

THE ZAMBEZI

August - September 2002

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POVERTY ALLEVIATION - A PRIORITY FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA

By Teonissah Muzjora, Tafadzwa Sekeso and Maria Mutema

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has identified poverty; peace, security and stability; financing for sustainable development; health; and waste management as some of the core issues that need the world's attention at the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg.

This follows sub-regional consultations in preparation for the WSSD during which governments, civil society and the business community participated and major issues including water scarcity and land degradation were highlighted.

Sustainable development issues have taken precedence on the SADC agenda over the past 10 years and

WSSD has offered an opportunity to showcase what the regional body has done and continues to do as well as a forum to tell the world what the major issues of concern to the region are. The position the region has taken is in line with the United Nations' desire to afford every world citizen a decent standard of living.

The United Nations has over the

Inside...	
Cooperation key to sustainable management of the Zambezi basin	3
NEPAD: The challenges ahead	7
Hard facts and tough choices for Africa	8
SADC's common position on the WSSD	10
African Ministers commit to clean water provision and sanitation	11

past 30 years been grappling with human development issues and like the world body, the SADC states are anxious and want all the pillars of sustainable development addressed. On its part, the regional body has through the establishment of strategic partnerships involving governments, donors, non-governmental organisations and the private sector, enhanced the effective

Continued on page 4



DIWAF, South Africa

Clean water reduces the risk of diseases

SADC hailed for water quality strategy

Southern African Heads of State and Government have been hailed for taking a decision to develop a holistic regional approach towards integrated water resources management and development through the Regional Strategic Action Plan (1999-2004).

The decision is seen as a major step towards improving water quality in southern

Africa. This is the message carried by the recently launched Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) report. The report, published by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and Natural Resources (AMCEN) was launched in Kampala, Uganda.

The production of the AEO was coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and involved inputs from four collaborating centres, including the Southern

Continued on page 5

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The newsletter is published under the Sida-funded State of the Environment Zambezi Basin (SOE Zambezi) project. The aim is to inform people on the state of the environment in the basin and promote good environmental stewardship in the SADC region.

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EDITORIAL

Over the past 10 years, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has taken up the challenges laid out in Agenda 21, in particular the provision of information to enable people to make informed decisions.

Through forming partnerships with various groupings including non-governmental and international organisations, the inter-governmental body has implemented a number of initiatives aimed at providing up-to-date and accurate environmental information.

One such initiative is the Communicating the Environment Programme (CEP) that saw the establishment of a partnership involving the SADC Environment and Land Management Sector (ELMS), IUCN - The World Conservation Union Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA), and the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (IMERCSA) in 1992. The partnership has since grown and taken on board the SADC Water Sector Coordination Unit (SADC WSCU) and the Zambezi River Authority (ZRA).

The diverse natural resources in southern Africa and the interaction between availability and demand led to the creation of CEP. It was seen as of importance to have a pool of environmental information that allows for sustainable use and management of resources.

CEP's objective is to inform, motivate and empower people at all levels of environmental decision-making in southern Africa to take positive action to counter environmental degradation and move towards sustainable development paths.

CEP has produced accessible State of the Environment reports in Southern Africa, environmental fact-sheets and has seen the growth of an environment resource and documentation centre with bibliographic and contacts databases for environmental issues. A regional network collection of documents has also been established and this has proved indispensable for the region's researchers, students and general public.

A regional State of the Environment report (1994) was produced. Two regional thematic updates entitled Water in Southern Africa (1996) and Biodiversity of Indigenous Forests and Woodlands in Southern Africa (2000) have also been published by the CEP partnership. Reporting the Southern African Environment: A Media Handbook (1998) is another publication out of CEP that has helped to provide relevant information to the region's environment journalists.

Another initiative, born out of CEP is the State of the Environment Zambezi basin (SOE Zambezi) project.

A network of National Collaboration Centres (NCCs) in each of the eight riparian states further strengthens the SOE Zambezi project. The organisations work in partnership to effectively disseminate information about issues in the Zambezi basin. The NCCs are the Environment Council of Zambia (ECZ), the Coordination for the Rehabilitation of the Environment (Malawi), National Environment Management Council (Tanzania), Forum for Sustainable Agriculture (Botswana), Gabinete do Plano de Desenvolvimento da Região do Zambeze (Mozambique), Campfire Association (Zimbabwe), the Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (Namibia) and Development Workshop (Angola).

The long-term goal of SOE Zambezi is to contribute towards poverty alleviation by, among other things, promoting environmental citizenship by encouraging community involvement in implementing projects to conserve, restore and enhance the Zambezi basin natural resources.

The CEP partnership and NCC network has published State of the Environment Zambezi Basin 2000/Estado do Ambiente da Bacia do Zambeze 2000 and its summary/sunário, posters, fact-sheets, The Zambezi newsletter and a Photographic database in CD ROM format.

The CEP initiative has had spin offs for SADC's partners including SARDC, which because of the work they have done with the regional body, have been called upon to contribute to global programmes. SARDC as a regional information resource centre has been involved in the production of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)'s Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) and the Global Environment Outlook (GEO).

As former SADC chairperson and former Botswana president, Ketumile Masire said in the foreword to the first SOE: "To all of us, a process of information sharing is of critical importance if we are to participate actively in shaping the path of sustainable development."

Cooperation - a key to sustainable management of Zambezi river basin

By Bonifacio Antonio

Countries sharing the Zambezi basin have been urged to work together to guarantee integrated and sustainable management of the river basin. Eight countries, Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe share the basin.

Mozambique's Deputy Minister for Environment, Francisco Mabjaia made the call when he officiated at the launch of the Portuguese version of the State of the Environment Zambezi Basin 2000 book in Maputo recently. The book describes the physical, human and environmental characteristics of the basin.

Such collaboration, he said, "is a major challenge if we consider that integrated management of natural resources is something which has not been fully achieved either in individual countries, or in the region as a whole".

Mabjaia pointed out that, despite the existence of large rivers such as the Zambezi, most of southern Africa was arid. Poor rains in most parts of the region this year have brought this harsh reality to bear and worsened the situation. More than 12 million people are threatened with starvation due to the drought.

Also at the launch ceremony was Netherlands Ambassador to Mozambique, Arie Van der Wiel who echoed Mabjaia's sentiments on the need for collaboration in the management of the Zambezi basin.

"It is the main life-supporting blood vessel of these eight Southern African Development Community (SADC) basin states. As such, it needs to be managed on a regional basis," said Van der Wiel.

The Ambassador said in trying to manage the Zambezi basin at regional level, there are many challenges for all those involved including donors, policymakers, legislators, researchers, technicians, builders and people living in the basin.



Communities have for a long time worked together. Their involvement at all levels of sustainable water resources management is essential.

"We have to continue on the road of cooperation, exchange of information, cross-fertilisation of the various sectoral policies with essential measures to try to achieve poverty reduction on one hand, and the sustainability of the natural resources on the other. This book will help us on that road," he said.

He pointed out that it was crucial that the book be translated to help strengthen cooperation between the policymakers and the public in Mozambique and Angola as was happening in other riparian countries. This would help effectively manage the natural resources in the Zambezi basin.

"The Zambezi river basin starts and finishes in two Portuguese speaking countries - a large part of its headwa-

ters are in Angola and its delta lies in Mozambique. So that already is sufficient reason for translation" of this book, stressed the Netherlands Ambassador whose Mission financed production of the Portuguese version.

The book was produced by SADC through its two sectors of Environment and Land Management and Water Sector Coordination Unit, in partnership with IUCN - the World Conservation Union Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA), the Zambezi River Authority (ZRA) and the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (IMERCSA) with its network of National Collaborating Centres (NCCs) in all

Continued on page 9

Poverty alleviation - a priority for southern Africa

Continued from page 1

tiveness of development programmes.

"Effective partnerships provide the cornerstone of any sustainable strategy to reduce poverty and enhance growth. The SADC region, with over 200 million people accounts for nearly a third of the GDP of sub-Saharan Africa. The region is well endowed with natural resources, a well developed infrastructural network and a highly educated human resource base. However, despite this huge potential, SADC as a region, continues to face numerous development challenges, poverty being one of them," the HUB Focus, a SADC newsletter says.

It is this drive to reduce poverty to decent levels that has given SADC the incentive to make significant contribution during the processes that have led to the UN gathering. This dates back to the Human Environment conference in Stockholm in 1972.

At this conference, sustainable development, a term that can be traced back to the late 1800s when German Forest Management groups used it, was incorporated into the world body's affairs.

The Stockholm Declaration, noted that, "The natural resources of the earth, including the air, water, land,

flora and fauna, and especially representative samples of natural ecosystems, must be safeguarded for the benefit of present and future generations through careful planning or management..."

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) fine-tuned this definition of sustainable development when they produced the document entitled *Our Common Future*. Their definition has been used ever since.

The WCED defined sustainable development as "...Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs..."

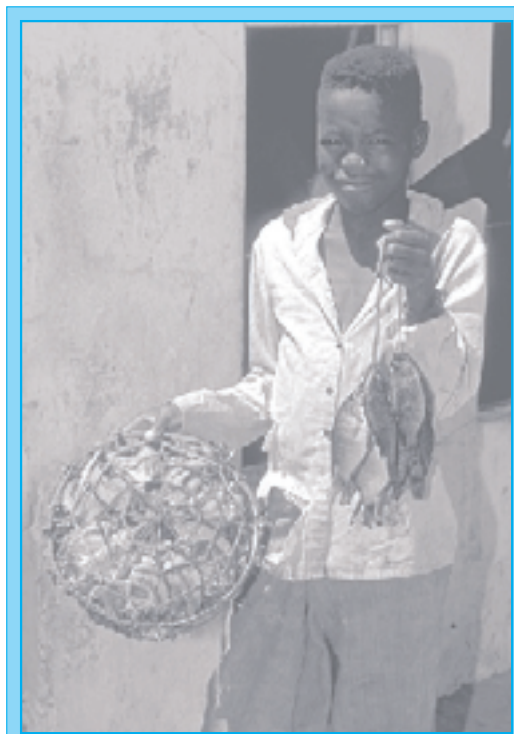
Realising the importance of sustainable development

worldwide, the UN then held the first ever environment and development conference dubbed the "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992.

A blueprint known as Agenda 21 was adopted which became the guide for governments, UN organisations, development agencies, non-governmental organisations and independent-sector groups, in every area in which human activity impacts on the environment.

To date, Agenda 21 remains the UN's blueprint for sustainable development.

The World Summit on Sustainable



Many people, particularly those in the rural areas have hope in the sustainable utilisation of natural resources



Women bear the brunt of unsustainable practices

Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa is a follow up to Rio 1992 and it is aimed at reinvigorating the Rio spirit. The focus of the WSSD is to strike a balance between the three pillars of sustainable development, which are environment, social, and economic as well as show that these are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

To ensure wide stakeholder participation in the WSSD, a process of consultation took place at various levels throughout the world. The processes were held at local, national, sub-regional, regional and international levels and made input into four Preparatory Committees (PrepComs) held before the Summit.

Dr. Hespina Rukato, Director of South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, says the major objective of the WSSD

Continued on page 5



The abundant wildlife offered by aquatic ecosystems, form the backbone of the tourism industry in southern Africa. Hippos offer tourists and local people a spectacular view and they are found on the Zambezi river

D. Martin, APG

Poverty alleviation a priority...

Continued from page 4

preparatory process, was to mobilise awareness, interest and involvement amongst all stakeholders. It was also to ensure an “organic” link between effective contributions from national and regional processes to the global preparatory process.

The processes that took place include national reviews of Agenda 21 over 10 years and regional and sub-regional assessments, which also formulated regional platforms for follow-up actions. The national and regional preparatory processes that date back to the year 2000, made input into the global process.

The issues drawn from these preparatory committees were:

- F poverty eradication;
- F changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production;
- F protecting and changing the natural resource base for economic and social development;
- F sustainable development in a globalising world;
- F health and sustainable development;

- F sustainable development of small island developing states;
- F sustainable development initiatives for Africa – such as the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD);
- F means of implementation; and
- F strengthening governance for sustainable development at the national, regional and international levels.

A political statement adopted by Heads of State and Government, a global implementation document and a record of commitments and partnerships are some of the expected outcomes.

Some of the questions for the Johannesburg Summit include:

- F What accomplishments have been made since 1992?
- F How have participating countries been implementing Agenda 21?
- F How many, if any, of the conventions adopted at Rio in 1992, have been ratified?
- F What obstacles have been encountered?

- F What lessons have been learnt about what works and what does not work?
- F What new issues have emerged to change the situation?
- F Where should they focus efforts?

The WSSD should focus the world’s attention and direct action on striving towards meeting challenges such as improving quality of life through conserving natural resources and dealing with rising demands for food, water, shelter, sanitation, energy, health services and economic security.

Since the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, the economic, social and environmental pillars of development have not been fully embraced to provide for a very sustainable future. The Johannesburg Summit therefore presents an opportunity for today’s leaders to adopt concrete steps and identify quantifiable targets to better implement the Agenda 21 mandate.

But Johannesburg’s major challenge will be to bridge the growing gap between commitment and implementation and also encourage the developed world to help sustain Africa’s environment. □

SADC Hailed...

Continued from page 1

African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) which covered southern Africa.

The report notes that freshwater resources in southern Africa are under pressure from pollution, particularly in urban areas. High localised coliform counts have been observed in water sources near major settlements within the Zambezi river basin, including the Victoria Falls, Khami dam near Bulawayo and the Kafue river in Zambia.

Coliform bacteria cause intestinal infections and diarrhoea if allowed into drinking water. Diarrhoea is a major cause of death in the region, especially among children, and the main cause is poor water quality and sanitation. □

Water issues and solutions showcased at WSSD

Time for theorising about water issues is gone. It is now time for people to show what they have done and continue to do to increase access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation.

Realising that the continent is hard hit with problems related to water, the Africa Water Taskforce has put the resource high on the agenda of the World Summit and organised a WaterDome. It is in the WaterDome that 'water' will become everybody's business.

The major goal of the WaterDome is to increase awareness around issues related to water during the Summit. It has offered a unique opportunity for organisations working in water to showcase to the world that water is at the crossroads of development and the environment.

Water is one of the five areas the United Nations has identified where concrete results are not only essential, but also achievable. The other areas are energy, agricultural productivity, biodiversity, ecosystem management and health.

"These are five areas in which progress would offer all human beings a chance of achieving prosperity that will not only last their own lifetime, but can be enjoyed by their children and grandchildren too," said UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan.

The Africa Water Taskforce, set up during a meeting of the African Development Bank (AfDB), took the challenge of making African water issues visible during WSSD.

The WaterDome is also aimed at increasing awareness on the important initiatives that are being launched to solve the worldwide water crises such as water shortages, floods, inadequate sanitation and unavailability of clean drinking water.

More than one billion people are without safe drinking water and twice that number lack adequate sanitation

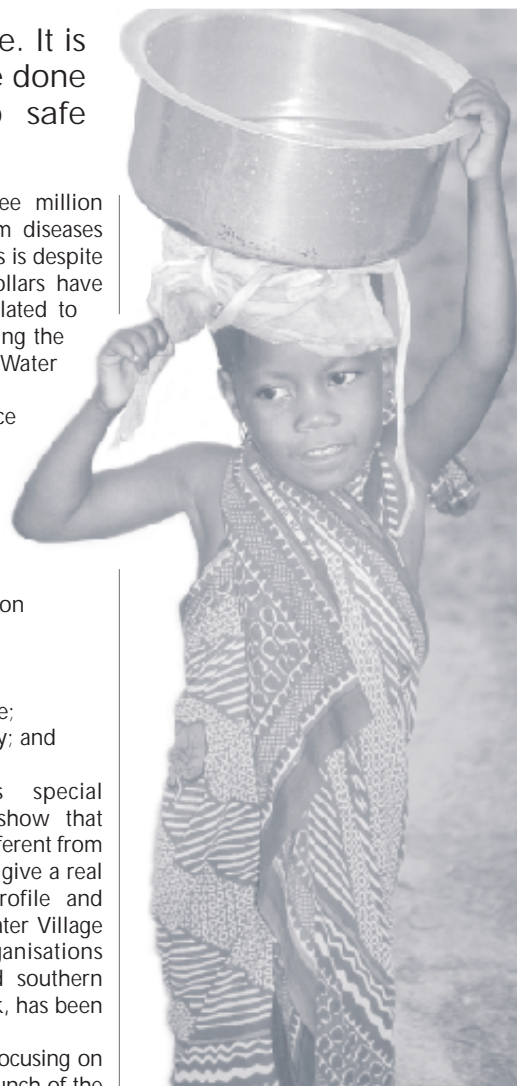
worldwide. More than three million people die every year from diseases caused by unsafe water. This is despite the fact that millions of dollars have been spent on activities related to water and aimed at improving the situation, the Africa Water Taskforce says.

Six themes of significance to Africa have been identified and each will be allocated a day during which activities around it will take place. The themes are:

- F water, regional integration and finance;
- F water and food security;
- F water and nature;
- F water, energy and climate;
- F water, health and poverty; and
- F water and globalisation.

The WaterDome has special emphasis on Africa. To show that water issues in Africa are different from the rest of the world and to give a real African feeling, a high profile and centrally located African Water Village with huts in which organisations working in east, west and southern Africa will exhibit their work, has been set up in the WaterDome.

Other activities aimed at focusing on African water issues is the launch of the Africa Water Taskforce position paper for the World Summit and a book entitled *Defining and Mainstreaming Environmental Sustainability in Water Resources Management in Southern Africa*, published by SADC and its partners, namely IUCN - the World Conservation Union Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA), the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) Musokotwane



D. Martin, APC

Fetching water often takes precedent over school work for the girl child.

Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (IMERCSA), the Africa Water Resources Management Initiative (AWRMI) and the Environment Department of the World Bank, with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). □

NEPAD: The challenges ahead

By Miretsi Madkufaita

A new chapter has been opened in African history with the launch on 9 July, 2002 of the African Union (AU) and formal adoption of its implementation plan, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Touted as a home-grown development plan, NEPAD is the new hope for Africa, a continent whose myriad of problems, self-inflicted or otherwise, have been well documented. The challenges ahead are many.

NEPAD is an initiative by African leaders unveiled at the Lusaka Organisation of African Unity (OAU) summit last year, and formally adopted in Durban. It is based on a common vision to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development in Africa, as well as making the continent a key global player.

For the African leaders, the immediate challenge after successfully launching the new institution, the AU, and formally adopting NEPAD as its development framework, is to broaden understanding of NEPAD whose language has been hitherto spoken only by the political leaders, with little or no participation by the people most affected by the current problems besetting Africa.

One of the reasons previous development plans such as structural adjustment programmes, popularly known as SAPs, failed is that they excluded grassroots people in their approach, from formulation to implementation. Without the support of the people, NEPAD would be destined for failure.

However, it has not been the intention of the founders of NEPAD to implement it on their own. Like all political initiatives, the programme will be a trickle-down affair. After its adoption, it is now up to the various stakeholders, the private sector,

community-based organisations and others, to buy into the programme and play a part. The stage has been set.

But before the founders can wear NEPAD off to other stakeholders, they have to raise the estimated US\$64 billion needed to ensure that the programme achieves its goals and objectives. It is not going to be easy

better use its natural resources, diversify the range of products it produces and improve access to outside markets. As Thabo Mbeki, South African President and first AU chairperson, says, Africa has to "cease being merely an exporter of raw materials" and start adding value to its agriculture and mineral outputs".

For example, Africa's vast agricultural potential can be improved by better water security and management, embarking on sustainable land and agrarian reforms that guarantee security of ownership and open up new lines of credit and financing for smallholder farmers. The capacity can also be unlocked by employing new farming methods, better transport, storage and marketing of agricultural produce. NEPAD has listed these as some of



Provision of decent housing is one of the challenges Africa faces.

unless there is a drastic change in the way Africa does business with the rest of the world.

The US\$64 billion is expected to come from internal sources as well as from the traditional overseas development assistance. Early critics of the development plan however, say Africa has to provide the bulk of these resources if the programme is to preserve its independence and avoid foreign manoeuvrings.

It is possible to raise some of these resources locally only if Africa can

the initiatives it will put in place to mobilise local resources.

NEPAD's goals and objectives are as many as the hardships that afflict the continent today. They range from improving economic growth, to achieving international development, and these will remain its long-term challenges.

Specific to the environment and water management is NEPAD's vision of conserving wetlands and supporting coastal management programmes. If Africa has to realise its agricultural

Continued on page 9

Southern Africa faced with hard facts and tough choices

Southern Africa together with the rest of the continent has tough choices to make as it faces a future of increased air and water pollution, land degradation, droughts and wildlife losses. The region faces problems of climate variability as floods and droughts continue to haunt it.

Floods and droughts have had impact on vegetation systems, biodiversity, freshwater availability, food production and air quality, says the Africa Environment Outlook (AEO), a report recently launched by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in partnership with four centres of excellence from the African continent.

The report calls for urgent action to ensure the delivery of environmentally friendly development for Africa and its people.

The Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) was one of the four centres that helped prepare the report coordinated by UNEP. The other centres are:

- F the Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), North Africa;
- F the Network for Environment and Sustainable Development (NESDA), West Africa;
- F Indian Ocean Commission Regional Environment Programme (IOC-REP), Indian Ocean Islands.

Association pour le Développement de l'Information Environnementale (ADIE), Central Africa and a consortium of experts coordinated by National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Uganda who covered east Africa assisted in compiling the report.

SARDC coordinated the compilation of the southern Africa report of the AEO. The report notes that southern Africa's atmosphere, biodiversity,

forests, freshwater, land and urban areas are facing increasing pressure from increased population and various activities. Natural disasters such as floods and droughts have added their share of environmental problems on the sub-region.

The AEO estimates that over the next 30 years, new threats including climate change, the unchecked spread of alien species, uncontrolled expansion of cities and pollution from cars and industry are likely to aggravate levels of poverty, environmental decline and ill health in the sub-region in particular and on the continent as a whole.

While some attempts are being made to address some of the environmental problems and their root causes through initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the AEO feels "a far bigger effort, by African countries and the world at large is needed to steer the continent on a prosperous and environmentally sustainable course".

The report recommends cuts in Africa's debt, a boost in international aid, local community empowerment, enforcement of international environmental agreements, introduction of cleaner production and fair access to international markets for African goods and services as some of the actions that should be taken to avert an environmental disaster on the continent.

"Without this, Africa is unlikely to develop in a way that benefits its people, its landscapes and its wildlife

and ultimately the world," the report says.

The report was prepared for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and Natural Resources (AMCEN) and saw the involvement of hundreds of experts. It is the most comprehensive and authoritative assessment of the continent's environment ever produced.

UNEP's Executive Director, Klaus Toepfer, told the launching ceremony in Kampala, Uganda recently that the "pioneering assessment on the state of Africa's environment will be invaluable for governments and the continent and the whole world in prioritising efforts to achieve a new dawn for these lands".

"The right decisions cannot be made without the right facts. We have those here in the AEO. It chronicles where Africa has been, where it is now and possible directions for the future with an array of positive and negative consequences," he said.

He noted that resources, both financial and technological were available to build Africa and improve the lives of its people and to conserve its amazing biological diversity.

"There is a new and more supportive mood in the international community to overcome Africa's difficulties and there is a new resolve among African nations to cooperate in achieving an environmentally-friendly future. I urge countries across the world to take the findings from the AEO and finally seize the opportunity to deliver responsible prosperity to this continent," Toepfer said. (UNEP) □

Cooperation - a key to sustainable management of Zambezi river BASIN

Continued from page 3

the eight riparian states. The NCCs are:

- F Environment Council of Zambia;
- F Coordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment, Malawi;
- F National Environment Management Council, Tanzania;
- F Forum for Sustainable Agriculture, Botswana;
- F Gabinete do Plano de Desenvolvimento da Região do Zambeze, Mozambique;
- F Campfire Association, Zimbabwe;
- F Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, Namibia;
- F Development Workshop, Angola.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) funded the production of the book, which marks the first time that an assessment of a single ecosystem has been reported on in southern Africa.

Publication of the book is one of several activities of the State of the Environment Zambezi basin (SOE

Zambezi) project. Other activities include publication of The Zambezi newsletter, factsheets and posters.

Translation of the publication into Portuguese is one attempt at establishing a comprehensive environmental awareness programme involving all stakeholders in the eight riparian states of the Zambezi river including the Portuguese-speaking people of Mozambique, Angola and beyond.

The English version was launched at both national and regional levels in 2000. The national launches took place in respective riparian states while the regional launch took place in Windhoek, Namibia, coinciding with a SADC Summit.

The book aims at stirring people from the eight riparian states into taking actions that ensure sustainable use and management of the basin's natural resources.

The Zambezi river basin, covering an area of about 1.3 million square kilometres is home to an estimated

38.4 million people. More than 30 large dams have been built in the basin for domestic and industrial use, water supply, irrigation and power generation.

The book, which among other issues talks about threats to the Zambezi basin's biodiversity, including over-exploitation of resources, habitat loss and pollution, is 334 pages long and contains 13 chapters plus a foreword by the Mozambican President and then SADC Chairperson, Joaquim Chissano. In the foreword, President Chissano points out the importance of information even at the highest level of political decision-making.

The 13 chapters of the book are divided into three distinct sections. Section one provides background information on the people and physical aspects of the basin. The second section deals with social and environmental issues while the last section deals with trends and scenarios. □

NEPAD: The challenges ahead

Continued from page 7

potential, the continent has to make use of the vast water resources it has and this can only be done through proper management of wetlands.

The Zambezi being one of the largest river basins in Africa can be a source of livelihood for residents of southern Africa now and for generations to come if NEPAD's proposals become a reality.

NEPAD has proposed sustainable access to water and sanitation and is advocating for national and regional cooperation and development in shared rivers. It is also hoping to address issues

related to climate change. These are areas in which some organisations are already working and having political support at the highest level could bring about better results.

Another major NEPAD development is to achieve and sustain an annual gross domestic product growth rate of seven percent in order to halve the number of Africans living in poverty by 2015.

However, current statistics would suggest that the target is less likely to be within the realm of possibility for many African countries. The average

annual continent-wide GDP growth rate is only around three percent.

However, African leaders say such goals are achievable, but only if certain conditions are fulfilled. These include a commitment by governments to practise the principal elements of good governance including strengthening democracy, achieving peace and security, and confronting corruption.

Mbeki summed it when he said: "We have to aim for measurable advances and not be satisfied merely to report that we met and adopted good resolutions". □

SADC common position on the WSSD

Following sub-regional consultations in preparation of the WSSD, in which governments, civil society and the business community participated, SADC agreed on core issues to be considered in the formulation of the Africa position for the WSSD. The core issues which the region wants addressed by the international community are:

- **poverty** which is prevalent in the SADC sub-region and is the primary constraint to socio-economic development;
- **peace, security and stability** which are a basic requirement for sustainable development;
- **financing for sustainable development**, including a transformation and increased access to financial mechanisms such as the Global Environmental Facility;
- **health**, bearing in mind that developing countries are currently burdened by communicable diseases. HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria are exacerbated by the region's poor socio-economic conditions;
- **waste management** – poor waste management including hazardous waste, is a core contributor to environmental degradation, health hazards, over-exploitation and depletion of scarce resources;
- **food security** – there is insufficient, inadequate access and inequitable distribution of food in the SADC region;
- **energy** which plays an important role in facilitating social, economic and environmental objectives. At least 80 percent of the people in SADC are still dependent almost exclusively on traditional sources of energy;
- **climate change** – noting with concern the current and potential future impacts of climate change on the SADC sub-region, particularly sea level rise and extreme weather events such as floods and droughts;
- **biodiversity** – calling for the support of the implementation of the OAU/AU's Model Law for the Protection of the Rights of Local Communities, Farmers and Breeders, and for the Regulation of Access to Biological Resources and the OAU/AU's Draft African Biosafety Model Law;
- **water scarcity** which is a problem in many parts of the SADC sub-region and the water resource is under constant threat from pollution;
- **land degradation and desertification** – the majority of people in the SADC sub-region directly depend on land resources for their livelihoods;
- **market access**, noting with concern that the benefits of economic globalisation have not been fairly shared across nations; and
- **capacity building and technology transfer**, noting that the technology gap has widened significantly between the region and the developed countries since 1992, in particular, the development benefits of Information and Communication Technology. This situation needs to be addressed with technology transfer, information exchange and technology partnerships.

SADC also wants the WSSD to agree on a Johannesburg Plan of Action to meet its targets in the period 2002 – 2012. (*SADC Today*)

African Ministers commit to clean water provision and sanitation

Eight African Ministers of Water Affairs have committed themselves to providing running water and sanitation to their people by 2015.

This emerged at an African Sanitation Conference in Johannesburg recently where delegates heard that more than half of the continent's people do not enjoy access to running water or sanitation.

On the eve of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa, some residents of Alexandra Township, a stone's throw from the summit venue at Sandton City, still suffer from water borne diseases and malnutrition. They have no access to running water or sanitation.

Margaret Zwane is one of the residents who have been using the bucket system for the past 30 years. She shares her toilet with her neighbours, exposing her children to diseases. African governments are, however, unanimous that the problem facing Zwane and about half of the continent's people will soon be a thing of the past.

Ronnie Kasrils, South Africa's Water Affairs Minister, says: "This is the way to stop water borne diseases such as dysentery and cholera that kill 6000 people, internationally, a day and many of them are children."

Nigeria, with a water budget that is even more than that of the army, says it is confident the WSSD will bear results for the continent.

Water debates at the WSSD will mainly take place at the WaterDome, one of the major venues for parallel events. The WaterDome will host all events relating to water, one of the world's most important resources.— WSSD Infor News. □



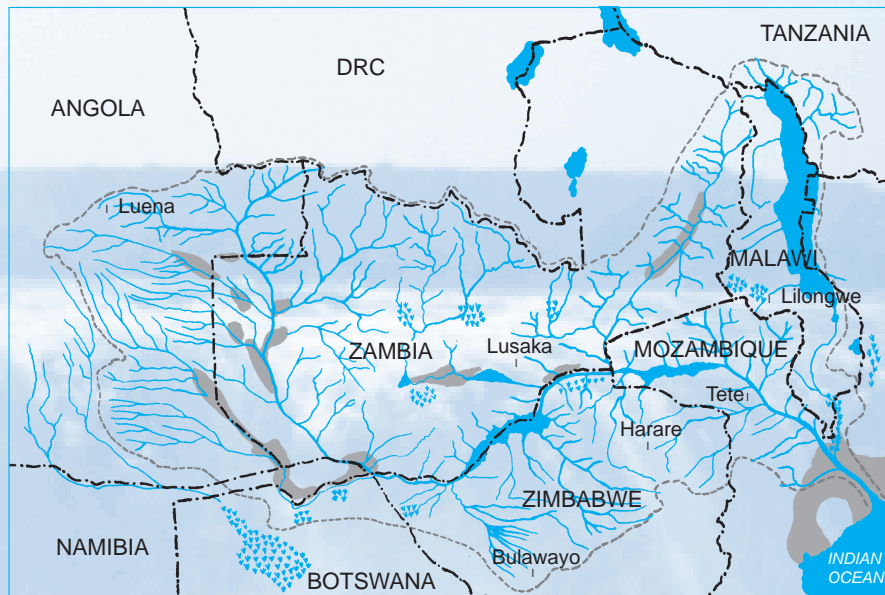
DWAf, South Africa

Involvement of communities in the design and implementation of water projects is crucial

The following National Collaborating Centres (NCCs) can provide information on the SOE Zambezi project:

- ◆ the Environment Council of Zambia;
- ◆ the Coordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment, Malawi;
- ◆ the National Environment Management Council, Tanzania;
- ◆ the Forum for Sustainable Agriculture, Botswana;
- ◆ Gabinete do Plano de Desenvolvimento da Região do Zambeze (GPZ), Mozambique;
- ◆ Campfire Association, Zimbabwe;
- ◆ the Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, Namibia; and
- ◆ Development Workshop, Angola.

THE ZAMBEZI



THE ZAMBEZI BASIN AT A GLANCE

- The Zambezi basin is the most shared in southern Africa and third largest in Africa after the Congo and the Nile.
- The Zambezi drains a total area of over 1.32 million sq kms., stretching across eight countries - Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- The Zambezi river rises on the Central African Plateau in the Kalene Hills in north-western Zambia to its delta in Mozambique before flowing into the Indian Ocean.
- The basin takes up approximately 25 percent of the total geographic area of the riparian countries, estimated at 5.6 million sq kms.
- At least 38.4 million of SADC's estimated 200 million people live within the basin.
- Some of the major urban areas in the basin include Luena in Angola, Kasane in Botswana, all urban centres in Malawi, Tete in Mozambique, Katima Mulilo in Namibia, virtually all urban areas in Zambia including the capital Lusaka, and most of the cities in Zimbabwe, including Harare.
- Victoria Falls, popularly referred to as one of the seven natural wonders of the world, along with lakes such as Kariba and Cahora Bassa, (which supply electricity to some of the countries in the region), are all located on the Zambezi river.
- The largest natural fresh water lake in the basin is Lake Malawi/Nyasa that covers 28,000 sq kms and is Africa's third largest fresh water lake after Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika.

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