectors and players together from the on-set. This will require clear policies for integrative research which need to be developed. There is also need to build capacity on integrated research. Partnerships that will drive the nexus approach will need to be developed. For integrated research that contributes to development to be successful there is need to develop coordination mechanisms that drive the research.

### **Highlight the role of ecosystems in the nexus approach**

There is need to highlight the importance of the ecosystem in the nexus approach – through knowledge sharing, recognising the role that the environment plays as a user and source of the resource.





### Deepening the understanding of issues that will drive the nexus

There is need to understand the consequences of interventions in the different sectors by looking at the whole system. The link of the nexus with climate variability and climate change issues is important looking at how the nexus can contribute to building climate resilience. In order to also understand the water, food and energy nexus, countries in SADC need to learn from the development trajectory pathways of emerging markets (like China, Brazil and India) to influence decisions now on how to deal with the nexus issue.

### Recommendations from the Dialogue

The 2013 Dialogue noted the following issues and actions to be taken:

- Look at ways of institutionalising the nexus approach in policy instruments.
- Take the outcomes of this water dialogue beyond the WRTC – to other sectors energy and agriculture
- There is need to elevate the nexus discussion to the ministers in charge of water, energy and food
- Communicate the incentives for coordination and cooperation – by highlighting the impact of not cooperating
- Take forward the nexus discussion to the national level through the SADC National Water Weeks

