



# Orange-Senqu River Basin

Orange-Senqu River Commission Secretariat  
Governments of Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa

UNDP-GEF  
Orange-Senqu Strategic Action Programme  
(Atlas Project ID 71598)

## **Collaboration under the Orange-Senqu River Learning Box Concept Note**

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Orange-Senqu Strategic Action Programme

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with contributions from the ORASECOM Secretariat, the UNDP-GEF Project and utilising  
previous work of ORASECOM and its ICP supported projects.

This report has been issued and amended as follows:

Revision	Description	Date	Signed
0	Draft for review and discussion by ORASECOM Secretariat and other stakeholders.	28 Nov 2011	JCP, mor
1	Incorporating comments of the ORASECOM Secretariat, general editing.	24 Jan 2012	mor

Project executed by:



# Contents

<b>1. Background</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Concept</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 <i>Objectives</i>	3
2.2 <i>Activities</i>	3
2.3 <i>Tentative budget</i>	4

# 1. Background

The final proposal 'Orange-Senqu River Learning Box, Action Learning for a Living River' was issued on 26 September 2011. The Box was inspired by, among others, the Danube Box of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR). The Danube Box is a teaching resource for children in the age of 10 to 12 years age range. It contains expert and factual knowledge, imagery, copy-able worksheets, introductions to role play, games, indoor and outdoor activities, as well as cultural articles.

The development of Orange-Senqu River Learning Box was the work of the Orange-Senqu River Basin Commission (ORASECOM) and interested stakeholders in the basin States, namely the Mokolodi Environmental Centre in Botswana; the National Curriculum Development Centre and the Transformation Resources Centre in Lesotho; the Desert Research Foundation in Namibia (DRF); and the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA).

Technical and financial support towards the development of this project proposal has been obtained from: ICPDR; the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ); the UK Department for International Development (DFID); and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID); through the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), and The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - Global Environment Facility (GEF) project presently assisting ORASECOM.

The final proposal outlines a planned project strategy and activities. The goal of the River Learning Box Project is to ensure basin-wide outreach, wide-spread information dissemination and support active learning processes in appropriate formats on river and environmental topics. The project has now received funding through GIZ. Implementation will start in early 2012.

The River Learning Box Project will address seven thematic areas:

1. Adaptation of WESSA's Enviro-Kids Magazine: The Enviro-Kids is a theme-based magazine for young WESSA members, covering mostly environmental and conservation issues. In future the magazine could carry at least one article, per issue, from the basin States and featuring Orange-Senqu Basin issues. The magazine could then be more widely distributed throughout the Orange-Senqu Basin, using ORASECOM dissemination channels.
2. Development of learning resources: Resource materials similar to those found in the Danube Box will be produced for the Orange-Senqu Basin.
3. Compilation of 'Believe it or not stories': 'Believe it or not' stories' and statistics explaining the basic facts of the Basin's environment will be researched and compiled in a fact sheet format, using research of ORASECOM projects and the Orange Senqu: River Awareness Kit as sources.

4. Development of thematic basin maps: Large-scale thematic maps of the Orange-Senqu Basin will be produced. These maps shall visualize the social and physical geography and highlight the main socio-economic and environmental issues.
5. Field-work kits: Water field-work kits will be developed as part of the River Learning Box. These field-work kits should contain tools to determine and monitor indicators related to, for example, water quality and aquatic life. The wider use of existing field-work kits, such as the South African Mini-SASS for field testing of indicator organisms in streams, will also be promoted.
6. Promotion of 'Stories of change': Short 'good news' stories shall be collected and documented. These stories shall feature how people respond to (water related) environmental concerns, how people make changes in their lifestyles, and how these changes affect the environment positively. Various media will be explored to enable a wider sharing of these ideas, respective templates will be developed.
7. Establishment of catchment modelling sites: in each basin State three sites for the (physical) modelling of water cycle related features of the Basin shall be established, using simple modelling technologies.

## 2. Concept

### 2.1 Objectives

The objectives that will guide the UNDP-GEF Project's contribution to the River Learning Box Project are:

- To make the results of the UNDP-GEF Project activities available to 10 to 12 year old school children.
- To support achieving River Learning Box goals through in-kind support and co-financing in the spirit of complementarity.

The UNDP-GEF Project will work in three of the above thematic areas drawing on the results of its studies and activities:

- Compilation of 'Believe it or not stories' and 'Stories of change';
- Dissemination of MiniSASS field-work kits; and
- Provision of 'Get it done' grants.

### 2.2 Activities

#### **'Believe it or not stories' and 'Stories of change'**

The UNDP-GEF Project is in the process of completing a catalogue of frequently asked questions. Answers to these FAQ are compiled as a series of fact sheets, including thematic maps, infographics and images. The FAQ are targeting decision makers and an interested public in the Basin. At least five of these fact sheets will be re-worked so that they are age appropriate for 10 to 12 year old children. These will be made available for inclusion in the River Learning Box.

The Project is also in the process of finalising a series of studies as part of its Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) of the Basin. Activities associated with the TDA including a recent photo shoot throughout the Basin, have turned up interesting 'Stories of change'. At least four of these stories will be developed for inclusion in the River Learning Box.

#### **miniSASS field work kits**

SASS (South African Scoring System) is a biomonitoring technique used to measure the health of a river and general quality of the water using the composition of organisms (mostly invertebrates) living in rivers and based on their sensitivity to water quality. A similar technique is applied in Namibia. Derived from this is the miniSASS, a simplified methodology and field work kit, to be used by school kids and an interested general public. miniSASS have been successfully used at public outreach events in all basin States during the 2010 Joint Orange-Senqu Survey.

The River Learning Box Project suggests pre-testing of resource materials with 40 participating schools throughout the Basin. The UNDP-GEF will procure 40 miniSASS kits for use in the participating schools. Four training courses, to be conducted in all basin States shall educate school teachers in the use of the kits. In using these kits, school children will begin to develop a database for the river or stream where they collect samples. This database shall then be made accessible via the ORASECOM website (i.e. a dedicated section under the Water information system WIS) for children to compare their results with other schools.

### **‘Get it done’ grants**

The UNDP-GEF Project will assist schools to implement ‘Stories of change’ that have been identified elsewhere. Under the heading of ‘Get it done’ small grants shall provide seed money to start concrete activities on the ground.

## **2.3 Tentative budget**

An estimated budget of some USD 74,000 has been earmarked. The below table provides a tentative breakdown of the allocation:

<i>No</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Unit costs (USD)</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Costs (USD)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	‘Believe it or not stories’ and ‘Stories of change’					
	Technical advisor	Person days		2		Pro memoria, charged to TDA
	Scientific editor	Person days		10		Pro memoria, charged to TDA
2	miniSASS field work kits					
	Mini-SASS kits	kit	250.-	40	10,000.-	Based on quotation of Ground Truth, Hilton, South Africa.
	Mini-SASS training courses for teachers	event	3,000.-	4	12,000.-	Based on quotation of Ground Truth, Hilton, South Africa.
	Travel and subsistence for training courses	per partici- pant	800.-	40	32,000.-	Back-to-back with regular teachers training to be explored.
3	“Get it done” grants					
	Small grants to schools	Per school / story	2,000.-	10	20,000.-	Selection criteria tbd.
<b>Total</b>					<b>74,000.-</b>	