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**Report of the First Steering Committee Meeting of the  
UNEP/GEF Volta River Basin Project: Addressing  
Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its  
Downstream Coastal Area**

**Bamako, 13-15 May 2008**



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Cover illustration: Group photograph of participants, 1<sup>st</sup> Project Steering Committee Meeting

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The First meeting of the UNEP-GEF Volta River Basin Project Steering Committee was held in Bamako, Mali on 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> May 2008. The meeting opening ceremony was attended by two government ministers, the Minister of Environment and Sanitation and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Water, while the technical session was chaired by Mr. Souleymane Cissé, Technical Advisor in the Ministry of Environment and Sanitation, Bamako, Mali.

The meeting was attended by Government officials (National Institutional Focal Points for the Project) as well as representatives of the Implementing Agency UNEP/DGEF, the Executing agencies UNOPS and the UNEP Collaborating Centre (UCC), and the Volta Basin Authority. Representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations and Research Institutions as well as representatives of the project partners and representatives of government technical services in Mali also attended the meeting as observers.

The main objectives of the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the UNEP/GEF Volta Project Steering Committee were as follows:

- Present, discuss and adopt the inception report (including updated project brief);
- Inform all PSC members on the status and results of the projects inception phase;
- Reach agreement on the Project implementation strategy and Project work plan and budget (including the first year work-plan and budget);
- Detail collaboration and partnership opportunities in the Volta Basin.

The decisions and recommendations of the first UNEP/GEF Volta River Basin Project Steering Committee meeting are presented in this report.



## THE DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VOLTA RIVER BASIN PROJECT 1<sup>ST</sup> PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the UNEP/GEF Volta River Basin Project Steering Committee, was held in Bamako, Mali from 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008. The Project Steering Committee reviewed the Inception Report presented, including revised activities, budget, monitoring and evaluation plan and implementation arrangements for the project, and noted with appreciation the progress made during the Inception Phase of the project since December 2007.

The Project Steering Committee made the following decisions and recommendations:

### I. To the Project Management Unit (PMU)

1. **Requests** the PMU to implement the first year proposed activities, taking into consideration suggestions for improvements made by the Project Steering Committee;
2. **Requests** the PMU to prepare project documents for the demonstration projects, based on available reports prepared during the PDF-B phase of the UNEP/GEF Volta Project. Consideration should be given to new initiatives, baseline data, realistic budgets, relevant indicators, and a plan for their long-term sustainability;
3. **Requests** the PMU to provide guidelines on the method of reporting and monitoring of the cash and in-kind co-financing from partners and participating countries by July 2008;
4. **Requests** the PMU to provide a detailed project budget to all members of the Steering Committee by July 2008;
5. **Recommends** that clear mechanisms should be developed in order to give a material and methodological support to the National Institutional Focal Points and the National Implementation Committees to enable them to successfully fulfil their functions within the project;
6. **Noted** the importance of countries to ratify the Volta River Basin Convention. **Acknowledged with satisfaction** the ongoing efforts between the UNEP/GEF Volta Basin Project and the Volta Basin Authority to establish a mechanism for cooperation and collaboration between the two partners. (Details of which will be drafted and included as annex to the revised Inception Report); Highlighted the need for the representatives of the UNEP/GEF Volta River Basin Project to attend regularly the key meetings of the Volta Basin Authority.
7. **Requests** that the PMU prepare a cost analysis of project travel in the region with the justification of purchase of vehicle for project partners' consideration;

### II. To the Project Steering Committee Members

8. **Agreed** to provide to the PMU, detailed information on ongoing and planned national and regional initiatives and projects that have direct or indirect linkages to the activities of the UNEP/GEF Project by June 2008;

### III. General observations and recommendations

9. **Recommends** that the downstream region of the Volta River Basin is given due consideration during the implementation of the project. Furthermore additional resources to be sought for implementing the joint demonstration project Ghana-Togo on the preservation of coastal aquifers from salinisation, which was not included in the final project document;



## UNEP-GEF Volta River Basin Project



The Project Steering Committee expressed sincere thanks to the government and all the people of Mali for hosting this first meeting and the warm reception during the period of stay.



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## List of abbreviations and acronyms

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Definition</b>
APNP-VRB	Action Plan for the National Part of the VRB
BFP	Basin Focal project
CPWF	Challenge Program on Water and Food
DRE	Direction des Ressources en Eau
ECOWAS	Economic Community Of West African States
EU	European Union
GCLME	Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GWP-WAWP	Global Water Partnership- West Africa Water Partnership
IRB	International River Basin
IRD	Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (France)
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
NOFP	National Operational Focal Point
PAGEV	Projet d'Amélioration de la Gouvernance de l'Eau dans le bassin de la Volta
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RPC	Regional Project Coordinator
SAP	Strategic Action Program
SIAAP	Syndicat Interdépartemental pour l'Assainissement de l'Agglomération de Paris
TDA	Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
UCC	UNEP Collaborating Centre
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNEP/DGEF	United Nations Environment Program/ Division of GEF Coordination
UNEP/GEF	United Nations Environment Program/ Global Environment Facility
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
VBA	Volta Basin Authority

## **1. Opening of the 1<sup>st</sup> Project Steering Committee Meeting**

### **1.1 Opening remarks**

1. The 1<sup>st</sup> UNEP/GEF Volta River Basin Project Steering Committee Meeting was hosted by the Government of Mali at the Massaley Hotel, Bamako, from 13 to 15 May 2008. The opening ceremony was graciously attended by two high level Government representatives: the Minister of Environment and Sanitation and the Minister of Mines, Energy and Water.
2. In his opening speech, Mr. Hubert Onibon, the Regional Project Coordinator (RPC) of the UNEP/GEF Volta River Basin Project thanked the Malian government for hosting the meeting, and expressed his appreciation for the Honourable Ministers' presence at the opening ceremony. He noted that the project is aimed at facilitating the integrated development and protection of the natural resources of the six riparian countries in the basin, and expressed his optimism that the meeting deliberations will impact positively on the project implementation.
3. Ms. Virginie Hart, UNEP/DGEF representative at the meeting also expressed her sincere thanks to the Ministry of Environment and Sanitation and the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Water of Mali for hosting the First Steering Committee Meeting of the GEF/UNEP Volta River Basin Project. She noted that the objective of the project inception phase is to further detail the project activities, the budget, the monitoring and evaluation plan, implementation arrangements and new initiatives in the region.
4. In his statement, the Executive Director of the Volta Basin Authority (VBA), Mr. Charles Biney expressed great pleasure at the opening ceremony and noted the untiring efforts that have been invested into the project. He stressed that the VBA is currently going through the process of completing its establishment, and the Volta Basin Convention will come into force upon ratification by at least four of the six countries. He congratulated Burkina Faso and Mali for having ratified the Convention and expressed hope that the other countries will follow suit.
5. In his opening Statement, the Minister of Environment and Sanitation, Honourable Mr. Aghatam Alassane, welcomed the participants from different countries of the basin to Mali, and thanked the Project Steering Committee (PSC) for choosing Mali as the venue for its 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. He further highlighted the challenges towards achieving sustainable development in the basin and expressed optimism that the project along with other initiatives in the basin will help address these challenges. He thanked all the project partners, including UNEP and UNOPS for their support to the project and wished the participants successful deliberations.

### **1.2 Appointment of the Bureau**

6. Mr. Alamir Toure, National Coordinator of the GEF-Volta Project for Mali proposed Mr. Souleymane Cissé, Technical Advisor of the Ministry of Environment as Chairman for the meeting. He further proposed Mr. Benjamin Ampomah of the Water Resources Commission, Ghana to be the Rapporteur, and Volta-GEF Regional Project Coordinator (RPC), Mr. Hubert Onibon as Secretary for the meeting. These proposals were accepted by all participants.

### **1.3 Review of Agenda and Introduction of participants**

7. The Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé welcomed all the participants and wished all participants a good stay in Bamako "the City of the three crocodiles". He noted the need for effectiveness during the course of the meeting in order to conclude the proposed agenda, which was then submitted for consideration.
8. Mr. Hubert Onibon explained that the meeting was originally scheduled for two days but later extended to three days after confirmation with BFP-Volta to enable them make a presentation on their research work in the Volta Basin. The proposed agenda was then adopted after minor

comments from participants and agreement that closing remarks be made on the third day of the meeting. The Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé then proposed that participants introduce themselves.

#### **1.4 Objectives and expected outcomes of the meeting**

9. The presentation on objectives and expected outcomes of the meeting made by Mr. Olumide Akinsola, noted that the overall objective of the First Project Steering Committee Meeting is to present, discuss and adopt the inception report (including updated project brief), inform all PSC members on the status and results of the projects inception phase, to reach agreement on the project implementation strategy, agree on Project work plan and budget, including the first year work-plan and budget, and to detail collaboration and partnership opportunities in the Volta Basin.

## **2. Presentations of key documents and discussions**

### **2.1 Presentation of project objectives, expected outcomes, activities and budget**

10. In his presentation, Mr. Hubert Onibon, highlighted management challenges of the project and the needs that necessitated the review of project activities. He equally noted that the GEF-Volta project is based on two main pillars; Development of management tools on International River Basin (IRB) and Capacity building for riparian countries for which guidelines are required and therefore will be developed to address equitable and sustainable management of water and associated natural resources in the basin.
11. The presentation further highlighted updated project logical framework (objectives, outputs/outcomes, and indicators), activities per sub-objective, budget and co-financing issues.
12. In his comments on the presentation, Mr. Sidi Touré from Mali highlighted problems in the basin and suggested that changes that have occurred in the basin should be noted when dealing with IWRM actions. He provided information regarding the Regional Plan of Action that was adopted in April 2008 and also the adopted ECOWAS Policy. He noted that Mali has ratified the Volta Convention and submitted that all this should be incorporated into the document. He further submitted that project plans for institutional matters should be conducted within the framework of the basin study, and indicated the need for VBA to take the lead in the project activities.
13. Mr. Sidi Touré also noted that the proposed budget for equipment is too restrictive and may not accommodate sufficient equipment purchase. Mr. Alamir Touré further said that the low contribution from Mali was due to the economic situation during the PDF-B phase and that the amount will be reviewed based on the updated project document.
14. Mr. Joachin Ouédraogo from Burkina Faso noted that the presentation enabled the participants to understand the project objectives and status. With regard to financial contribution, he agreed with the RPC that the endorsement letter sent by the Burkina GEF focal point in 2003 did not specify in kind or cash contribution. Nevertheless, following the requests sent by the RPC, Burkina Faso contribution has been estimated at \$189,000 and an official letter will be sent to the PMU in that regard. Mr. Joachin Ouédraogo further expressed concern about time required to implement the program and also the documentation of lessons learned from demonstration projects.
15. Mr. Kwamé Odame-Ababio from IUCN/PAGEV made some clarifications regarding the budget co-financing arrangement between IUCN and GEF, and noted that IUCN interventions will compliment the GEF project while promising to make PAGEV results available to the project. He stated that the co-financing is still valid as parallel support to complement Volta-GEF activities.
16. Mr. Benjamin Ampomah from Ghana submitted that the in-kind contribution of his country will be \$550,000 while the cash will be \$35,000 per annum (i.e. \$140,000 for 4 years) making a total of \$690,000. He added that the initial contribution proposed has reduced drastically because the project was supposed to support institutional framework for the creation of VBA to which most

contribution was already provided when VBA was created.

17. Mr. Daniel Amlalo from Ghana noted that based on the project title the project should also put emphasis on the Downstream Coastal Areas since majority of the countries are also part of the Abidjan Convention. He equally added that the cost of \$5,000 allocated to develop hydrological modelling in the Volta GEF project as stated on page 47 (English version) is small. He suggested that the Project should ensure that GCLME Project is fully involved.
18. Concerning co-financing issues, Mr. Gérard Cougny representing UCC informed participants that his organisation will provide a co-financing amount equal to what the project will make available for UCC activities. Also speaking on those issues, Mr. Dam Mogbanté representing GWP-WAWP noted that there are challenges with project budgeting because of the decreasing value of the US Dollar and therefore suggested that the project should look at worst case scenario and also assess what PAGEV co-funding would entail.
19. Ms. Virginie Hart noted that the Project document was approved by GEF because of the level of co-financing promised. She mentioned that co-financing for the GEF project is a little over \$6 million with GEF contribution equal to \$5.3 million bringing total project funding to about \$11.3 million. Ms. Virginie Hart highlighted that the Project can not be executed on a regional scale unless this co-financing is made available and therefore suggested that the PSC makes a recommendation on how to finalize co-financing issue and also explore linkages with other project activities.
20. While responding to comments and questions asked by participants, Mr. Hubert Onibon stated that the project is putting in place mechanisms for coordination with partners like SIAAP. He agreed that timing is an issue of concern for the project implementation but believed that lessons from Demo Projects can be documented and incorporated into SAP within the project period. He also noted that since the US dollar rate is falling, the project needs to mobilise more resources in addition to contributions received from Czech Republic and Hungary Government.
21. With regard to Mr. Dam Mogbanté's suggestion, Mr. Hubert Onibon reaffirmed that the major pillar of the project is finalisation of the TDA and preparation of SAP and APNP-VRB. He then informed participants that the GEF contribution has been secured and allocated to that end.

## **2.2 Presentation of budget and activities for year 1 and discussions**

22. The presentation made by Mr. Olumide Akinsola, dwelt on the project budget for Year 1 (GEF Contribution). This was presented per project specific objectives. The presentation also noted that the total GEF contribution for the first year is about \$1.43 million.
23. During the discussion session, the Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé requested to know how funds will be provided to countries and the type of feedbacks required from national partners. He also agreed with the co-financing issues raised by Ms. Virginie Hart, while noting that National Focal Points will require means to work and therefore suggested that it is important to make necessary provisions for them in the budget.
24. Mr. Kwamé Odame-Ababio noted that the personnel and operational cost is high when compared to the project activities. This was supported by Mr. Daniel Amlalo, who observed that the personnel allocation is about 50% of the budget.
25. Mr. Pierre Damien Bakyono from Burkina Faso submitted that his country considers the project as VBA project, and believed that VBA will give more strength to the project. He requested to know the basis by which resources are distributed among countries in the budget.
26. Mr. Hubert Onibon clarified that in the summary presentation of the budget, personnel, travel and consultants were included (many of which would be national), leading to the misinterpretation that management and personnel costs were excessively high, and that the detailed breakdown of budget lines was included in the Inception Report, sent to all PSC members. Concerning the

institutional issues, he highlighted the fact that all project activities are meant to support VBA are clearly presented in the Inception document, but noted that UNEP unfortunately can not sign an agreement with VBA because currently it has no legal status. On allocation of finance, he recalled that the project document stipulates that GEF will distribute resources equitably while other considerations will be based on differential allocations for different demo projects.

### 2.3 Presentation on institutional framework and discussions

27. Mr. Hubert Onibon in his presentation mentioned that the Institutional Framework was revised in order to take into account the considerable changes that had occurred in the basin. He presented the role and responsibility of key components of the institutional framework, including the newly proposed expert group called Task Force. He stated that at the national level, National Operational Focal Points (NOFP) are needed to ensure regular feedback to the PMU. He equally noted that the National Implementation Committee (NIC) for Project Implementation will guide project implementation at national level. He highlighted possible bottlenecks including, feedback/availability of national partners, and mobilization of national contributions and coordination of parallel funding, collaboration between Ministries of Water and Environment, and the involvement of all national players.
28. Mr. Charles Biney agreed that all project activities should be in line with VBA vision, and submitted that VBA will facilitate the endorsement of project documents and linkages with key government ministries.
29. Mr. Alamir Touré from Mali reaffirmed the importance of linking implementation at national level with budget, including provision of human and financial support for the national focal points to implement activities at the national level.
30. Mr. Kwamé Odame-Ababio commented that the implementation arrangement at national level is top heavy, and suggested that the National Implementation Committee members should include representatives at the local level. He also proposed that the project should use existing structures for project implementation.
31. Mr. Sidi Touré from Mali agreed with the idea of setting up of national committees and the involvement of people at the grassroots level in these committees. He further agreed with the idea of National Operational Focal Point and proposed that establishing strong links with VBA is necessary in the overall management of the project. He recalled that the VBA member countries have demanded the ratification of the Volta Basin Convention by all countries, and expressed hope that the convention will soon enter into force.
32. Mr. Félix Azonsi from Benin requested to know how the six Project Task Force members will be recruited; and suggested concerning data collection that the project should agree on the parameters for data to be collected during implementation.
33. The Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé commented on the project linkage with VBA and reiterated the need for the project to have strong links with VBA and good coordination units at the national level. He proposed the importance of setting deadlines for countries to respond to requests, including putting in place structures like the NOFP among others.
34. Mr. Hubert Onibon noted that only flexibility and dialogue can help address institutional challenges. On the question of linkage of budget to national level activities, he responded that the MOA to be signed will specify detailed budgets for each country. He also emphasised that each country should have its committee based on choice. In his response to Mr. Sidi Touré's comment, he said that the project will work with VBA and ensure complementarity. He confirmed that the task force experts are yet to be appointed and the PMU is still collating CVs. Concerning the institutional structures to be established, he indicated that the project considers national focal points and their institutions as focal structures consisting of the Coordinator and the second representative on the PSC. Mr. Gérard Cougny supported this notion and said that the National

Implementation Committee will also be involved in other activities and not just pilot projects, hence the need for flexibility in its establishment.

35. Ms. Virginie Hart remarked that the aim of the project is to work with VBA on TDA and SAP which are the needed foundations for VBA. Mr. Charles Biney also noted that VBA considers the Volta GEF as a project with a time frame and that VBA structures will help implement key outcomes from the project and equally relate to the project like the Volta Hycos Project.
36. Following these submissions, the Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé agreed that the steering committee should be flexible in order not to encourage further implementation delay and submitted that the project proceed as currently proposed with future situation review before the end of the project .
37. Mr. Yawo Jonky Tenou from Togo highlighted possible bottlenecks that the project may encounter based upon his experience on the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem project (GCLME) Project. These include lack of support to national offices to draft action plans and eventual delays in developing the plan by some countries; experts are not localized hence do not provide information for national offices; appointed national project directors are not supported despite their roles and responsibility on the project. He therefore suggested that the Volta GEF Project should find ways to support the national coordinators in order to encourage them. He mentioned that Togo has passed a decree to ratify the Volta Basin Convention.
38. In responding to these remarks, Mr. Hubert Onibon submitted that the project budgeted for APNP-VRB development and that regional experts will support actions at regional levels while support will be available for engaging consultants for country interventions.

#### **2.4 Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and UNOPS reporting and procedures**

39. Ms. Virginie Hart made a presentation on the Monitoring & Evaluation Plan of the project. Following the presentation, the question of whether the indicators are at national or project level was raised. Ms. Virginie Hart responded that there are indicators at different levels, and that PMU had developed tentative indicators, with demo projects having their own monitoring indicators.
40. Presentation was also made by Ms. Julie Klassen on reporting requirements by UNOPS. The presentation highlighted the use and importance of Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) to be signed by Executive Director of UNOPS and Head of Institutional entities working on the project.

#### **2.5 Presentation on ongoing projects/initiatives and discussions**

41. The presentation made by Mr. Olumide Akinsola, highlighted several ongoing regional projects and initiatives in the basin, and noted areas where the ongoing projects and the Volta GEF project would compliment each other in order to deliver the sustainable objectives for the basin.
42. During discussions, Mr. Benjamin Ampomah suggested that the project should research environmental projects that are ongoing and in the pipeline, and also projects that could negatively impact on water resources. Mr. Charles Biney supported this and suggested that the project further identify and prepare a detailed list of NGOs in the basin as well. Mr. Gérard Cougny reported that the new EU project in the basin will be incorporated into the project document.
43. The Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé reaffirmed that the project document is good as an initial effort, and that the focal points can also contribute to improve it in view of the synergy effects to be achieved with other existing programmes and projects in the basin.

#### **2.6 Presentation of demonstration projects and discussions**

44. The presentation on demonstration projects made by Mr. Hubert Onibon, highlighted the difficulties with the demo projects and efforts made at revising the projects' briefs, including new opportunities identified to strengthen the projects.
45. During discussions on the demo projects, it was clear that all the demo projects need further

elaboration. Concerning the Demo Project 1, it was noted that the problem of water resources are problems of water flow, and therefore there is a need to underline this issue in the inception report of the demo project. Mr. Sidi Touré noted the need to have more information on Lerry Dam in the tributary of the Volta and the impacts of agriculture expansion.

46. Mr. Joachim Ouédraogo supported the idea of commissioning consultants to appraise the status of the demo projects. Mr. Mamadou Coulibaly, an observer from Mali suggested that the project be implemented in consultation with users, and advised the project to ensure that sustainable activities are included when involving private companies.
47. Mr. Winston Andah representing the BFP-Volta noted that the projects are ambitious and reaffirmed the importance of conducting base-line studies for the demo projects. He further cautioned on the potential high cost of constructing treatment plants and reforestation projects. Similarly, Mr. Dam Mogbanté expressed concern about the magnitude of the demo projects and noted that the Kara project is very ambitious, but also appreciated the fact that consultants will still re-evaluate the projects.
48. Mr. Hubert Onibon stated that the ambitious nature of the demo projects is the reason for proposing inception periods for these projects. The Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé endorsed that the demo projects are all interesting, and requested the PMU to make use of consultants as proposed, to improve the demo projects in order to achieve project success.

## **2.7 Presentation of SIAAP experience in Kara**

49. In her presentation, Ms. Charlotte Bayle-Kalinowski highlighted SIAAP's experiences on improving the sanitation situation in Kara, and its plan to construct wastewater network based on completed investment plan and feasibility study. The presenter explained the extent of the partnership proposed by GEF-Volta Project and reemphasised the company's intention to partner and work with the Volta-GEF project in the two countries of the demo project 2 (Benin and Togo).
50. After the presentation, the Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé noted that the presentation had also raised the need to review the project document as earlier mentioned. Mr. Dam Mogbanté suggested that the project pay attention to connecting projects in different countries. He noted that SIAAP's plan is workable but needs to be implemented on time, and that project indicators and time schedules for activities should be revisited. In his response to these comments, Mr. Hubert Onibon agreed with the need to visit sites with SIAAP and finalize the plan and project document. He said that this will be done as soon as the new SIAAP President is installed, and the local elections in Benin concluded in order to have the new Mayor's support for the project.

## **2.8 Presentation of IUCN/PAGEV experience**

51. The IUCN/PAGEV Coordinator, Mr. Kwamé Odame-Ababio made a presentation on the IUCN Water Governance Project experiences in the transboundary area of Burkina Faso and Ghana. The presentation highlighted the project's institutional and implementation approach, achievements and challenges encountered during implementation. After the presentation, the Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé stressed the need for PMU to work closely with PAGEV during project implementation.
52. Mr. Michel N'guessan from Côte d'Ivoire also noted that the PAGEV project has good ownership issues to be replicated. Mr. Dounanké Coulibaly, an observer from Mali noted that processes such as PAGEV take time and requested to know how long it took to come up with tangible results for the project, while Mr. Winston Andah requested to know the major challenges faced by the project and if the results are replicable.
53. In his response to the comments on the presentation, PAGEV Project Coordinator acknowledged that the process is time consuming, but replicable. He listed major challenges as meeting people's expectations and demands; gender mainstreaming; time and involvement of administrative staff in the projects.

## 2.9 Presentations on BFP-Volta and CPWF projects activities

54. During the meeting, a special session was also dedicated to the presentation of the results of research activities conducted by 2 key projects: BFP-Volta and CPWF. After the global presentation of the BFP-Volta and CPWF projects by Mr. Jacques Lemoalle, key issues addressed by different presentations are focused on the following:
- Water resources in the Volta basin (by Mr. de Condappa Devaraj)
  - Food production and water productivity (by Mr. Winston Andah)
  - Rural poverty (by Mr. Jacques Lemoalle)
55. Further research opportunities as well as link between the GEF-Volta projects were discussed and suggestions made for collaboration.

## 3. General comments

56. During the general comments session introduced to take note of issues not covered during presentations and comments from participants on the inception report, the Chairman Mr. Souleymane Cissé noted that the demo projects proposed are transboundary activities, and wondered if there are other projects to be implemented at national level and if results are obtainable in four years.
57. Mr. Hubert Onibon responded that other activities will focus on development and implementation of training tools for basin management. He reaffirmed that, only the current phase will last 4 years after which the project outputs will be inserted into VBA long term work plan and used as support for development and implementation of new national level projects.
58. Mr. Daniel Amlalo expressed concern that the PMU may be constrained to visit project sites while there is no provision for vehicles in the project document. Mr. Hubert Onibon responded that the project will need to visit projects sites for regular monitoring, and that the issue had been raised but would have to be considered by the PSC before any further action could be taken.
59. The Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé submitted that the PSC can not accept that the regional project coordinator uses his private car for official purposes, and expressed the view that there must be a vehicle at the level of coordination, as a minimum condition for fulfilling the duties assigned. He therefore recommended a budget revision to accommodate this requirement.
60. In her response to the discussion on the project vehicle, Ms. Virginie Hart mentioned that GEF decided not to use GEF financing to purchase vehicles. She therefore suggested that a cost analysis over the period of the project be carried out upon which a justification will be made to explore the purchase of a vehicle from co-financing contribution. In his comment on this same issue, Mr. Sidi Touré from Mali stressed the need for a vehicle during the raining seasons, and expressed his view that the project can not rely on analysis to get a vehicle and therefore suggested that the PSC find a way to get one for the project.
61. Finally, the Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé requested that the PSC propose a recommendation that the coordinator can not use his personal car to work, and therefore efforts must be made to get a vehicle for the project.
62. The Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé further noted that there are only two professional staff at the regional level and wondered if this is enough for the project, to which Mr. Hubert Onibon responded that the project planned to use consultants and Project Task Force to help with specific activities.
63. Mr. Dam Mogbanté expressed concern about the project human resources based upon their experiences at the GWP/WAWP, and wanted to know how much time the task force would be expected to put into the project. While Mr. Yawo Jonky Tenou from Togo also expressed his concern on how the project consultants will be managed at the national level.

64. Mr. Daniel Amlalo noted that with the emphasis on the downstream coastal areas in the project title, the project should also implement activities that will contribute to downstream areas. Mr. Gérard Cougny responded that out of the 40 proposals received for Demo projects only 4 were selected. Out of these 4 only 3, apart from the one with focus on the coastal area, could be funded due to budget constraints. Mr. Gerard Cougny also noted that, if necessary, additional funds could be sought for this demo during the project lifespan.
65. In his responses to these comments, Mr. Hubert Onibon mentioned that the TDA and SAP will address the coastal concerns and also that GCLME is also addressing the coastal challenges. He noted that the concern about managing the consultants is serious and always difficult, but was hopeful that the project will have balance in experts.
66. Mr. Gérard Cougny noted that the project anticipated 40 man/day/year for each task force member but proposed reduction to 22 man/days/year. Mr. Hubert Onibon suggested that the 40 man/day/year be maintained because of the task ahead. He confirmed that UNEP will evaluate all assignments before it is awarded by UNOPS. Concerning consultancy tenders, he submitted that PMU will support national partners to do tenders. The countries will be expected to do sourcing of consultants, evaluate and send recommendation to PMU, while PMU will get UNOPS to sign contracts with experts in order to pay them directly.
67. When Mr. Sidi Touré emphasised again the need for the project to integrate its activities into VBA, Mr. Hubert Onibon stressed that this had been discussed and was included in the Inception document. He further mentioned that SAP will be implemented by VBA after project lifespan. The Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé submitted that the project implementation should not be delayed further and efforts be made to ensure that VBA appropriates project results.
68. Ms. Virginie Hart, mentioned that it is unfortunate that the project could not sign an agreement of collaboration with VBA because of its status, however all the elements for collaboration had been discussed and were in place, for VBA to take ownership of the results of the project, and leading to the future adoption and implementation of the SAP and APNP-VRB.

#### **4. Adoption of draft recommendations of the 1<sup>st</sup> PSC meeting**

69. The chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé introduced the above mentioned agenda item and requested the Rapporteur to present the draft recommendations of the 1<sup>st</sup> Project Steering Committee Meeting. Mr. Ben Ampomah, representing Ghana presented the recommendations.
70. Following discussions on the draft recommendations presented, the Steering Committee adopted the decisions with amendments and urged for same to be included as annex to the report of the 1<sup>st</sup> PSC meeting.

#### **5. Closing remarks and closure of the meeting**

71. Mr. Hubert Onibon representing the PMU, expressed thanks to the Ministers, Project Steering Committee members, IRD, SIAAP and PAGEV. He specially expressed the PMU's thanks to Mr. Alamir Toure of Mali and his team for their support and constant availability. He also expressed immense gratitude to the Malian government for agreeing to host the meeting and for their warm hospitality during the meeting.
72. Ms. Virginie Hart representing UNEP/DGEF thanked the participants for their contributions during the PSC meeting, while promising on behalf of UNEP/DGEF that the project will be implemented based upon the agreements with the partner countries and their expectation for the development of Volta basin.
73. Mr. Charles Biney, the Executive Director of the VBA expressed appreciation to research colleagues as well as the translators and all those who contributed to the success of the meeting.



74. Mr. Michel N'Guessan from Côte d'Ivoire, on behalf of the Steering Committee expressed appreciation to the Government of Mali and in particular the Minister of Environment and Sanitation and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Water for agreeing to host the meeting and to their staff for the excellent organization of the meeting.
75. The Chairman, Mr. Souleymane Cissé thanked the delegates for their participation in the meeting and wished them and the PMU well in project implementation. In the absence of any other business, the Chairman on behalf of the Minister in charge of Environment declared the meeting closed at 17:16 on Thursday 15th May 2008.

## **6. Annexes**

## 6.1 Annex 1: List of participants

N°	Country/Organisation	Name/ /Address
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## 6.2 Annex 2: Meeting agenda

### Day 1: Tuesday 13 May, 2008

Time	Activity	Responsible
08:00 – 09:00	Arrival and registration	PMU and National partners
09:00 – 09:45	Opening remarks	Regional Project Coordinator Representative of UNEP Representative of VBA Malian Minister in charge of Environment
09:45 – 10:15	Tea/Coffee Break	
10:15 – 10:30	Appointment of the Bureau of the meeting	All participants
10:30 – 10:45	Review and Agreement of meeting Agenda	
10:30 – 10:45	Introduction of Participants	All participants
10:45 – 11:00	Workshop objective and expected outcomes	Olumide Akinshola
11:00 – 11:30	Overall revised project: objectives, expected outcomes, activities and budget	Hubert Onibon
11:30 – 11:45	Budget and co-financing issues	Hubert Onibon
11:45 – 12:30	Discussion	All participants
12:30 – 13:00	Proposed work plan and budget for the first year of implementation	Olumide Akinshola
13:00 – 15 :00	Lunch	
15:00– 16:30	Institutional Arrangements	Hubert Onibon
16:30 – 16 :45	Tea/Coffee Break	
16:45 – 17:05	Presentation of project M&E plan	Virginie Hart
17:05 – 17:25	UNOPS reports and procedures	Julie Klassen
17:25 – 18:00	Discussions	All participants
18:00	End of day 1	

### Day 2: 14 May, 2008

Time	Activity	Responsible
09:00 – 9:45	Linkage with other projects or initiatives	Olumide Akinshola
09:45 – 11:00	Updated Demonstration projects: objectives, expected outcomes, activities and budget	Hubert Onibon
11:00 – 11:15	Tea/Coffee Break	
11:15 – 12:00	Demo Project 2: Presentation of SIAAP experience and plan	SIAAP
12:00 – 13:00	Presentation of IUCN/PAGEV experience	Kwame Odame-Ababio
13:00 – 15 :00	Lunch	
15:00 – 16:30	General comments and discussions on the inception report (including project review)	All participants
16:30 – 17:30	Preparedness of Recommendations	Bureau of the meeting
17:30 – 17:45	Tea/Coffee Break	
17:45 – 18:30	Recommendations	All participants

**Day 3: 15 May, 2008: Challenge Program Water for Food / BFP Volta**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible</b>
09:00 – 09:30	Presentation of the CPWF and BFP - Volta	J. Lemoalle
09:30 – 10:00	The Water Resource	D. de Condappa
10:00 – 10:15	Discussion	All participants
10:15 – 10:45	Food production and water productivity	W. Andah
10:45 – 11:00	Discussion	All participants
11:00 – 11:30	Tea/Coffee Break	
11:30 – 12:00	Rural poverty	J. Lemoalle
12:00 – 12:15	Discussion	All participants
12:15 – 12:30	Research questions	J. Lemoalle
12:30 – 13:00	Discussion	All participants
13:00 – 14:45	Lunch	
14:45 – 16:00	Closing remarks	Regional Project Coordinator Representative of UNEP Representative of VBA Malian Minister in charge of Environment

## **6.3 Annex 3: Vote of thanks**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Project Steering Committee Meeting**

**Bamako, 13-15 May 2008**

### **Vote of Thanks**

We, representatives from the riparian countries of the Volta river basin, involved in the steering and implementation of the UNEP/GEF Volta River Basin Project for “Addressing Transboundary Concerns in the Volta River Basin and its Downstream Coastal Area” having met in Bamako from 13 to 15 May 2008 on the occasion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Project Steering Committee meeting,

#### **Hereby express our sincere thanks to:**

- The Government of Mali for hosting the meeting and the warm reception during our stay;
- The Minister of Environment and Sanitation and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Water and their staff for the excellent organization of the meeting; and
- Our technical and financial partners for their continued support.

Bamako, 15 May 2008

The Representatives of the countries of the Volta Basin