

A case study: The Development of A Comprehensive IncoMaputo Agreement by Moçambique, Swaziland and South Africa

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Abstract

The Incomati and Maputo Watercourses (Figure 1) are shared by Moçambique, South Africa and Swaziland. The need for co-operation by the parties to ensure the best joint utilization of the water goes back a number of decades to an agreement between South Africa and Portugal in 1964, to which Swaziland acceded in 1967 on the best joint utilization of rivers of common interest, in Moçambique. The Governments of Moçambique, South Africa and Swaziland have been collaborating in the exchange of information, agreements on sharing of water, and joint studies since the early 1980s. The Tripartite Permanent Technical Committee (TPTC), responsible for providing advice to the three watercourse States, matters relating to the utilization, development and management of water resources of common interest, was established in 1983. Its membership comprises senior officials from the respective water departments of each of the three countries. The TPTC meets approximately three times per year.

During the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in August 2002 the Tripartite Interim Agreement for Co operation on the Protection and Sustainable Utilization of the Incomati and Maputo Watercourses (IIMA) was signed by Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland. The general objective of the IIMA is to promote co-operation among the Parties to ensure the protection and sustainable utilization of the water resources of the Incomati and Maputo Watercourses. The IIMA is an interim agreement to formalise the water use, water resource development and management and the exchange of information to enable the parties to proceed with much needed development in a spirit of co-operation until a more comprehensive agreements have been concluded for the two watercourses. The IIMA is also an agreement concluded under the umbrella of the Revised SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses. This makes it a milestone agreement in transboundary water management in the Southern Region.

This paper describes the process the three member states embarked on in developing the Comprehensive Agreement and also include the two joint river basin studies undertaken for the Inkomati and Maputo. The results of which were aimed at supporting the three countries in their efforts to reach agreement on:

sustainable development, alignment of objectives, coordination of management, sharing of benefits of the resources, while respecting the sovereignty of each country regarding its policies and subjects.

Figure 1: The Incomati and Maputo Watercourses



Keywords: Shared Watercourses, Integrated Water Resources Management,

Water Resources, Transboundary.