



OKACOM

*The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission
Comissão Permanente das Águas da Bacia Hidrográfica do Rio Okavango*

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

European Union Transfers Equipment to Support OKACOM's Transboundary Water Management Programme

Gaborone, 12 October 2021

A handover and signing ceremony took place at the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) Secretariat, to officially receive equipment and materials for the 5-year EU-OKACOM *Programme for the Transboundary Water Management of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin*. The equipment handover document was signed by the EU Ambassador to Botswana H.E Jan Sadek and the OKACOM Executive Secretary, Mr Phera Ramoeli. The EU's support to OKACOM is improving governance within the Cubango-Okavango River Basin (CORB) through an enhanced Decision Support System. The EU procured equipment valued at 2 million Euro to improve water monitoring across the member states of Angola, Botswana and Namibia. The event was also attended by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Land Management, Water and Sanitation, Ms. Bonolo Khumotaka, who serves as Co-Chairperson for Botswana on the OKACOM Council of Commissioners, on behalf of the three member states.

The transfer includes equipment for eight hydro-meteorological stations within the Basin, water monitoring boats and sediment coring boats, vehicles and ICT equipment to enhance data analysis. The technology will allow OKACOM to gather different streams of data, including water levels, flows, temperatures, biological and chemical water quality, sediment dynamics, and historical patterns of droughts and floods. Collected from water, land and space, this data will feed into an EU-supported Decision Support System to provide science-based advice to policy-makers in the three member states. The ceremony also viewed and recognised a newly refurbished office wing housed at the OKACOM Secretariat which accommodates the EU funded Project Management Unit team.

“The Okavango Delta is a globally important wetland oasis for a myriad of bird species, a World Heritage Site, and one of the most iconic wilderness areas on the planet,” said EU Ambassador Jan Sadek. “But the entire Okavango Basin is under threat from pollution, excess water extraction, deforestation, climate change, and potential oil drilling. The main reasons the EU is supporting OKACOM's water management programme is to help protect the river, its priceless flora and fauna, and the half a million people who depend on it for their livelihoods, from these serious threats.”

Speaking at the event, the OKACOM Executive Secretary noted that “The objective of the EU support through is very much aligned to the OKACOM Strategic Action Plan which looks at promoting and strengthening the integrated, sustainable management, use and development of the Basin's resources. The member states welcome the opportunity to benefit from this partnership which is well in line with the Basin's shared vision.”

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Background Information

- The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM), is a river basin organisation established by the three riparian states of Angola, Botswana and Namibia to jointly manage water resources of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin (CORB).
- The CORB is a transboundary basin with a network of river systems traversing through Angola, Botswana and Namibia.
- The Transboundary Water Management Programme in the Cubango-Okavango River Basin is the European Union's support to the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) of OKACOM, endorsed in April 2018 and implemented through OKACOM Secretariat in Gaborone, Botswana.

For more information, please contact:

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