

Chapter 6. Conclusions: Conclusions of the Workshop on Sustainable Management of the Lakes of Zimbabwe, 24-25 February 1999

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The presentations and discussions made at the Workshop on Sustainable Management of the Lakes of Zimbabwe, 24-25 February 1999 organized in Harare for this study and fully reflected in the previous Chapters of this report are summarized as follows:

- 1) The meeting gave an impetus to discuss among Zimbabwean water quality specialists and water managers the issues related to lakes and reservoirs in Zimbabwe, their problems and possible solutions. For these reasons the meeting can be considered successful.
- 2) Zimbabwe is by its geographical position a country under water stress. In the whole world UNESCO now considers world water shortage as a *priority*

SUGGESTION 1: AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION AND THE WORLD-WIDE PRIORITY GIVEN TO WATER PROBLEMS IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT HIGH PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO WATER PROBLEMS.

Also, for the research community, which is in Zimbabwe well developed in respect to water it is concluded that joining efforts with other dry and semiarid region countries under particular water stress will be useful.

- 3) With the signs of Global Climate Change over the world in general and in Zimbabwe and Africa in particular it is expected that the water shortage will be increasing due to decreasing precipitation and increasing evaporation as a consequence of increased temperatures.

SUGGESTION 2: THE PROJECTIONS OF INCREASING DRYNESS WITH GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE STRENGTHEN THE NEED FOR PRIORITIZING THE WATER ISSUES IN ZIMBABWE AND PREPARE SOLUTIONS COPING WITH THE INCREASING WATER SHORTAGE. IN PARTICULAR, WATER SAVING INITIATIVE HAVE TO BE INITIATED IMMEDIATELY.

There is a need for organizing systematic evaluation of water situation at present and in the future, and elaborate guidelines for water saving procedures by the industry, municipalities, and citizens.

- 4) Water quantity problems are enhanced by the associated water quality problems. Water shortage, low water levels and droughts are accompanied by worse water quality, as are the floods. Therefore the water quality problems have to be taken increasingly into account and gain the same priority as the water quantity problems.

SUGGESTION 3: THE WORLD DOCUMENT OF AGENDA 21 STRESSED GUARANTEEING OF ADEQUATE AND HYGIENICALLY SAFE WATER TO CITIZENS. POLITICIANS CAN EXPECT SOON TO BE FACED WITH THE PROBLEM OF COPING WITH THE WATER QUANTITY AND QUALITY ISSUES.

- 5) Rapid expansion of urban areas in Zimbabwe causes inadequacy of the existing water supply systems, overloading of water treatment plants, insufficient water treatment and deterioration of city hygiene. Long term planning at different decision levels is a way helping to cope with the problem. The problem is being solved in various countries from two sides, often simultaneously: by decreasing water use and by augmenting purification plants. One worldwide verified option for decreasing water use is by making the price of water closer to its cost, the other is by substantially decreasing water distribution system losses. Augmentation of the purification plants is a recently developed efficient procedure much cheaper and more feasible with restricted budgets than construction of new plants.

SUGGESTION 4: SELECTING AND PUTTING INTO EFFECT PROCEDURES ADEQUATE FOR THE SITUATIONS IN ZIMBABWEAN CITIES BY SETTING PRIORITIES UNDER RESTRICTED BUDGETS IS THE WAY TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEM.

- 6) Water quality and quantity issues are becoming a reason for wars and other international problems. The problems concern both the incoming and the outgoing water and its quality. Governments of various countries are called for responsibility in water issues. Therefore, good knowledge of the situation in the respective countries seems to be necessary for handling these international problems. Also, guaranteeing the RIGHT TO KNOW, to have access to transparent information about environment related and health issues, has to be based on information being collected and evaluated.

SUGGESTION 5: CREATION OF A NATIONWIDE INFORMATION DATABASE ON THE STATE OF QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF WATER SEEMS INEVITABLE.

- 7) Most countries of the world have or develop state wide and regional water management systems under the jurisdiction of specialized state agencies. In Zimbabwe the technical skills of specialists for both water quantity and water quality seems to be existing, but water management systems does not yet exist.

SUGGESTION 6: ENFORCING A WATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN ZIMBABWE SEEMS TO BE THE WAY TO PROCEED.

- 8) Because of accumulation of water quantity and water quality related problems, there seems to be a need for meetings of politicians and water quantity and water quality specialists.

SUGGESTION 7: IT SEEMS TO BE APPARENT THAT A MEETING BETWEEN POLITICIANS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF POLITICAL HIERARCHY AND WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY SPECIALISTS CAN SUBSTANTIALLY HELP WITH STARTING TO SEEK SOLUTIONS FOR THE URGENT WATER PROBLEMS.

- 8) The water quality problems in Zimbabwe can be divided into those caused by point

sources and those created by non-point sources. While considerable attention seems to be devoted to point sources, the importance of non-point sources is not sufficiently known.

SUGGESTION 7: WATER QUALITY SPECIALISTS NEED TO GIVE MORE ATTENTION TO NON-POINT SOURCES.

9) City hygiene seems to be at stake in Zimbabwean cities.