



Water and Land Resource Centres (WLRC) Project – phase III



Region

Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania

Partners

Centre for Development and Environment (CDE)

Background information

Most trans-boundary river basins in Eastern Africa face increasing water stress due to economic development and population growth.

Project target

To promote integrated water and land use management at the basin level in hot spot basins.

Beneficiaries

People living in targeted basins, from smallholders to policy makers.

Costs

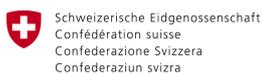
CHF 2,400,000

Duration

01.2016 – 12.2018

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Trans-boundary river basins in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania face multiple environmental, social and economic challenges which have considerable impact on hydro-political relations both within and beyond the respective countries. Evidence-based information on water and land management, synthesized as targeted knowledge products for policy and practice are crucial in supporting hydro-political negotiations and decision-making.

In phase I of the project, the Centre for Development and Environment and its local partners established two Water and Land Resource Centers (WLRC) in Ethiopia and Kenya. During phase I and II both Centers established hydro-meteorological observatories, which feed rich and open access data and information repositories, produced tailor made information products for various stakeholder groups and implemented transformative land and water management activities on the ground, such as learning watersheds. These efforts will be continued and strengthened in phase III.

The overall goal of the project is to improve sustainable water and land resource management and governance, secure environmental services and deal more effectively with inherent conflict in national and transnational river basins in the Eastern Nile and East Africa. It does so by generating knowledge for devolved processes of negotiation, planning, implementation and conflict resolution, with a view to balancing benefit-sharing and long-term preservation of water-related environmental services.

The WLRC in Ethiopia focuses on the Blue Nile Basin in the Ethiopian Highlands. In this basin, two interlinked important issues with transboundary implications are land degradation and hydro-sedimentology. Over the last centuries, water and land resources in the Ethiopian Highlands have been exposed to exploitative subsistence agriculture. This has had negative on- and off-site effects both in Ethiopia and in downstream countries. Increased sediment load in the Nile River, leading to siltation of downstream

hydropower and irrigation dams in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt, poses a major threat. At the same time, the productivity of rain-fed agriculture in the Ethiopian highlands is reduced due to loss of fertile soil and nutrients. Against this background, knowledge generation and dissemination of “best practices” of integrated water and land management technologies are essential in order to significantly increase food production, enhance water productivity, improve the livelihoods of subsistence farmers and reduce the potential for conflicts.

The WLRC Kenya focuses mainly on the Ewaso Ng’iro Basin (Kenya/Somalia) and the Pangani Basin (Kenya/Tanzania). Both basins are severely water stressed and pressure on water will continue to build up as a result of economic growth. In Kenya, devolved governance systems are in force since 2013, which effectively delegate water resources management and governance from the national to the basin level. Basin Water Committees emerge as important players in the sector and are the key addressee of information generated and capacity development by the WLRC. An additional important focus is the strengthening of Water User Associations in both Kenya and Tanzania.



Additional information:

www.cde.unibe.ch/research
www.wlrc-eth.org
www.cetrad.org