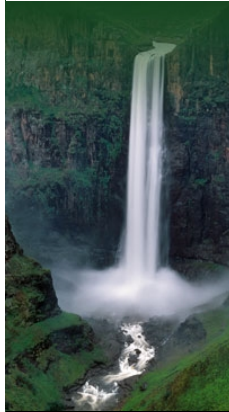


Orange-Senqu River Awareness Kit

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Governance

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Water Governance in the Orange-Senqu River Basin: Strengthening ORASECOM

As it is currently structured, ORASECOM provides a forum for discussion on basin issues and operates as a funding coordinator (ORASECOM 2007). A new structure for ORASECOM, that considers not only international conventions, but also linkages to national governments and [bilateral agreements](#), has been proposed.

Recommendations for strengthening the ORASECOM Agreement were outlined in the "Legislative and Legal Issues Surrounding the Orange River Catchment" report developed as part of the Orange River Integrated Water Resources Management Plan (IWRM-Plan).

Legal issues related to the ORASECOM Agreement identified in this report are summarized below:

Box: Strengthening the ORASECOM Agreement

In its present format, the ORASECOM Agreement does not seem to be entirely suitable and sufficiently equipped to accommodate an IWRMP for the Orange River. It does not contain a definitional clause.

Its Preamble is inspired by wide-ranging sources such as the Helsinki Rules, the UN Convention, and the Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems in SADC (Original Protocol). Its basic objective seems to be to "extend and consolidate the existing tradition of good neighborliness and friendly relations between the Parties by promoting the close and coordinated co-operation in the development of the resource of the River System". It does not invoke the principles of "judicious, sustainable, and coordinated management, protection and utilisation of shared watercourses" or "the unity and coherence of each shared watercourse" on which the Revised Protocol is based.

As a result, ORASECOM is established as an international organisation with a legal personality and certain institutions and powers. But nothing "shall affect the prerogative of any number of the Parties to establish among themselves river commissions with regard to any part of the River System".

Source: ORASECOM 2007



ORASECOM provides a platform for discussion.

Source: Hatfield 2009
(click to enlarge)

The EU-funded project, **African Transboundary River Basin Support Programme Case of the Orange-Senqu River in Botswana Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa**, was initiated in 2008, primarily aiming to strengthen the functioning of ORASECOM to better equip the organization to execute its stated mandate. The [Institutional Analysis for ORASECOM](#) report was developed under this project.

The Report outlines adjustments to the current organizational and/or institutional arrangements of ORASECOM, based on:

- Purpose of the basin-wide action plan
- Evolving nature of ORASECOM
- Manner of engagement of Parties with the ORASECOM Agreement
- Role of bilaterals
- Engagement of SADC
- Responsibilities of various elements of ORASECOM

Some of the recommendations for ORASECOM provided in the report are outlined below:

- ORASECOM should **facilitate the development of the Basin-wide Plan**, and be responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Plan
- **Bilaterals** are an important part of institutional arrangements within the basin, and should remain sub-ordinate to ORASECOM
- Clarification of **reporting requirements of ORASECOM to SADC** in terms of their obligations under the SADC Protocol
- In order to facilitate basin-wide cooperation, ORASECOM should assume a **joint collaboration role in advising the Parties** through development

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

[enter](#)

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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of basin-level scenarios

- Parties should agree to hold an annual or biannual **Ministers Meetings** to provide strategic directions and endorse positions that require agreement between the Parties
- Adapt **internal arrangements within ORASECOM** to its evolving role, including the development and clarification of terms or reference, roles and responsibilities of the Council, Secretariat and Task Teams with respect to each other

[Next: National Water Laws](#) ►

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