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Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM): River Basin Management

River Basin Management (RBM) is generally approached in terms of the **success factors** needed to achieve results.

Critical Components of RBM

Critical components of establishing basin management systems include (GWP 2009a):

- **Political will** and high-level commitment from decision makers
- **Legislative and policy framework** at the national and international levels
- Basin organisations operating in an enabling environment with clear institutional arrangements and management mechanisms, or a **water management framework**

Political Will

Political will is required to develop the enabling framework for IWRM, allocate money, and establish stable public institutions (GWP 2009a).

Activities must be coordinated both vertically across different levels of authority and horizontally across different sectors and impacted stakeholders, which can be facilitated through water user dialogues (GWP 2009a). The multitude of users and uses of water within a basin creates competing interests and demands on water. The approach proposed within IWRM is strategic and intended to focus on what needs to be done first, as outlined in the Steps for Basin Management Section. Horizontal and vertical integration requires political commitment and will, to allow officials within different ministries to coordinate activities and share information.

"A key element of horizontal integration is bringing together ministries responsible for activities that impact on water – ministries of finance, planning, agriculture, transport and energy – and those with social or environmental responsibilities – ministries of health and the environment." (GWP 2009a).

Law and Policy

The international community has promoted a legal framework for managing international waters with which basin organisations are required to comply. Political will is required to ensure that [International Agreements](#) and regional agreements can be reached.

Effective water governance relies on appropriate laws and institutions—national, provincial and local—requiring water to be managed in accordance with the principles of integrated water resource management. National laws and policies that identify the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of public and private sector actors provide the water management framework (GWP 2009a). National water laws and policies establish the rules governing the use of water resources, and delineate decision making power for stakeholders involved in, or affected by, water management.

For more information see the [National Water Laws](#) section.

Water Management Framework

The Global Water Partnership (2009a) proposes a framework for water management comprising three dimensions: the enabling environment, institutions and management. The enabling environment includes laws and policies, water user dialogues, budgets and a spirit of cooperation. The institutions consist of effective coordination mechanisms, clear roles and responsibilities, participatory planning processes, and financing in place. Management requires structures in place to establish communication and information systems, resolve water allocation conflicts, establish regulations and financing arrangements, conduct development works, devise systems for accountability, develop organisational capacity and coordinate activities.



The Orange-Senqu River is a transboundary river that requires cooperation among RBOs.

Interactive

Basin Map

Explore the sub-basins of the Orange-Senqu River

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Principles of IWRM

Explore the principles of Integrated Water Resource Management applied to the Orange-Senqu

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ORASECOM

Learn about water governance in the Orange-Senqu basin

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Video Tour

Tour video scenes along the Orange-Senqu River related to Governance

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