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IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE LOWER
ORANGE RIVER AND TO PROVIDE FOR FUTURE
DEVELOPMENTS ALONG THE BORDER
BETWEEN NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

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LIST OF REPORTS

TITLE	REPORT NUMBER		
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Legal, Institutional, Water Sharing, Cost Sharing, Management and Dam Operation	PB D000/00/4603	400/8/1/P-10	3692/97331
Specialist Report on the Environmental Flow Requirements - Riverine	PB D000/00/4503	400/8/1/P-07	3519/97331
Specialist Report on the Determination of the Preliminary Ecological Reserve on a Rapid Level for Orange River Estuary	PB D000/00/4503	400/8/1/P-08	3663/97331
Water Requirements	PB D000/00/4202	400/8/1/P-02	3486/97331
Hydrology, Water Quality and Systems Analysis (Volume A)	PB D000/00/4303	400/8/1/P-04	3736/97331
Hydrology, Water Quality and Systems Analysis (Volume B)	PB D000/00/4303	400/8/1/P-03	3485/97331
Water Conservation and Demand Management	PB D000/00/4903	400/8/1/P-12	3487/97331
Dam Development Options and Economic Analysis – Volume 1	PB D000/00/4403	400/8/1/P-05	3484/97331
Dam Development Options and Economic Analysis – Volume 2 (Appendices)	PB D000/00/4403	400/8/1/P-05	3484/97331
Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Dam Sites on the Orange River	PB D000/00/4503	400/8/1/P-06	3873/97331
Vioolsdrift/Noordoewer Joint Irrigation Scheme: Assessment of Viability	PB D000/00/4803	400/8/1/P-11	3525/97331
Public Consultation	PB D000/00/4503	400/8/1/P-09	3869/97331
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PRE-FEASIBILITY STUDY INTO MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE LOWER ORANGE RIVER

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Executive summary

The Republics of Namibia and South Africa initiated a joint investigation, the Lower Orange River Management Study (LORMS) aimed at improving the management of the lower Orange River. This is the first time that these two countries have collaborated as full partners to develop agreed strategies and management plans for the Orange River. The main purpose of the study, which falls under the control of the Permanent Water Commission between Namibia and South Africa, is therefore to investigate and make recommendations on the more efficient management and use of available water resources in the lower Orange River.

The Terms of Reference for this pre-feasibility study emphasised the need for a multi-disciplinary approach, including allowance for appropriate public participation. Consequently, consultation with Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) formed an integral component of the LORMS. The public participation process served to provide I&APs (from both Namibia and South Africa) with an opportunity to raise issues and concerns relating to the study. This was achieved through public, authority and key stakeholder consultation.

The public participation process for the study entailed two phases. The initial phase (Phase One) of consultation entailed a series of public meetings, held in Upington, Vioolsdrift, Noordoewer and Keetmanshoop, which served to inform I&APs of the study, and to elicit initial feedback. Meetings were also held with the authorities in Windhoek and Upington. The second round (Phase Two) of the public participation process served to present the draft findings of the LORMS and to provide an opportunity for both individuals and organisations to raise and/or debate any issues or concerns.

Four newsletters were produced and allowed those not able to attend to participate in the public and authority meetings study to still participate in the study. The newsletters were produced in both English and Afrikaans. We believe that the public process undertaken was appropriate for a pre-feasibility level of study at the scale of the lower Orange River.

An accurate record has been kept of all I&APs comments and issues raised during the public participation process. A comprehensive list of such issues and comments raised was included in Newsletters Two and Four, together with the project consultants' and clients' responses to such comments.

The level of public participation will form the basis for any future LORMS studies, should it be decided to pursue the investigation, or component thereof, to feasibility level and beyond.

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ABBREVIATIONS

a	annum
I&APs	Interested and Affected Parties
LORMS	Lower Orange River Management System
Mm ³	million cubic metres

LOWER ORANGE RIVER MANAGEMENT STUDY: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The Republics of Namibia and South Africa initiated a joint investigation, the Lower Orange River Management Study (LORMS) aimed at improving the management of the lower Orange River. This is the first time that these two countries have collaborated as full partners to develop agreed strategies and management plans for the Orange River. South Africa and Namibia share a 600km border along the lower, western, reaches of the Orange River before it flows into the Atlantic Ocean (see **Figure 1**).

A map of the river catchment is included as **Figure 1**.

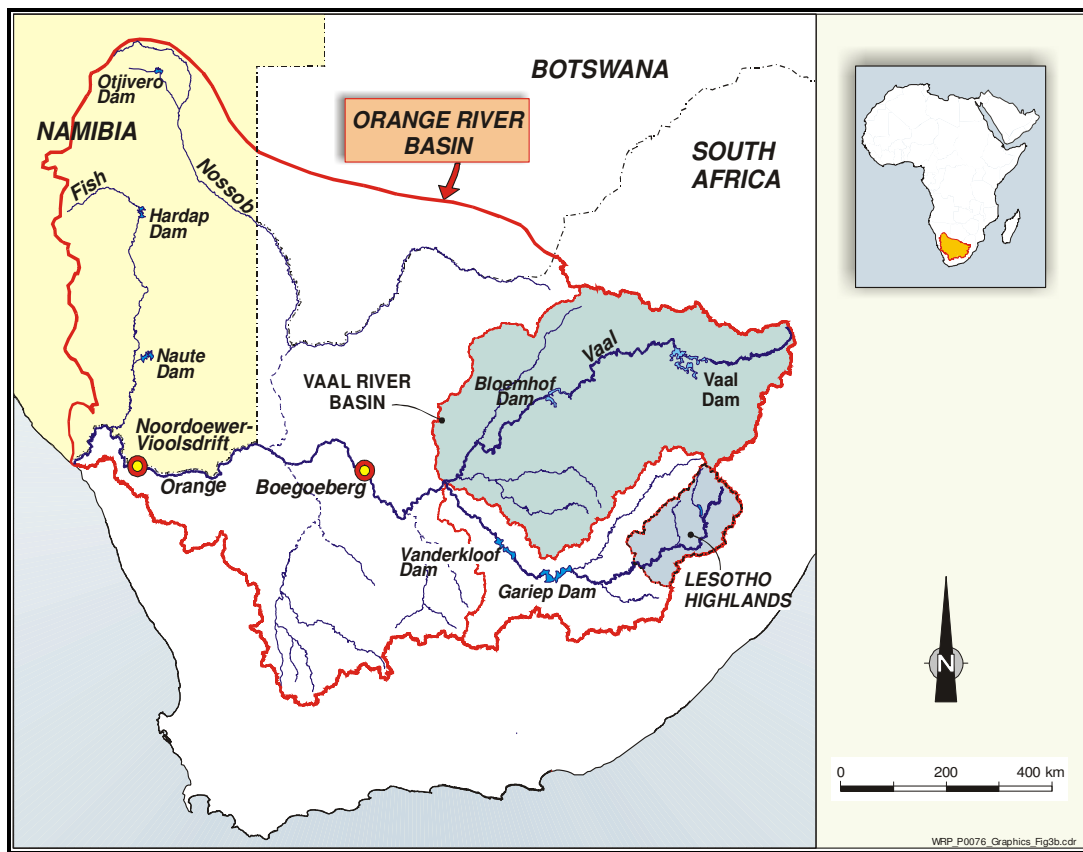


Figure 1: Orange River Basin

The main purpose of the study, which falls under the control of the Permanent Water Commission between Namibia and South Africa, is therefore to investigate and make recommendations on the more efficient management and use of available water resources in the Lower Orange River.

The Terms of Reference for this Pre-feasibility Study into measures to improve the management of the Lower Orange River and to provide for future developments along the common border between Namibia and South Africa emphasise the need for a multi-disciplinary approach, including allowance for appropriate public participation.

The key technical aspects of the study are:

- Assessment and/or confirmation of present and future water requirements and reliability requirements;
- Demonstration of the opportunities for and potential benefit of, water conservation and demand management;
- Review of the South African hydrological data base by Namibian consultants as well as the reassessment of the Fish River hydrology which will then be incorporated into an agreed hydrological data base;
- Selection of upstream development scenarios in the Orange River catchment (including the Vaal River System) for assessing the future water balance;
- Assessing the benefits of a possible dam at Boegoeberg or Vioolsdrift, taking account of contributions from the Fish River;
- Assessment of the social and environmental benefits and impacts of all management options, including dams and water conservation, with potential mitigation measures;
- An economic analysis to establish the most appropriate management actions to ensure that available water resources are used efficiently;
- Consolidating the information on each management option, or combination of options, into management reports so that decision makers from Namibia and South Africa can make informed decisions; and
- Ensuring that the public – and particularly the stakeholders who may be directly affected – are informed and their opinions are taken into account and recorded.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to report on the public participation process undertaken during the LORMS.

Consultation with Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) formed an integral component of the Pre-feasibility study for the Lower Orange River Management Study (LORMS). The public participation process served to provide I&APs (from both Namibia and South Africa) with an opportunity to raise issues and concerns relating to the study, and for the project consultants to provide responses to such comments or to provide feedback as to how such issues and concerns would be addressed in the study. This was achieved through public, authority and key stakeholder consultation.

The public participation process for the study entailed two phases of public involvement. The initial phase (Phase One) of consultation entailed a series of public meetings, held in Upington, Vioolsdrift, Noordoewer and Keetmanshoop, which served to inform I&APs of the study, and to elicit initial feedback. Meetings were also held with the authorities in

Windhoek and Upington. Authority consultation occurred across all tiers of Government from both countries, and particularly those that have responsibility for the environment, commercial and emerging agriculture, heritage and cultural issues, district and local councils, water supply as well as, UNESCO and the Ramsar Commission.

The second round (Phase Two) of the public participation process served to present the draft findings of the LORMS to I&APs and to provide an opportunity for both individuals and organisations to raise and/or debate any issues or concerns. A second round of public meetings was held in Upington, Vioolsdrift and Noordoewer.

Four newsletters were produced during the course of the LORMS. The newsletters augmented the public and authority meetings and allowed those not able to attend to participate in the study. The newsletters were produced in both English and Afrikaans and were distributed to I&APs in both Namibia and South Africa.

The aims of the public participation process and the various phases of the process undertaken are described below.

3. PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The aims of the public participation process for LORMS included the following:

- To create an awareness of the study and the proposed project;
- To elicit the views, attitudes and perceptions of I&APs;
- To provide a channel of communication to inform I&APs and receive feedback on the study;
- To improve decision making (by ensuring the process is transparent, inclusive and fair); and
- To comply broadly with the internationally accepted principles of public participation of the World Commission on Dams.

4. PHASES OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The public process entailed two main phases, namely an initiation phase prior to undertaking any significant work on the study, and a feedback phase where the draft findings of the study were presented. Details of these two phases are described in the following sections.

4.1 PHASE 1: INITIATION OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

4.1.1 Notification of the Public and Registration of I&APs

Adverts were placed in the following national and local newspapers in Namibia and South Africa, to announce the Namibian and South African governments' appointment of a multi-disciplinary consortium of consultants to undertake the Pre-Feasibility Study into the management and development of the Lower Orange River:

- *The Namibian* (23 August 2002 and 8 November 2002)
- *Namakwa Weekblad/ Weekly* (23 August 2002 and 8 November 2002)
- *Republikein* (28 August 2002 and 8 November 2002)

- *New Era* (8-10 November 2002)
- *Die Volksblad* (28 August 2002 and 8 November 2002)
- *Diamond Field Advertiser* (29 August 2002 and 8 November 2002)
- *Die Gemsbok* (28 August 2002 and 8 November 2002)

The adverts provided the necessary contact details for members of the public and/or organisations to register as I&APs and invited I&APs to attend the first round of public meetings at Noordoewer, Vioolsdrift, Keetmanshoop and Upington.

Posters notifying the public of the LORMS and details of the first round of public meetings were erected at key locations. Furthermore, the social consultants appointed for LORMS made direct contact with a number of organisations and individuals in the Lower Orange River in the week prior to the public meetings. The purpose of this engagement was to ensure that I&APs that may not be reached by the printed media were informed of the study and empowered to participate in the public participation process.

A list of all registered LORMS I&APs (for both the South Africa and Namibian databases) is provided in **Annexure A**. The I&AP database was updated on a continuous basis throughout the study.

4.1.2 Distribution of Newsletter One

Newsletter One provided details of the LORMS, and was distributed to registered I&APs on 21 August 2002, as well as handed out by the social consultants, and at the public meetings. Existing structures and organisations also assisted with the distribution of Newsletter One and were asked to assist with the identification of I&APs and to disseminate information.

The project study area, project consultants, previous studies and the aspects that would be addressed in the study were outlined in Newsletter One (see **Annexure B**). Most importantly, the document provided an opportunity for individuals and organisations to comment on and contribute to the study, by completing the attached Response Form One. Refer to **Annexure B**.

4.1.3 Invitation to First Round of Public Meetings

A letter inviting I&APs to attend the first round of public meetings was sent to approximately 670 I&APs in South Africa and to approximately 190 I&APs in Namibia on 21 August 2002, together with Newsletter One. Refer to **Annexure C**.

4.1.4 First Round of Public Meetings

The following public meetings were held in the initial phase of public consultation:

- A public meeting at Noordoewer on 3 September 2002, attended by 62 people;
- A public meeting at Vioolsdrift on 3 September 2002, attended by 57 people;
- A public and authority meeting in Keetmanshoop on 13 November 2002, attended by 35 people;

- A public meeting in Upington on 13 November 2002, attended by 34 people;
- An authority meeting held in Windhoek on 4 December 2002, attended by 16 people;
- An authority meeting held in Upington on 13 November 2002, attended by 9 people; and
- A further informal meeting was also arranged for Alexander Bay for I&APs near the estuary on 2 September 2002, but despite assurances that various people would attend, nobody arrived.

The meetings served as a forum to introduce the proposed project, its background, legal requirements and public participation process to I&APs. Notes of the above public and authority meetings are provided in Annexure D.

4.1.5 Collation of IAP Comments from Response Form One and Public Meetings and Identification of I&AP Issues and Concerns

Approximately 200 Response Forms were completed by I&APs and returned to the public participation co-ordinators. For convenience and to facilitate interaction, it was decided to have a co-ordinator in each country. Comments from I&APs were collated and divided into the following key categories:

- Need for the study
- Water requirements and water conservation (irrigation, urban, industrial/ mining and environmental)
- Water resources and yield analysis of potential dams (including water quality and sedimentation)
- Dam development options (identification of dam sites, engineering and costing)
- Economic and financial analysis
- Water sharing, cost sharing and dam operation
- Environmental and social issues (ecological, social impacts and archaeological/ cultural aspects)
- The public consultation process (stakeholders and authorities)
- Other (not related to study)

A summary of all I&AP comments were included in Newsletter Two, together with the project Consultants' and Clients' responses to such comments.

4.1.6 Distribution of Newsletter Two

Newsletter Two was distributed to I&APs on 6 February 2003 and contained a brief summary of the initial phase of the public participation process. A summary of the issues, concerns, comments and questions raised at the public and authority meetings, and feedback received via Response Form One was provided, together with the project consultants' and clients' response to the comments raised. Refer to **Annexure E** for the aforementioned document. Newsletter Two constituted the end of the first phase of the public participation process.

4.2 PHASE 2: COMMENT ON THE DRAFT FINDINGS OF THE LORMS

4.2.1 Notification of Project Programme Extension

A letter, notifying I&APs that the project programme was to be extended, was sent to I&APs on 7 April 2004 (refer to **Annexure F**). The letter indicated that the additional detailed studies had taken longer than anticipated and that Newsletter 3, which would provide a summary of the main findings of LORMS, would be forwarded to I&APs in mid 2004.

4.2.2 Invitation to I&APs to attend the Second Round of Public Meetings

A letter, inviting I&APs to attend the second round of public meetings at Noordoewer, Vioolsdrift or Upington, was sent to registered I&APs on 18 June 2004 (refer to **Annexure G**).

4.2.3 Distribution of Newsletter Three

Newsletter Three contained an overview of the draft findings of the LORMS (refer to **Annexure H**), and was distributed to I&APs on 8 July 2004. The newsletter described the current and projected future water use for Namibia and South Africa, and outlined the options for management and development of the Orange River, particularly the Lower Orange below the Vanderkloof Dam. I&APs were invited to provide comment by completing the attached Response Form Two by 16 August 2004.

4.2.4 Second Round of Public Meetings

The following public meetings were held in the second phase of public consultation:

- A public meeting at Noordoewer on 14 July 2004 at which 25 people signed the register.
- A public meeting at Vioolsdrift on 14 July 2004, attended by 20 people;
- A public meeting at Upington on 28 July 2004, attended by 23 people.

The notes of the above meetings are provided in **Annexure I**.

4.2.5 Collation of I&AP Comments from Response Form Two and Second Public Meetings

Four written comments on the draft study findings were submitted to the public participation co-ordinators subsequent to Newsletter Two and the second public meetings. The I&AP's comments were collated and divided into the categories outlined in **Section 3.1.5** above.

All I&APs comments were included in Newsletter Four, together with the project consultants' and clients' responses to such comments.

4.2.6 Distribution of Newsletter Four

Newsletter Four (refer to **Annexure J**) contained a brief summary of the second phase of the public participation process. The newsletter was distributed to I&APs on 9 March 2005. A summary of all the issues, concerns, comments and questions on the draft findings of the LORMS raised at the three public meetings, as well as feedback received via Response Form Two, was provided. The way forward after the completion of the study was described.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The public participation process for LORMS provided opportunity for I&APs to be informed of the study, as well as providing an opportunity for both individuals and organisations to comment on, and contribute to, the study. We believe that the public process undertaken was appropriate for a pre-feasibility level of study at the scale of the Lower Orange River.

An accurate record has been kept of all I&APs comments and issues raised during the public participation process. A comprehensive list of such issues and comments raised was included in Newsletters Two and Four, together with the project consultants' and clients' responses to such comments.

The level of public participation carried out for the Pre-Feasibility study for the LORMS will form the basis for any future LORMS studies, should it be decided to pursue the investigation, or component thereof, to feasibility level and beyond.

ANNEXURE A
List of registered I&APs (South Africa and Namibia)

ANNEXURE B
Newsletter One

ANNEXURE C

Letter to I&APs – Invitation to First Round of Public Meetings

ANNEXURE D
Notes of First Round of Public and Authority Meetings

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