

“Vulnerability of Water Resources to Environmental Change in Southern Africa”



A report for the Pan African START Secretariat and UNEP

by

Hans E. Beekman, Irené Saayman and Simon Hughes

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Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
PO Box 320
Stellenbosch 7599
South Africa


Your Technology Partner

Table of Contents

LIST OF FIGURES	1
LIST OF TABLES	1
TEXT BOXES	1
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Terms of Reference.....	1
1.3 Report Structure.....	2
2 FRAMEWORK FOR VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT	3
2.1 Definitions	3
2.2 River Basin Perspective.....	3
2.3 Parameters and indicators	4
2.4 Approach to Vulnerability Assessment.....	4
3 VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT OF SOUTHERN AFRICA	6
3.1 Southern Africa	6
3.1.1 Physiography	7
3.1.2 Socio-Economy	11
3.1.3 Management.....	16
3.1.4 Water Scarcity – A Cross-Cutting Vulnerability Indicator	18
3.1.5 Southern African Vulnerability studies	19
3.2 Zambezi River Basin.....	22
3.2.1 Physiography	22
3.2.2 Socio-Economy	25
3.2.3 Management.....	27
3.3 Orange River Basin.....	29
3.3.1 Physiography	29
3.3.2 Socio-Economy	35
3.3.3 Management.....	35
4 SYNTHESIS	37
4.1 Comparison of Zambezi and Orange River Basins.....	37
4.2 Virtual Water Trade - An adaptation mechanism for water stress.....	39
5. REFERENCES AND DATA SOURCES	40
5.1 Africa / Southern Africa	40
5.2 Global.....	51

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Major River Basins of Southern Africa.....	6
Figure 2: Landcover Southern Africa (IGBP Legend).....	8
Figure 3: Hydrolithological Domains of Southern Africa.....	9
Figure 4: Aridity in Southern Africa.....	10
Figure 5: Water availability in selected countries (after Hirji et al., 2002).	11
Figure 6: Population density in Southern Africa.....	13
Figure 7: Potential Water Related Disputes in Southern Africa.....	15
Figure 8: Population relative to water stress threshold (Vorosmarty et al., 2000).	18
Figure 9: Comparison of two precipitation scenarios for 2070 (Alcamo et al., 2002).	18
Figure 10: Changes in Water Stress between 1995 and 2025 under the World Water Vision's Business-as-Usual Scenario (Alcamo et al., 2000).....	19
Figure 11: Web-based early warning for potential weather hazards (6-12 February 2003)..	20
Figure 12: Zambezi River Basin.....	22
Figure 13: Landcover Zambezi River Basin (IGBP Legend).	24
Figure 14: Hydrolithological Domains Zambezi River Basin.	26
Figure 15: Orange River Basin.	29
Figure 16: Landcover Orange River Basin (IGBP Legend).....	31
Figure 17: Hydrolithological Domains Orange River Basin.	33
Figure 18: Mean annual groundwater recharge in the Orange River Basin.	34

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Parameters and vulnerability indicators.....	4
Table 2: Data availability and knowledge gaps.....	5
Table 3: Population size and per capita GDP (Ashton and Ramasar, 2002).	12
Table 4: Principles for Allocating Shared Waters (Sadoff et al., 2003).	17
Table 5: Runoff of Zambezi River and its Main Tributaries (m ³ /s). (Savenije and van der Zaag, 1998).	25
Table 6: Population of Zambezi River Basin countries in 1994 (Seyam, 1999).....	26
Table 7: Water Resource Vulnerability Zambezi and Orange River Basins.....	37
Table 8: Data availability for the vulnerability assessments in Southern Africa.....	40

TEXT BOXES

Box 1: Zambezi River Basin – Main characteristics.....	23
Box 2: Orange River Basin – Main characteristics.....	30

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The availability and access to water strongly influences patterns of economic growth and social development (Alan, 2002). In this regard, the Southern African region faces considerable challenges in meeting the social and economic needs of its populations (Hirji et al., 2002). It has become increasingly important that water resource development takes place in the context of integrated water resource management (IWRM) with its main principles of equity (regarding access), efficiency (economic) and sustainability (environment).

The sub-Saharan region is characterised by a high economic dependence on local natural resources in the form of agriculture (frequently subsistence) and pastoralism, in which the variability of climate and the availability of water to a large extent determine production. This coupled with its relatively low development status make the economies and social character of Southern Africa particularly vulnerable to changes in the availability of water over space or time. Such changes may be defined in terms of the total amount of precipitation received, its frequency of recurrence, the persistence of wet or dry day combinations or the onset and duration of the rainy season (Schulze et al., 2001) or in terms of the quality of the available resource. The extent to which water resources, the environment and economies may be impacted by changes in water availability vary.

In February 2003 the UNEP Project “Vulnerability Assessment of Water Resources to Environmental Change in Africa” was launched to address the vulnerability issue in a broad sense, i.e. in terms of physiographic, socio-economic and management related changes. This report presents the Southern African contribution to this project.

The Southern Africa assessment is carried out in the context of the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development (UN, 2002) where the international community made a renewed commitment to sustainable development as outlined in the Rio Declaration (UN, 1992) and the advancement of the Millennium Development Goals (UN, 2000). These recognise that sustainable development in Africa can only be achieved by addressing peace, security and development concerns, including issues related to the environment, human rights and governance. This overlaps with efforts in formulating “a programme of action for Africa’s re-development” through the NEPAD initiative (www.nepad.org).

1.2 Terms of Reference

For the Southern Africa project the following deliverable was defined:

“A Report with data and information on vulnerability of water resources in Southern Africa and policy actions derived from stakeholder consultations and assessment for the future GEO report”

Main focus of the project is to:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of existing vulnerability assessments of water resources, to synthesize results of various scientific studies, integrate data and information from multiple sources and identify indicators that would best represent the type of vulnerability studies that are to be pursued.

- Carry out Southern Africa vulnerability assessments on issues where investigations have so far been inadequate and where water resources are believed to be highly vulnerable to environmental change.

Activities should focus on river/lake basin scale with special attention on:

- Water Stress (combined effects of different stresses acting upon regional water resources);
- Water supply and allocation (water stocks and uses including optimal allocation of water resources to benefit people's livelihoods and support economic growth of the region);
- Water management policies (the physical, social, economic and legal aspects of water resources, management and development);
- Environmental change threats to water availability (including natural and socio-economic systems, changes in land-use, climate change etc);
- Link between the vulnerability of water resources to environmental change and contribution of poor water quality to human vulnerability. Identification of human impact in highly populated areas in order to minimize existing or potential vulnerable water resources (surface) contamination at the source.

1.3 Report Structure

Section 2 provides a framework for the vulnerability assessment. This framework comprises definitions of vulnerability, the motivation for a river basin perspective on vulnerability assessment, identification of parameters and vulnerability indicators and a three-tier approach to vulnerability assessment.

Section 3 presents a general vulnerability assessment of water resources to environmental change for the Southern African region as a whole and a more detailed assessment ('rapid' approach) of the two largest river basins: Zambezi and Orange River. The assessments concentrate on various aspects of vulnerability seen from physiographic, socio-economic and management points of view.

In *Section 4* the vulnerability assessments of the river basins are compared and key issues to be included in future analyses are discussed.

Section 5 gives an overview of references and data sources (including web-sites).

2 FRAMEWORK FOR VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

2.1 Definitions

The degree to which a system is susceptible to, or unable to cope with, adverse effects of environmental change, including natural and socio-economic systems, defines its **vulnerability**: With regard to climate change this vulnerability is a function of the character, magnitude, and rate of climate variation to which a system is exposed, its sensitivity, and its adaptive capacity (IPCC, 2001). Of most concern and relevance to the discussion on the vulnerability of water resources are spatial and temporal changes in precipitation.

In many countries water demand outstrips the available freshwater resources. Countries or regions where such conditions limit development are said to experience **water stress**. Water stress may cause the deterioration of fresh water resources in terms of quantity (over-exploitation, environmental degradation, etc.) and quality (eutrophication, organic matter pollution, saline intrusion, etc.). Withdrawals exceeding 20% of renewable water supply has been used as an indicator of water stress (IPCC, 2001). Appropriate **water resource legislation and management** is a means to address vulnerability issues.

2.2 River Basin Perspective

Increased incidence of water stress have brought about the adoption of new approaches to the management of the water resources in a holistic and integrated manner. A paradigm shift from water resource management based on administrative boundaries to hydrological boundaries followed from the Rio + 10 and Dublin conferences.

The River Basin perspective takes into account the different components of the hydrological cycle. The perspective helps to achieve a balance between the interdependent roles of resource protection and resource utilization (Ashton, 2000). It incorporates the principles of sustainability, development, participation and integrated water management and is meant to denote desirable collective goals such as equity, voice, self-realization and a healthy environment (Turton and Henwood, 2002). In effect, the River Basin perspective seeks to maintain a balance between the competing pressures exerted by the need to maintain resource integrity in the long-term, against the compelling call for social upliftment and advancement, and the need for continuous economic growth and use of environmental resources.

The River Basin perspective represents a progression from supply orientated water resource development to water demand management (Turton and Henwood, 2002). This progression develops where water demand continues to outstrip supply even though all available water sources have been developed or are prohibitively expensive to develop, which induces competition between water use(r)s and water scarcity reaches such a level that the exploitation limits become evident and finding the best possible use of water becomes imperative (Turton and Ohlsson, 2000).

For this project we will carry out a general assessment for the Southern Africa region as a whole and a more detailed assessment for two large river basins.

2.3 Parameters and indicators

Parameters and related indicators for assessing vulnerability of water resources to environmental change were grouped into natural, socio-economic and management clusters (see Table 1). They have been linked to sub-clusters and should be applied at various temporal and spatial scales. Please note that the table is not exhaustive but aims at providing an overview of those parameters and indicators for which data and information is relatively easily available and accessible from a Southern African perspective, i.e. according to the knowledge of the authors of this report. The reader is referred to Chapter 3 for detailed discussions on the parameters and indicators.

Table 1: Parameters and vulnerability indicators.

Cluster		Parameter *	Vulnerability Indicator*	Water Scarcity
Physiography	Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainfall, • Evapotranspiration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aridity 	
	Ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water dependency • Land use • Landcover 		
	Hydrology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stream flow • Storage • Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Availability • Storage and Supply Infrastructure 	
	Hydrogeology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yield • Recharge 		
Socio- Economy	Demography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population Size and Distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population Density • Access to Water 	
	Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Demand • Water Supply • Value of Water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Use • Poverty • Conflicts 	
Management	Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies • Acts • Regulations • Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector reform • Implementation and adaptive capacity 	
	Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adherence to IWRM principles • Human Resources 		
	Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature/reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data availability, gaps, and quality 	

*Temporal and spatial variability and trends

2.4 Approach to Vulnerability Assessment

The level of detail of a vulnerability assessment is determined by the study objective and resource availability (human resources, finances, data and information, etc.). We propose the following three tiered approach:

- Rapid: summarised overview including inventory of sources of data and information.
- Intermediate: a more detailed overview
- Comprehensive: in-depth analysis, likely at a smaller spatial scale (pilot areas)

We estimate that it should take one month for one person to carry out a vulnerability assessment of one large river basin to the level of a rapid assessment. The subsequent intermediate assessment may take about six months, depending on the study objective, whereas the comprehensive assessment may take a year.

The following procedure is proposed for carrying out a rapid assessment:

- Stage 1: Define spatial scale of assessment using biophysical and socio-economic boundaries.
- Stage 2: Define temporal scale that incorporates current and potential environmental change.
- Stage 3: Collect data and information on the relevant biophysical characteristics of the study area.
- Stage 4: Collect data and information on the socio-economic and management characteristics of the study area.
- Stage 5: Provide a summarised overview.

Data availability and knowledge gaps should be inventorised during the rapid assessment, preferably at a river basin scale.

Table 2 provides a means to evaluate data availability and knowledge gaps during the rapid assessment. Data availability can be referenced on a country (national) and regional (Southern Africa) level, and grouped according to the main vulnerability assessment clusters and sub-clusters. Having been collected nationally, country-by-country, information in Africa, however, is generally compiled and available according to administrative boundaries rather than according to hydrological boundaries. Information therefore needs to be synthesised. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) offer an opportunity to capture and assemble information at the River Basin scale. For a comprehensive vulnerability assessment the data inventory should include metadata describing its reliability and precision, as well as the temporal and spatial scale for which it is representative.

Table 2: Data availability and know ledge gaps.

COUNTRY / REGIONAL	PHYSIOGRAPHY				SOCIO-ECONOMY			MANAGEMENT					
	Climate	Climate Change and Impacts	Ecosystems	Hydrology	Hydrogeology	Sociology - Health	Hydro-politics	Economy	Legislation, regulations and guidelines	Water Sector Reform – IWRM	Water Master Plan	Data-bases and Maps	Digital Coverage
A	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
B	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Africa / Southern Africa
 Country-specific

3 VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

3.1 Southern Africa

The four largest Southern African (internationally shared) river basins, south of the Democratic Republic of Congo, are (from largest to small) the Zambezi River Basin, the Orange River Basin, the Okavango River Basin and the Limpopo River Basin. The distribution of these river basins over the sub-continent is shown in Figure 1.

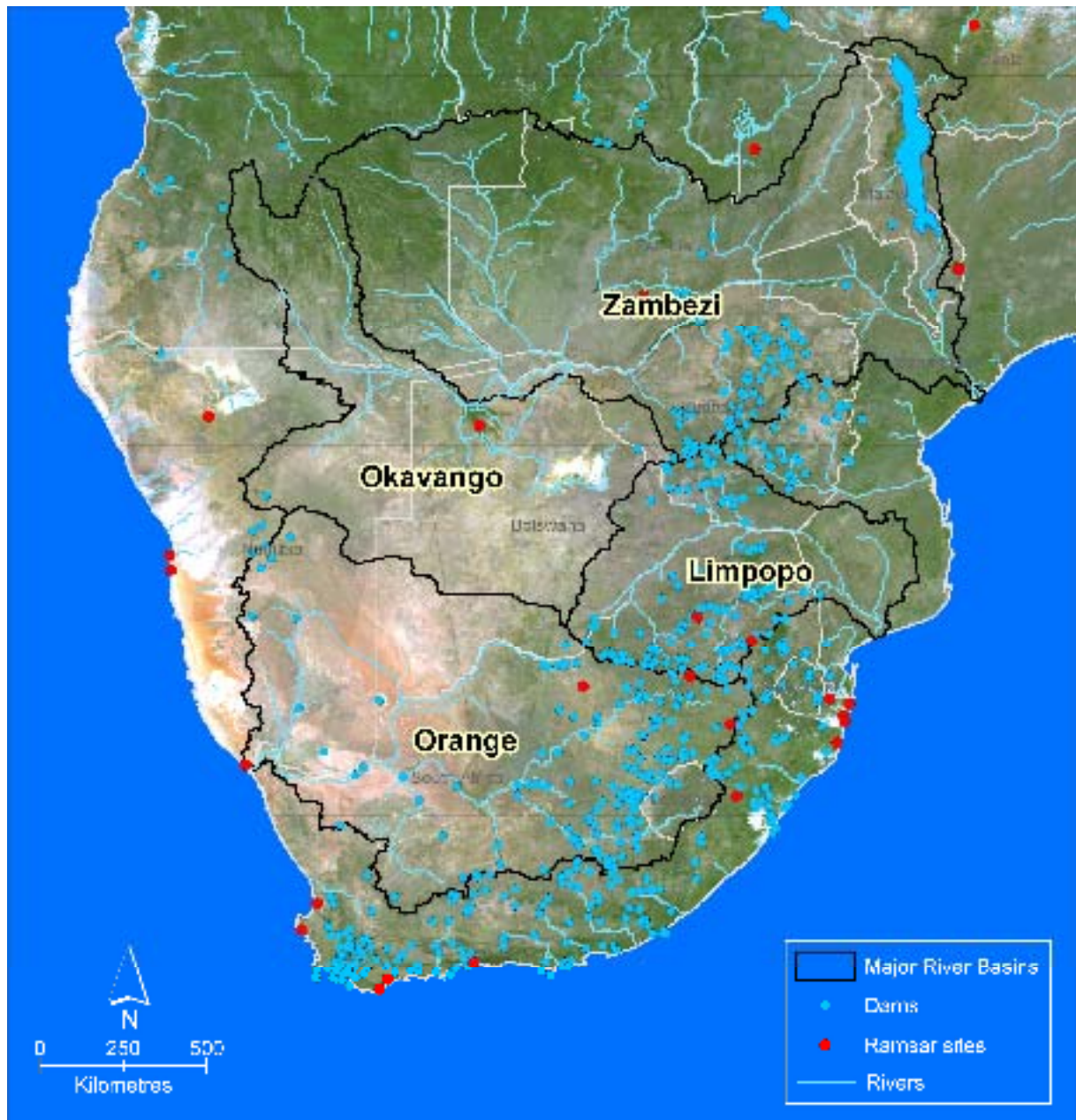


Figure 1: Major River Basins of Southern Africa.

Source

Satellite Image: USGS MODIS, 28 December, 2001

Rivers and Dams: FAO Atlas of Water Resources and Irrigation in Africa – Aquastat, FAO 2001

Ramsar Sites: Ramsar 2003 www.ramsar.org

3.1.1 Physiography

Climate

Rainfall patterns of Southern Africa are largely governed by the position of three systems; the Intertropical Convergence Zone near the equator, high-pressure cells south of the 20° parallel, and cold fronts at the southern tip of the continent. Broadly speaking, annual rainfall is highest near the equator and along the east coast, and decreases southwards and westwards. It ranges from 100 mm in the western parts to 1500 mm in the eastern parts. Potential evapotranspiration exceeds average annual rainfall in most of the region. An average of 65% of all rainfall evaporates soon after it has fallen (Pallett, 1997). Evaporation is much lower in relatively cooler and more humid areas, but can get as high as 83% in Namibia.

Ecosystems

Natural beauty and biological diversity (birds and wildlife) are one of the key attractions for tourists. The region has relatively large areas where the natural systems are protected and largely un-impacted by human interventions. Recent developments have seen the joining of protected areas across national borders through the establishment of trans-frontier parks. Furthermore, there are 25 wetlands of high ecological importance in the region protected under the Ramsar Convention of 1971 (Figure 1).

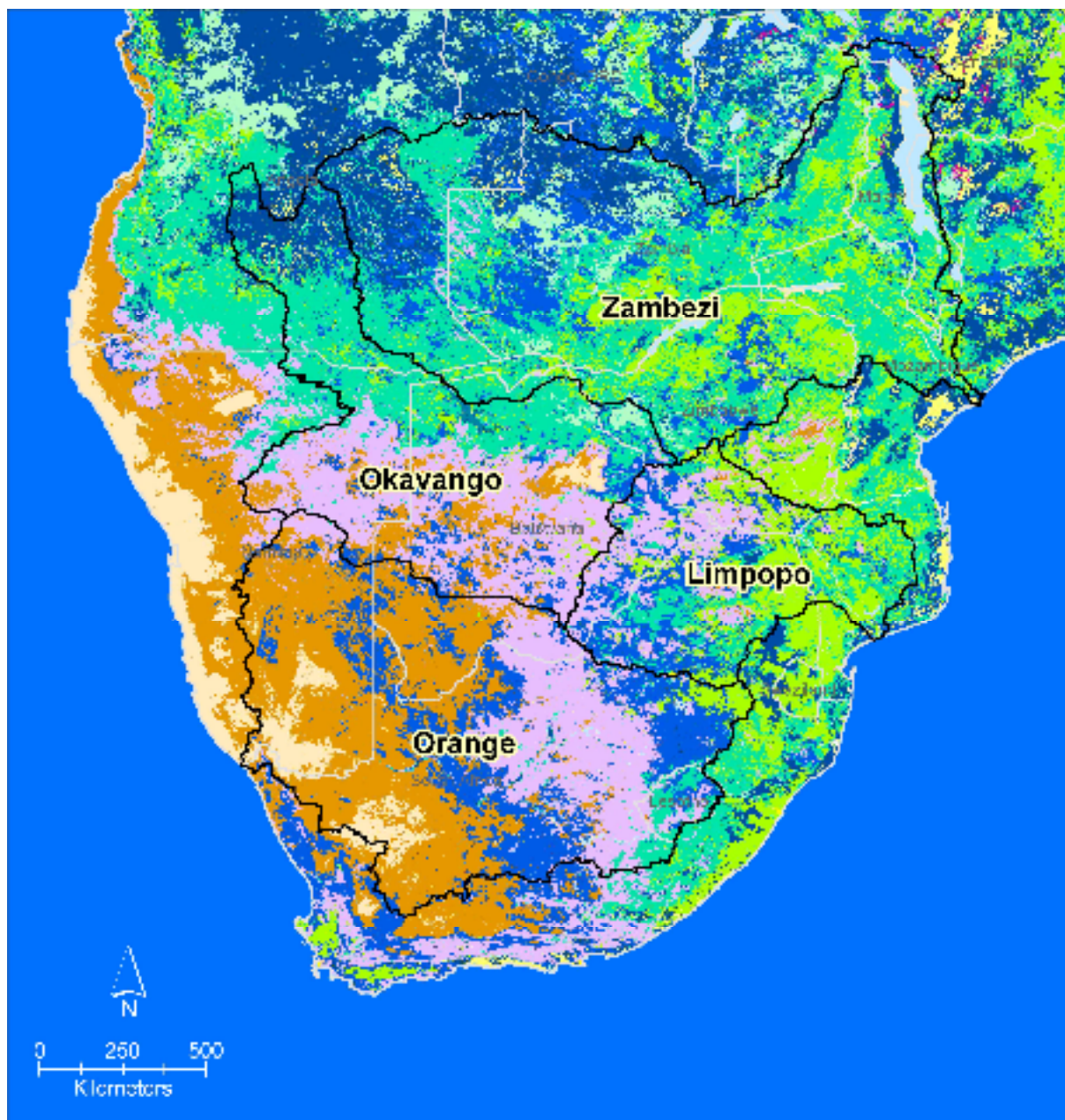
The region's landcover largely mirrors its climate, with grassland and open shrubland in the west and southwest, savannah in the southeast and evergreen broadleaf forests in the north. Large areas of cropland are found in eastern and northern South Africa and Zimbabwe (Figure 2). This to some extent is a reflection of the relatively advanced level of commercial agriculture that exists in these countries.

Hydrology and Hydrogeology

Renewable freshwater of Southern Africa is estimated at 650 billion cubic meters, distributed over rivers, lakes and groundwater (Chenje and Johnson, 1996). The distribution, occurrence and availability of water resources are uneven in the region. In some parts of the region surface runoff is available in sufficient quantities throughout the year. In other parts surface runoff only occurs with extreme episodic rainfall events. Under such conditions people rely largely on dams and groundwater resources. The renewable portion of groundwater resources is determined by groundwater recharge. Average annual recharge figures for the region typically range from 1 to 15% of average annual rainfall (Gieske, 1992; Bredenkamp et al., 1995; Beekman et al., 1996; Xu and Beekman, 2003).

Southern Africa has 16 major river basins, of which the four largest are the Zambezi River, the Orange River, the Okavango River and the Limpopo River Basins (Figure 1). The Zambezi and Limpopo rivers flow into the Indian Ocean, while the Orange River flows into the Atlantic Ocean. The Okavango River Basin is internally draining and terminates inland in the Okavango Delta.

Groundwater is extensively used throughout Southern Africa (Savenije and van der Zaag, 1998). This is particularly the case in rural areas where groundwater is the main contributor for domestic supply and agricultural needs. Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of groundwater occurrences according to the following main hydrogeological domains: volcanic rocks (e.g. basalt); Precambrian basement rocks (crystalline basement); consolidated (e.g. sandstone and dolomite) and unconsolidated (e.g. sands) sediments. Southern African aquifers mainly occur in crystalline basement and sedimentary basins. Although the hydrogeological domains do not follow the river basin boundaries, the aquifers generally do fall within the boundaries.



Landcover		
Barren Or Sparsely Vegetated	Evergreen Broadleaf Forest	Permanent Wetlands
Closed Shrublands	Evergreen Needleleaf Forest	Savannas
Cropland/Natural Vegetation Mosaic	Grasslands	Urban And Built-Up
Croplands	Mixed Forests	Water Bodies
	Open Shrublands	Woody Savannas
		Major River Basins

Figure 2: Landcover Southern Africa (IGBP Legend).

Source

USGS Africa Landcover Characteristics Data Base - <http://edcdaac.usgs.gov/glcc/glcc.html>

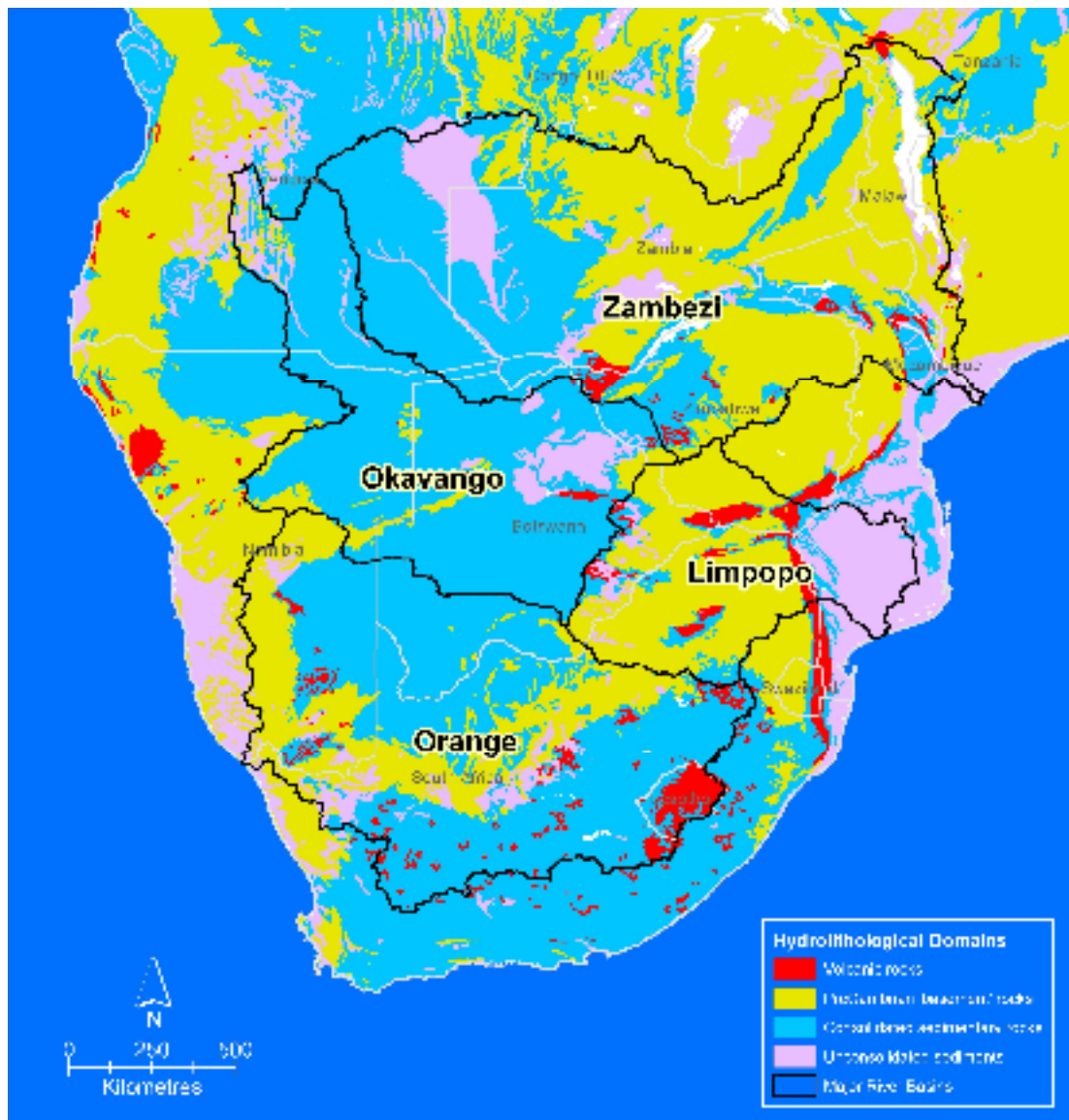


Figure 3: Hydrolithological Domains of Southern Africa.

Source
 Adapted from USGS World Energy Resources Products, Generalized Geology of Africa
<http://energy.cr.usgs.gov/oilgas/wep/products/geology/africa.htm>
 After MacDonald, A.M. and Davies, J. 2000.

On top of crystalline basement a weathering zone may develop which is usually 10 to 15 meters thick (UN, 1988). Groundwater yields from boreholes in these zones depend on the degree of weathering and fracturation of the rock. Borehole yields of 5 m³/hr for granites and granitogneiss and 1 m³/hr for micaschists and metamorphic schists are considered as ‘good’ (UN, 1988). Groundwater from these rocks is mostly used for domestic water supply.

Vulnerability Indicators

Aridity

Figure 4 shows the aridity in the region as a function of rainfall and evapotranspiration and is indexed as: Annual Precipitation / Annual Potential Evapotranspiration. The lower the

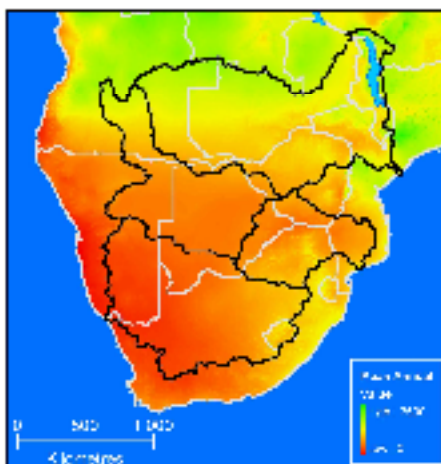
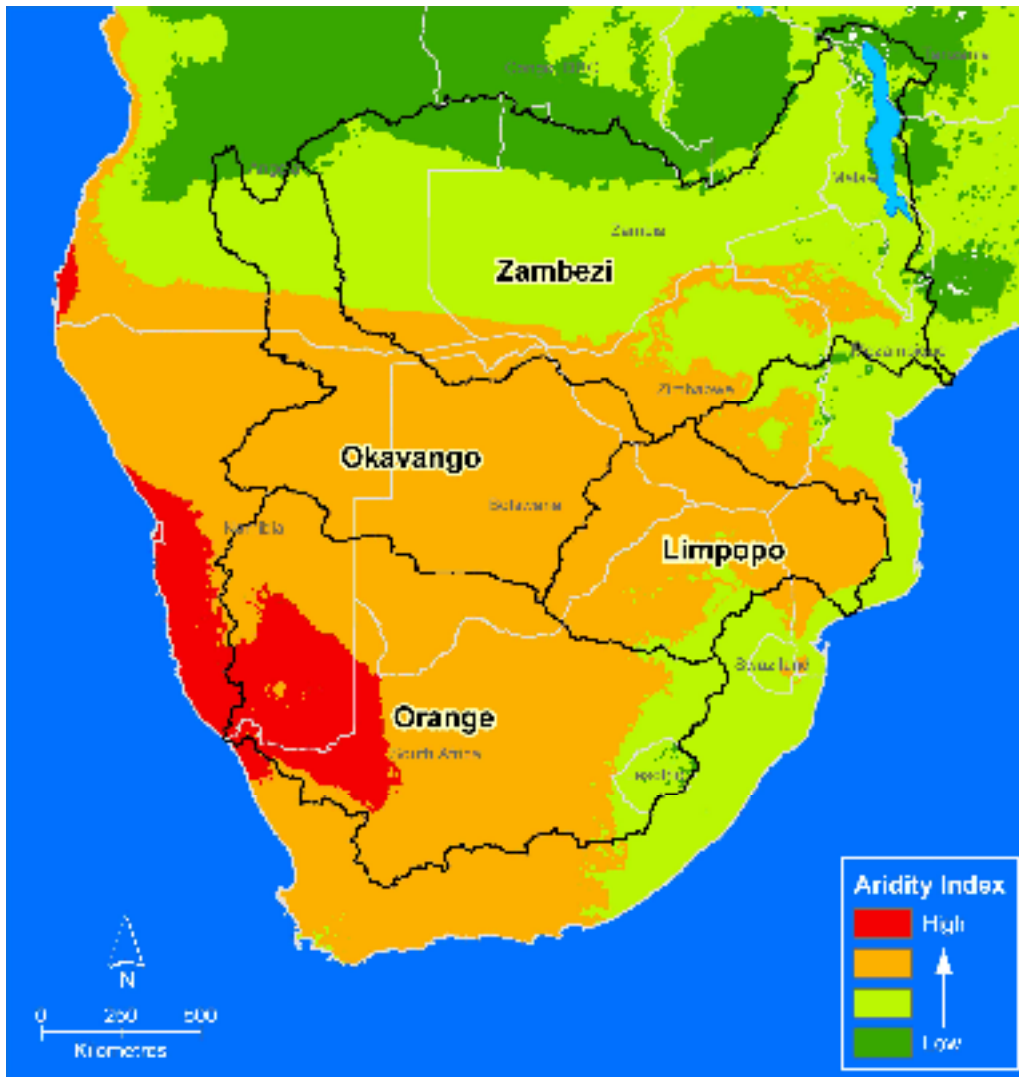


Figure 4: Aridity in Southern Africa.

Source

UNEP Spatial Characterisation Tool, 1997. Texas A&M University, USA.

<http://www.grida.no/cgi/ar/awpack/spatial.htm>

index, the higher the aridity and vulnerability of water resources to environmental change. Highest aridity occurs in western-Southern Africa and decreases to the north and east.

Water availability

The availability of water relates to both quantity and quality aspects. It comprises both surface water and groundwater. Availability of water is determined by parameters such as rainfall and evapotranspiration, land cover, recharge, etc. Figure 5 shows water availability per capita per year for selected countries. Projected figures for 2025 (UN FAO, 1995; Vital Climate graphics Africa – UNEP) suggest that water availability per person will decrease. This is largely due to increasing water demand and a reduction in resource accessibility as a result of factors such as increasing urban population, environmental change (incl. climatic change), pollution, etc. Particularly for Malawi and South Africa the projection looks bleak.

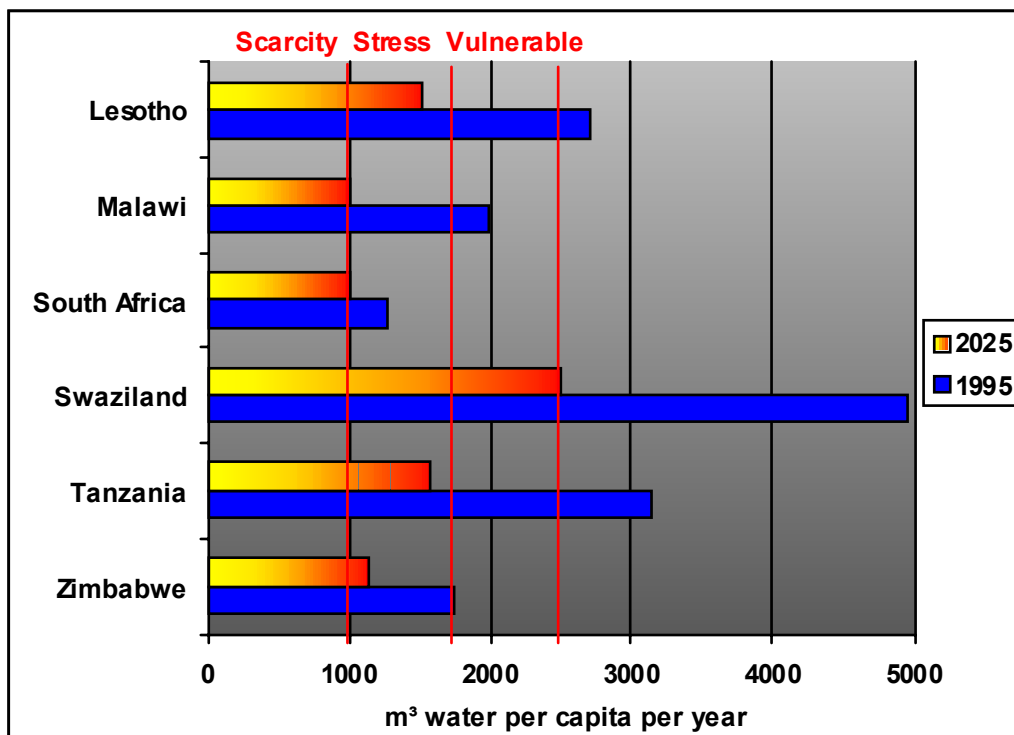


Figure 5: Water availability in selected countries (after Hirji et al., 2002).

Source

UN FAO 1995; Hirji et al., 2002; Vital Climate Graphics Africa; UNEP Grid Arendal, 2003 www.grida.no/

3.1.2 Socio-Economy

Demography

The population of Southern Africa (excluding The Democratic Republic of Congo) was estimated to number around 150 million people in 2000 (Ashton and Ramasar, 2002). Table 3 gives a breakdown of population of each country. Population growth rates are high: 1.5 – 3%, but will likely be curtailed by the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS. Note in the table the decline in life expectancy for all counties of the region between 1995 and 1999/2000. Some projections (UN World Population Prospect), however, foresee that SADC's population will grow by about 50% by 2020 and 100% by 2050.

In all countries a strong trend exists towards urbanisation. As a result the population growth rates of towns and cities are much higher than national population growth rates. These high growth rates place further demands on clean water supplies and sanitation. Some of the main population centres can be seen in Figure 6 (from 1988 population data).

Table 3: Population size and per capita GDP (Ashton and Ramasar, 2002).

SADC country	Population in 2000 (millions)	Country population in 2025 (millions)	Per capita GDP in 1999 (US\$/p/year)	HIV/AIDS incidence (%)	1995		1999-2000*	
					Life expectancy (yrs)	HDI ranking	Life expectancy (yrs)	HDI ranking
Angola	12.903	21.961	336	**2.8	50	157	47	160
Botswana	1.639	1.981	2 904	35.8	60	71	39	122
Lesotho	2.156	3.246	502	23.6	58	137	46	142
Malawi	10.778	16.068	132	16.0	46	157	39	159
Mozambique	19.980	28.776	92	13.2	52	166	43	169
Namibia	1.739	2.567	1 969	20.0	56	116	50	115
South Africa	43.265	49.010	3 281	22.6	60	100	48	101
Swaziland	0.928	1.257	1 255	25.3	58	110	46	114
Tanzania	33.744	63.636	124	8.1	50	149	45	156
Zambia	9.191	14.895	431	20.0	49	136	39	151
Zimbabwe	13.109	13.988	579	25.1	50	124	40	151

*Latest data available was for different years, either 1999 or 2000.

**Unreliable data due to civil war in these countries.

Source

World Bank (1998), CIA (2000); SADC (2000); UNAIDS (2000); Whiteside and Sunter (2000).

Large disparities exist between the levels of development in the countries of Southern Africa. One way of comparing development is through the Human Development Index (HDI) (shown in Table 3). The HDI is a composite of three basic components of human development: longevity, education and living standards. Five out of the 11 Southern African states fall in the lowest-ranking countries regarding the Human Development Index. A comparison with the rest of the world shows that sub-Saharan Africa is the most under-developed region in the world. This is illustrated by the fact that the region has the highest proportion of people relying on less than one dollar a day (Christian Aid, 2002).

In order to advance human development, governments have adopted a number of targets, known as the Millennium Development Goals MDG (UN, 2000; UN-WWDR, 2003). Among these is Goal 7, which requires that governments adopt sustainable resource management policies and reduce the number of people that do not have access to safe water and sanitation by half by 2015.

Economy

The economy of Southern Africa is largely based on natural resources, with mining and agriculture contributing most to economic output. Mineral wealth, however, is not evenly distributed throughout the region, with development concentrated in Angola (Oil), Botswana (Diamonds), Namibia (Diamonds) and South Africa (Gold, Diamonds, Platinum, Coal). Agriculture contributes 9% to the GDP output of the region (1996 data), but provide employment for 60% of the regions total active labour force (source: FAO statistics-www.fao.org).

In 2000 the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Southern Africa was US\$162.3 billion, of which \$125.8 billion (78%) was produced in South Africa (UNEC, 2002). The average sub-Saharan annual per capita income is \$490, while in Botswana it is \$2 904, Namibia \$1 963 South Africa \$3 281 and Swaziland \$1 255 (Ashton and Ramasar, 2002).

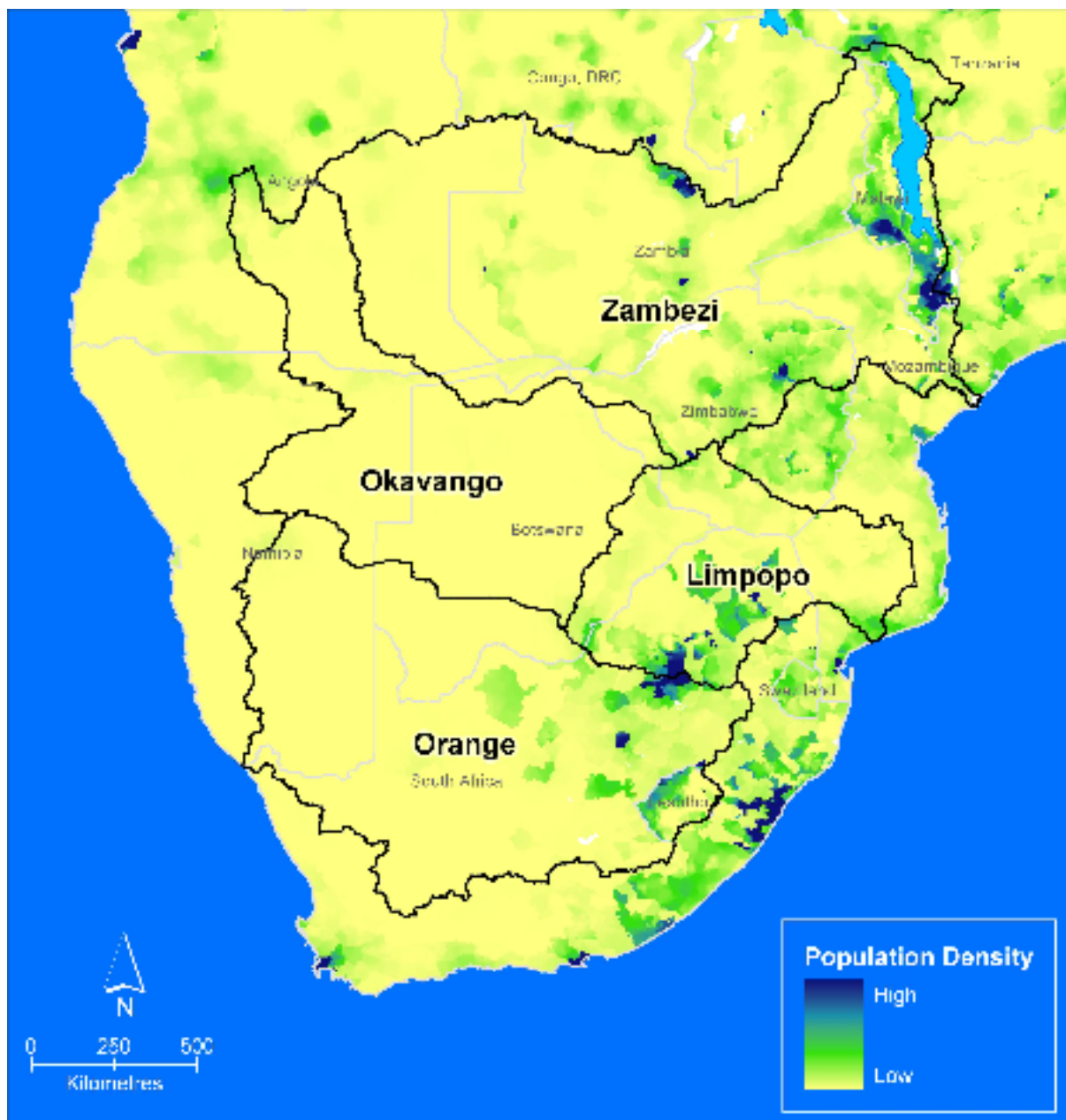


Figure 6: Population density in Southern Africa.

Source

UNEP Spatial Characterisation Tool, 1997; Deichmann, 1994.

The impact of social instability and war has constrained growth and development throughout the region. Its low development status has resulted in considerable involvement of the international community through aid and donor agencies. Large foreign debt remains a problem in the region, with Angola, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia classed among the most indebted countries in the world (Jubilee, 2000).

The UN Economic Commission for Africa estimates that in order for countries in Southern Africa to meet the MDGs by 2015 a minimum sustained growth rate of 6.2% a year is required. In recent years only Mozambique has grown more than 6%. During the 1990s, the average growth rate in Zambia has been 1.6% and in conflict and war-ridden Angola 0.5%.

The Zimbabwean economy is the fastest contracting in the world today, with GDP shrinking by 17% in 2002 (Christian Aid, 2002).

Economic factors that contribute to the poor performance of Africa and which render most of the population vulnerable have been summarized as follows (HSRC, 2002):

- low levels of private investment due to macroeconomic instability, inadequate legal systems and conflict;
- high tax and import duty rates which discourage foreign investment;
- bad governance and corruption;
- high levels of debt and dependence on foreign assistance;
- low rates of return on capital and labour;
- low overall productivity rates;
- over-valued exchange rates;
- poor infrastructure; and
- insufficient competition and monopolistic structures.

Impact of HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS remains a major concern for Africa. Apart from its direct effects on the health of individuals, it also exerts indirect influences on every sector of society. HIV/AIDS further poses a threat to development, security and economic growth. Among the consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic is an erosion of human capacity within organisations and in countries. The loss of capacity reduces economic growth. Southern Africa is the region with the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS in the world. Of the countries of Southern Africa, Botswana (35.8%), Swaziland (25.3%), Lesotho (23.6%) and South Africa (22.6%) have the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS (Ashton and Ramasar, 2002).

Several aggregate models project significant reductions in economic growth rates for African economies. These modelling exercises typically follow a pattern of reporting “with” and “without AIDS” scenarios. An example is the widely cited ING Barings model produced for the July 2000 HIV/AIDS conference in Durban, which showed that long-term economic growth in South Africa would decline 0.4 percent per year due to HIV/AIDS (Brookings Institution, 2001). Recent research, however, suggests that these studies may be too optimistic. What they fail to consider is that by undermining human capacity, HIV/AIDS reduces productivity, disrupts organizations, and unravels institutions (Brookings Institution, 2001).

Vulnerability Indicators

Water Demand and Water Use

Based on an evaluation of water availability in Southern Africa, Arntzen (2001) demonstrated that increased water demand is driven by:

- High population growth (2 – 3.5% per annum)
- The urbanization of populations
- Improved welfare and living conditions and
- Industrial and agricultural development.

Increasing water demand and water use obviously results in less water available per person.

Conflicts (from Ashton, 2002)

Some 85% of Africa's water resources are comprised of large river basins that are shared between several countries. High rates of population growth accompanied by continued increases in the demand for water have resulted in several countries passing the point where the scarcity of water supplies effectively limits further development. Present population trends and patterns of water use suggest that more African countries will exceed the limits of their economically usable, land-based water resources before 2025. Normally, water allocation and distribution priorities within a country are aligned with national development objectives. While this may achieve national "water security" objectives, greater emphasis needs to be placed on regional efforts to ensure that the available water resources are used to derive sustainable long-term benefits for the peoples of Africa as a whole. Ideally, each country's water-resource management strategy needs to be aligned with that of its neighbours if peace and prosperity are to be maintained and conflict is to be avoided in the region. Figure 7 shows hot-spots of actual or potential water-related conflicts in Southern Africa. Largest conflicts are expected in connection with the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, the Limpopo River and the Eastern Caprivi region.

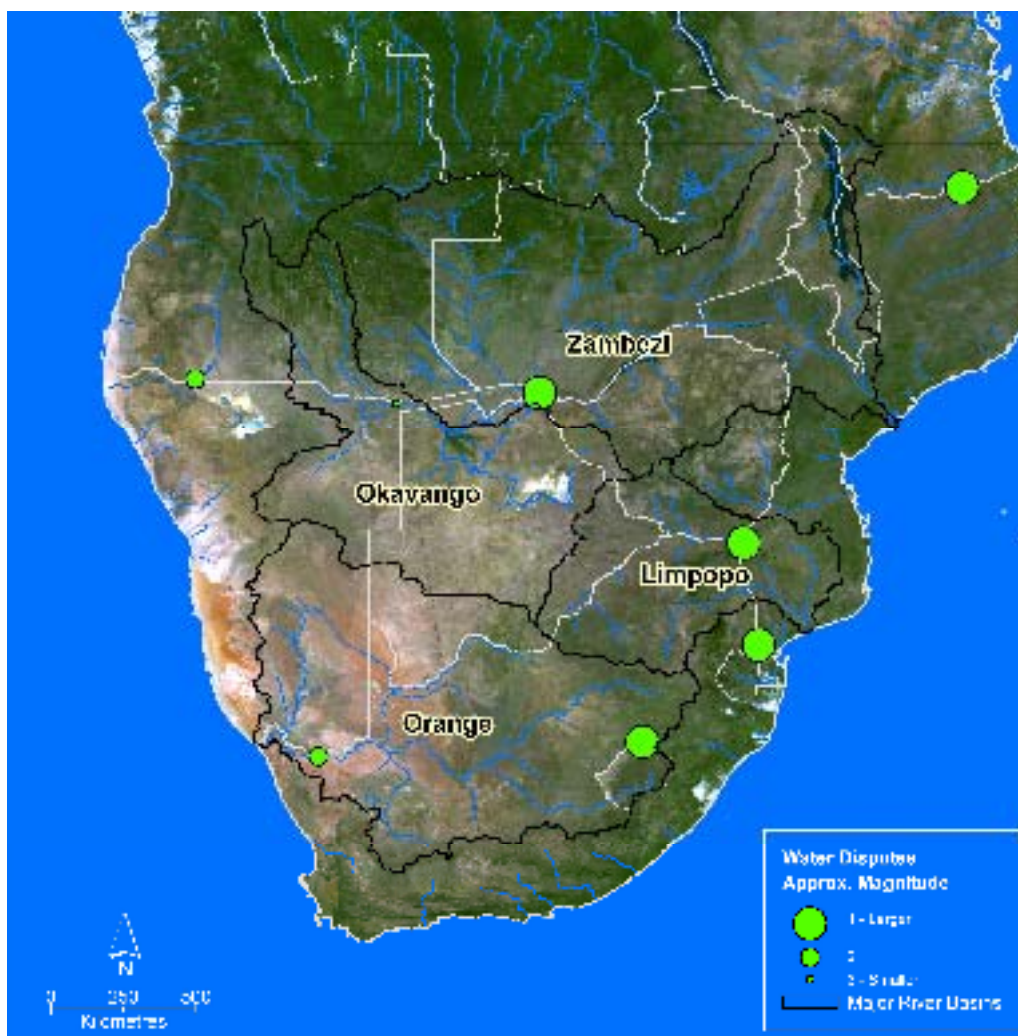


Figure 7: Potential Water Related Disputes in Southern Africa.

Source
Adapted from Ashton, 2002.

3.1.3 Management

Legislation and Institutional Framework

There has been significant progress in water sector reforms in Southern African countries since the late nineties with an increasingly holistic approach to water resource management (both surface water, groundwater, socio-economic and other issues being dealt with in an integrated manner). The water sector reforms which include the set up of new institutions with new functions and responsibilities and legislation and guidelines for water resource management and development, takes place at a different pace and at different scales. South Africa and Zimbabwe promulgated their new Water Acts in 1998 whereas other countries such as Namibia and Zambia are in the process of revisiting their old Acts.

SADC Shared Watercourse Systems Protocol (<http://www.thewaterpage.com/sadcWSCU.htm>)

Water in the region is a scarce resource and it is foreseen that in the next 20 to 30 years, three or four SADC States will be facing serious water shortages. In recognition of the importance of a coordinated approach to the utilisation and preservation of water, SADC member States signed the Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems at the 1995 Summit in South Africa. The main thrust of the Protocol which is a legally binding document, is to ensure equitable sharing of water and also to ensure efficient conservation of the scarce resource. The protocol describes the establishment, objectives and functions and a financial and regulatory framework of River Basin Management Institutions.

As of 5 July 2001, the SADC countries that have ratified the original Protocol on Shared Water Course Systems are Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Revised protocol on shared water courses (2000) signed by thirteen SADC member states in Namibia has been ratified by the two member states Botswana and Namibia.

Table 4 lists the principles for allocating shared waters of the SADC Shared Water course Systems Protocol (1995) in comparison with the Helsinki Rules on the Uses of the Waters of International Rivers (1966) and the UN Convention on Non-navigable Uses of International Watercourses (1997).

Data availability

References to data sources for the Southern African region as a whole are given in Table 8 in Section 5.1.

Table 4: Principles for Allocating Shared Waters (Sadoff et al., 2003).

Helsinki Rules on the Uses of the Waters of International Rivers (1966)	SADC Shared Watercourse Systems Protocol (1995)	United Nations Convention on Non-navigable Uses of International Watercourses (1997)
<p><i>Within the meaning of Article IV a reasonable and equitable share is to be determined in the light of all relevant factors in each particular case.... Relevant factors which are to be considered include, but are not limited to:</i></p>	<p><i>Utilization of a shared watercourse system in an equitable manner. ...requires taking into account all relevant factors and circumstances, including:</i></p>	<p><i>Utilization of an international watercourse in an equitable and reasonable manner requires taking into account all relevant factors and circumstances, including:</i></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The geography of the basin, including in particular the extent of the drainage area in the territory of each basin state 2. The hydrology of the basin, including in particular the contribution of water by each basin state 3. The climate affecting the basin 4. The past utilization of the waters of the basin, including in particular existing water utilization 5. The economic and social needs of each basin state 6. The population dependent on the waters of the basin in each basin state 7. The comparative costs of alternative of satisfying the economic and social needs of each basin state 8. The availability of other resources 9. The avoidance of unnecessary waste in the utilization of waters of the basin 10. The practicability of compensation to one or more of the co-basin states as a means of adjusting conflicts among uses 11. The degree to which the needs of a basin state may be satisfied, without causing substantial injury to a co-basin state 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Geographical, hydrographical, hydrologic, climatical and other factors of a natural character 2. The social and economic needs of the member states concerned 3. The effects of the use of a shared watercourse system in one watercourse state on another watercourse state 4. Existing and potential uses of the shared watercourse system 5. Guidelines and agreed standards to be adopted 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Geographic, hydrographic, hydrologic, climatic, ecological and other factors of a natural character 2. The social and economic needs of the watercourse states concerned 3 The population dependent on the watercourse in each watercourse state 4. The effects of the use or uses of the watercourses in one watercourse state on other watercourse states 5. Existing and potential uses of the watercourse 6. Conservation, protection, development, and economy of use of the water resources of the watercourse and the costs of measures taken to that effect 7 The availability of alternatives, of comparable value, to a particular planned or existing use

3.1.4 Water Scarcity – A Cross-Cutting Vulnerability Indicator

Water scarcity can be expressed as the ratio between water demand (or water withdrawal) and water availability. A threshold of 0.4 for this ratio is often taken as indicator for severe water scarcity. Figure 8 from Vörösmarty et al. (2000) shows the number of inhabitants per 0.5 degree pixel living above or below this threshold. The figure suggests that the Southern African region is currently at risk.

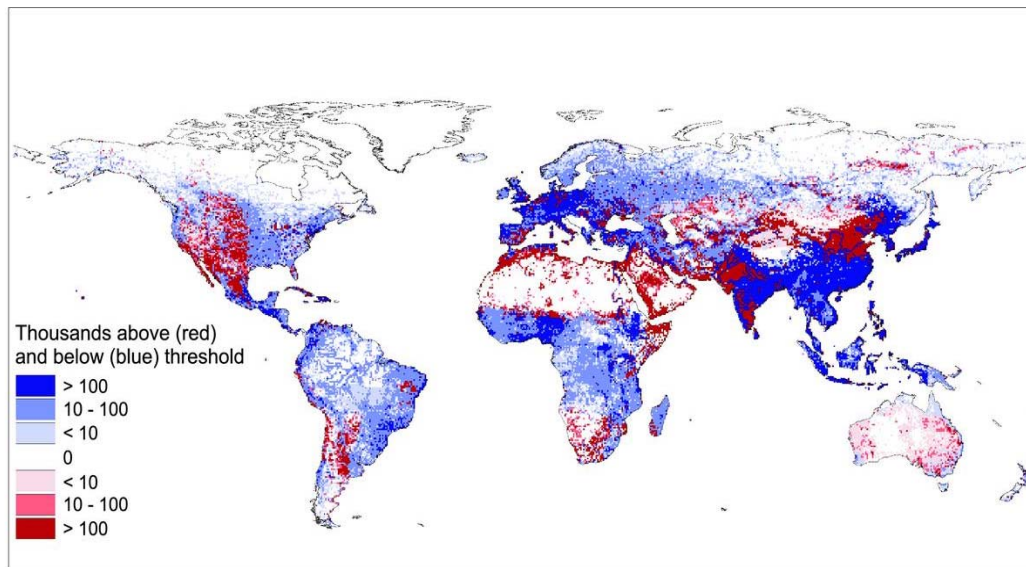


Figure 8: Population relative to water stress threshold (Vorosmarty et al., 2000).

SADC's population is expected to grow by about 50% by 2020 and 100% by 2050 (UN World Population Prospect) hence the water requirement for food supply will grow accordingly. Climate change may further aggravate the situation through decreasing water availability. The UN-WWDR (2003) suggests that climate change will account for about 20% of the increase in global water scarcity. Southern Africa is among the few regions in the world for which most global climate models (GCMs) agree upon further increase in aridity. Figure 9 compares the results of two GCMs – red areas are those where both models agree that precipitation will decrease. The combined effect of decreasing rainfall and increasing temperature as predicted for large parts of the region would lower the average water availability for livelihoods (DWC, 2003).

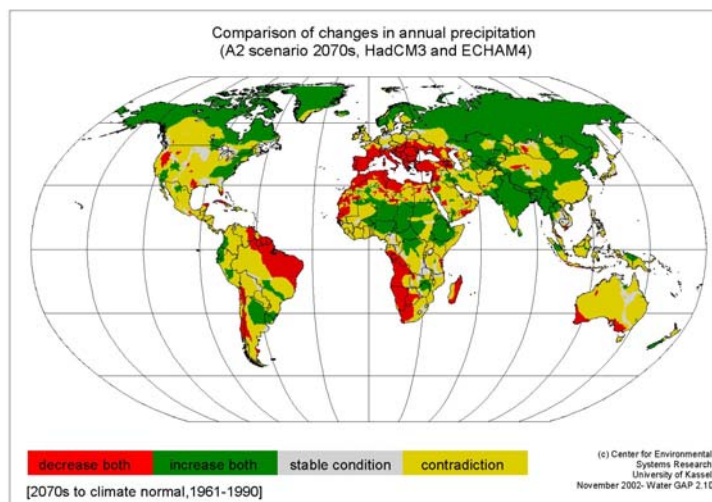


Figure 9: Comparison of two precipitation scenarios for 2070 (Alcamo et al., 2002).

Figure 10 depicts the change in water stress (ratios of water withdrawal to water availability in drainage basins) on a global scale between 1995 and 2025. Based on the above figures, Southern Africa, with its spatially and temporally highly variable water resources, is therefore not only currently but also in the future experiencing increasing water scarcity.

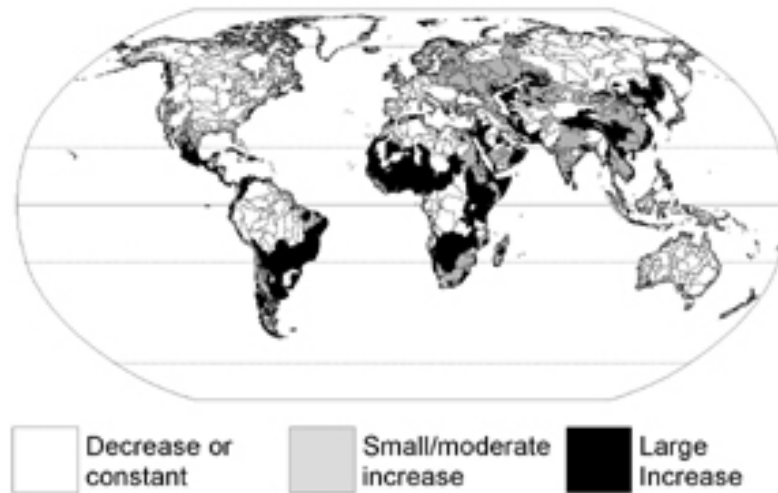


Figure 10: Changes in Water Stress between 1995 and 2025 under the World Water Vision's Business-as-Usual Scenario (Alcamo et al., 2000).

Alcamo and Heinrichs (2002) determined critical regions of water stress vulnerability up to the 2020s based on a comparison of the change in water withdrawals caused by changes in population, economic growth and technological change with the change in water availability due to climate change. From their study it can be deduced that most of the Orange and Limpopo River Basins are in a critical state and when combined these basins comprise one of the three largest critical areas in Africa. South Africa in particular is among the most severely water stressed countries in the world. Water scarcity will undoubtedly place a major constraint on food production, human health, and environmental quality. On top of water stress are the extreme events as shown in Figure 11. Here a web-based, timely early warning system for weather hazards (droughts and floods) for the whole of Africa illustrates areas at risk.

3.1.5 Southern African Vulnerability studies

To date, most Southern African vulnerability studies carried out have focused on drought vulnerability and the impact of climate change on water resources.

Southern Africa is among the world's most drought prone regions. Indications are that climate change may increase the periodic occurrence of drought in the region (Ohlsson, 1995). Recurring droughts continue to pose a serious challenge to food security in the region. In many areas groundwater use is being increased in an attempt to limit the impact of rainfall scarcity and variability on agriculture. This and the fact that groundwater can be a safe, cheap and reliable source of water for domestic supply, is resulting in an increased reliance upon groundwater throughout Southern Africa.

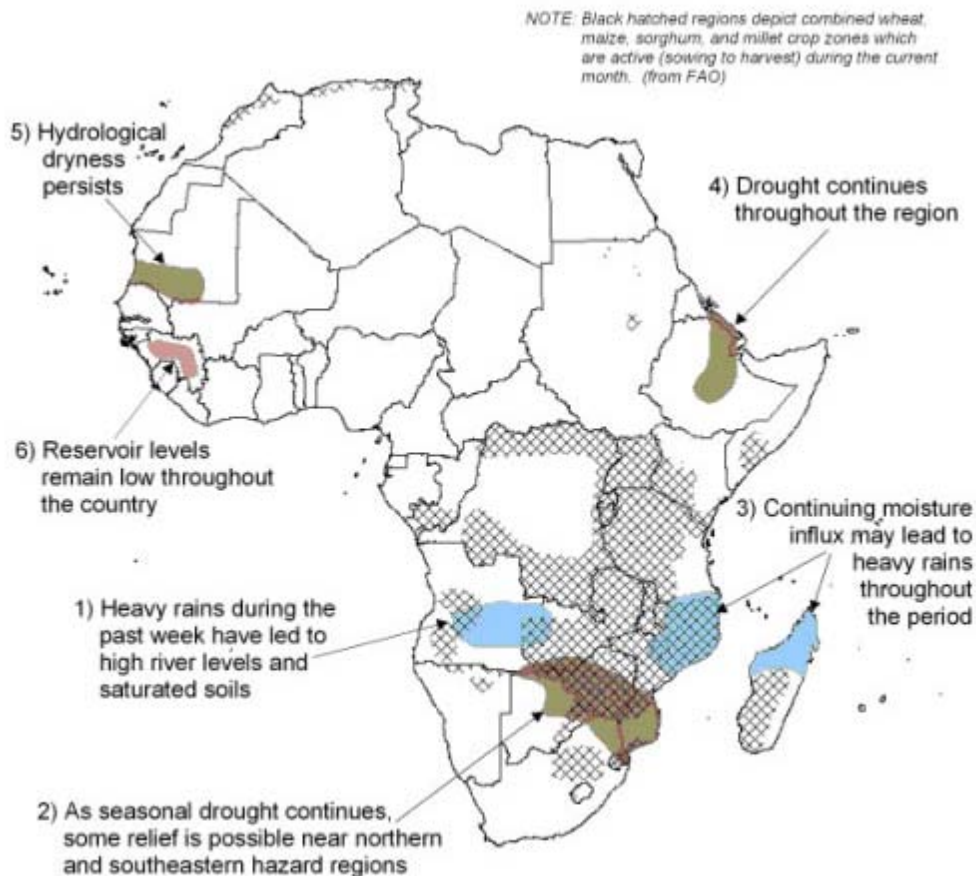


Figure 11: Web-based early warning for potential weather hazards (6-12 February 2003).

Source

Relief Web <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/map.nsf/home?OpenForm>

When the rains stop, and surface water sources dry up, groundwater can become the only water source available. As a result boreholes and wells that were previously utilised within a sustainable level are typically over-used at a time of diminished recharge. As a result water levels drop. The extent of aquifer depletion in such a situation is controlled by the aquifer's permeability and aquifer depletion may be either local or regional.

Among the advantages of groundwater use is its ability to buffer rainfall variability. Aquifers have significantly more storage capacity than surface water resources, and typically account for around 90% of water stored in a catchment.

Studies on vulnerability of water resources to climate change in Southern Africa include:

- Hulme (ed), (1996): Focused on annual surface water runoff in the SADC region at 0.5° resolution.
- Meigh et al. (1998): An assessment of water availability in East and Southern Africa at 0.5° resolution. Included a demand/supply study incorporating both surface and groundwater.

- Schulze and Perks (2000): Detailed modelling exercises covering South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland at 0.25° cell resolution, and applied to the 1946 Quaternary catchments.
- Vörösmarty and Moore (1991): On the hydrology and runoff of the Zambezi basin.
- Cambula, (1999): On the impact of climate change on the water resources of Mozambique.
- Cavé et al. (2003). Impact of climate change on groundwater recharge estimation.

Recharge is one of the critical parameters in determining water availability. Changes in recharge will result from changes in effective rainfall as well as a change in the timing of the rainfall season (Gleik, 2000). In general, under a scenario of global warming, increasing temperature results in decreasing precipitation over the central continental areas causing decreasing recharge and thus depletion of groundwater resources. Indirect impacts on groundwater resources may also arise from climate change impacts on vegetation and human activities e.g. groundwater abstraction patterns. Rainfall – recharge relationships may be used in a first attempt to assess impacts of climate change on groundwater resources (Cavé et al., 2003).

In the following sections rapid assessments will be made of the two largest Southern African River Basins south of the Congo River Basin: the Zambezi and the Orange River Basins.

3.2 Zambezi River Basin

South of the Congo River Basin, the Zambezi is the largest river basin in Southern Africa. It has a catchment area of about 1,390,000 km². This transboundary river basin includes parts of Angola (18%), Botswana (1%), Malawi (8%), Mozambique (12%), Namibia (1%), Tanzania (2%), Zambia (42%) and Zimbabwe (16%; Figure 12).

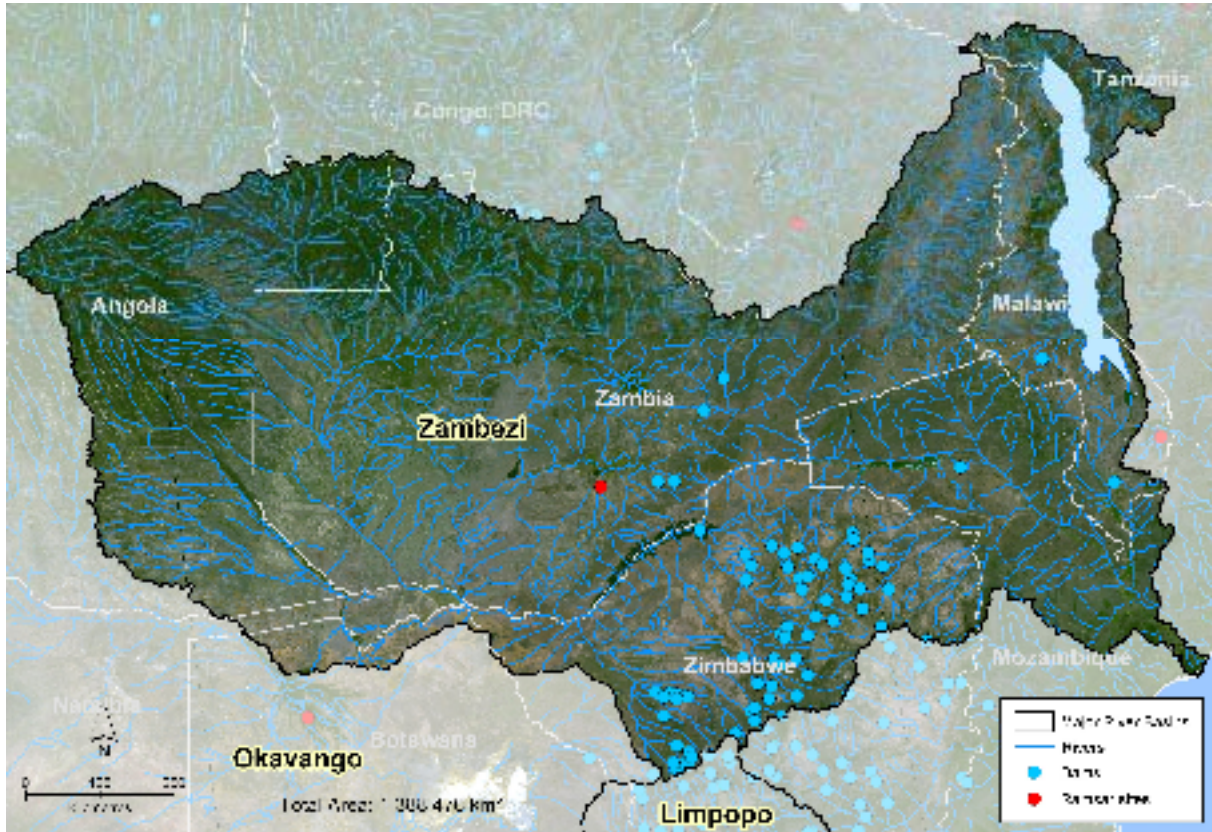


Figure 12: Zambezi River Basin.

Source

Satellite Image: USGS MODIS, 28 December, 2001

Rivers and Dams: FAO Atlas of Water Resources and Irrigation in Africa – Aquastat, FAO 2001

Ramsar Sites: Ramsar 2003 www.ramsar.org

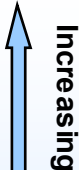
The Zambezi River originates in the Angolan Highlands and drains into the Indian Ocean. Some of the features of the basin are floodplains, swamps, lakes and dams. Box 1 summarizes the main characteristics of the basin. Over 30 large dams have been built in the Basin with an estimated total capacity of 221 000 Mm³. Water resources of the basin are still sufficient at present to meet human demands but this situation is expected to deteriorate with population growth. The most significant increase in water consumption will most probably be for large-scale irrigation projects.

3.2.1 Physiography

Climate

Most rainfall occurs during the summer season between October and April. Rainfall in the basin averages 990mm per year (Savenije and van der Zaag, 1998). The northern parts of the basin (Malawi, Tanzania and northern and western Zambia) receive an average annual rainfall

Box 1: Zambezi River Basin – Main characteristics.

<p>Basin Surface area: 1 388 000 km² MAP: 700 – 1 200 mm/a</p> <p>Demography Population: 25.4 million Density: 18 persons/km²</p> <p>Water Resources River length: 2 650 km MAR: 94 000 Mm³/a</p> <p>Major dams Kariba: 160 000 Mm³ Cahorra Bassa: 52 000 Mm³ Itezihitezi : 5 600 Mm³</p> <p>Total dam storage: 221 245 Mm³</p> <p>Major Aquifers: crystalline basement</p>	<p>Water Use Agriculture Domestic Industry Mining Hydroelectric</p> <p>Vulnerability Increasing to the East</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  </p>
<p>Source Pallett, 1997; Seyam, 1999; Hirji et al., 2002</p>	

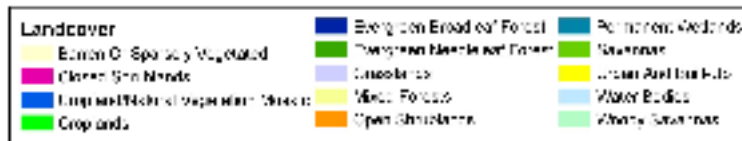
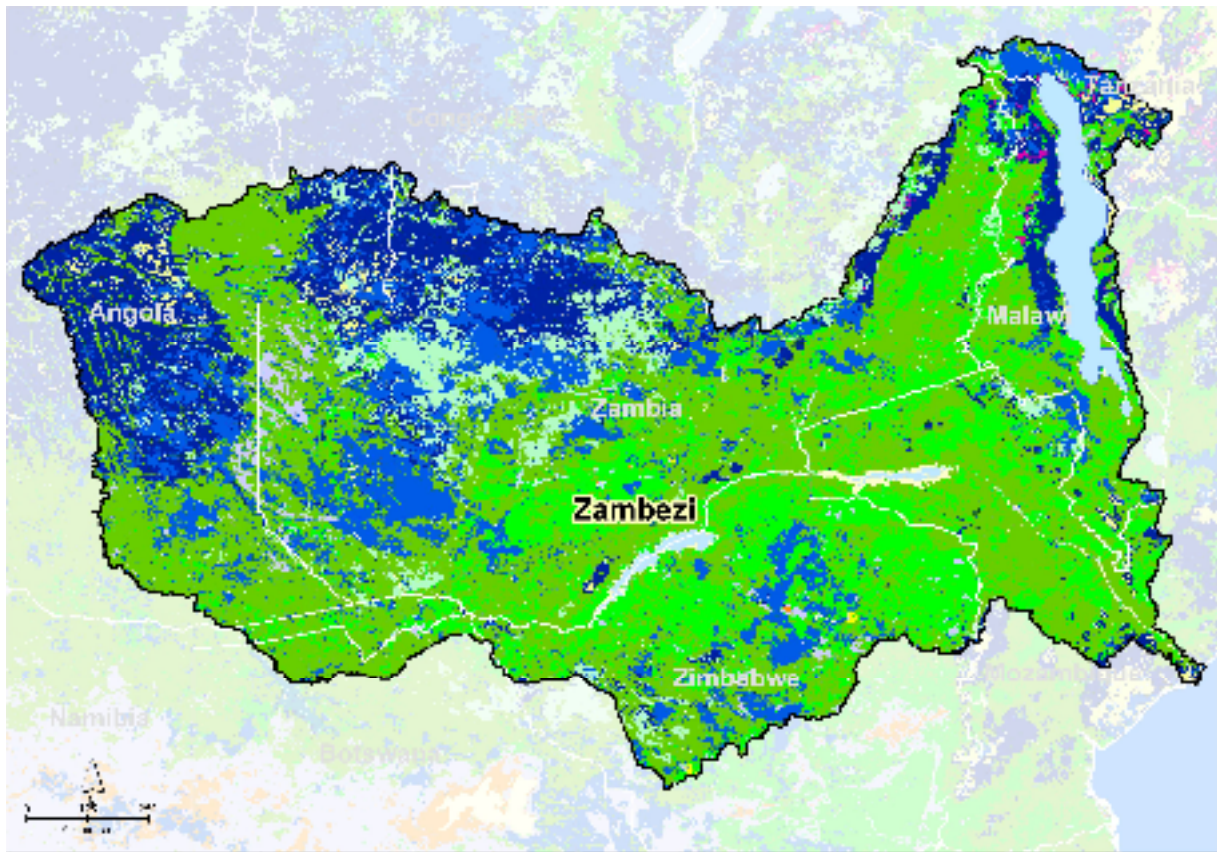
of 1200 mm, while the southern and south-western parts receive 700 mm. Average annual actual evapotranspiration is 870 mm; it ranges from 1000 mm in the Luangwa, Shire and lower parts of the basin to 500 mm in the south-western parts of the basin (Savenije and van der Zaag, 1998).

Ecosystems

There is only one Ramsar protected wetland in the Zambezi River Basin (Kafue Flats). National parks, game reserves, and safari areas in the basin include the Kameha Park (Angola); the Chobe National Park (Botswana); the Chobe and Kasane Forest Reserves (Botswana); and the Caprivi Game Reserve (Namibia). A total of 122 fish species are found in the basin of which 7 are intruder species (World Resources Institute: <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wani/eatlas/index.html>). Twenty five species are listed as endemic, while one is listed as under threat of extinction. Three bird species are endemic to the basin.

Figure 13 shows the landcover of the basin. Savannas cover almost half the total land area. This is in part a result of the removal of 43% of the basin's original forest cover (Revenga et al., 2000). Population growth and the development of agriculture are expected to result in a continuation of this trend.

Evergreen broadleaf forests still cover large parts of the basin (14%). These are however largely restricted to the Angolan and northern Zambian parts of the basin. At least 20% of the basin area is under crop cultivation. This is likely to increase as a result of population growth and the integration of Africa into global trade.



Description	Percentage
Barren Or Sparsely Vegetated	1
Closed Shrublands	0
Cropland/Natural Vegetation Mosaic	15
Croplands	19
Evergreen Broadleaf Forest	14
Grasslands	1
Mixed Forests	1
Open Shrublands	0
Permanent Wetlands	0
Savannas	41
Urban And Built-Up	0
Water Bodies	3
Woody Savannas	6

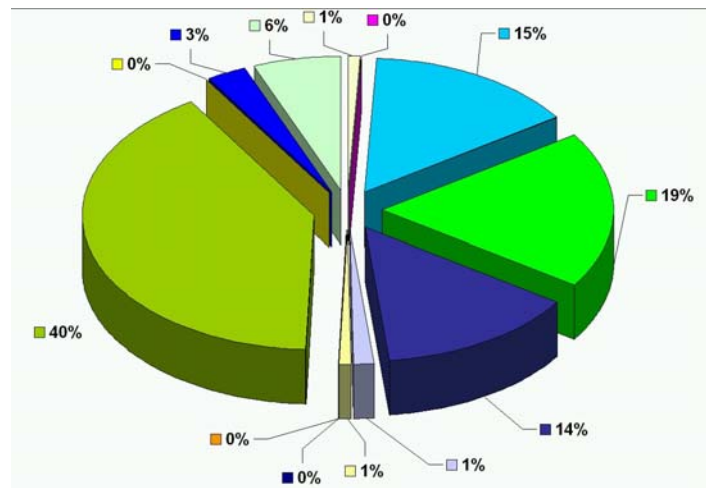


Figure 13: Landcover Zambezi River Basin (IGBP Legend).

Source

USGS Africa Landcover Characteristics Data Base (2003) - <http://edcdaac.usgs.gov/glcc/glcc.html>

Hydrology

The volume of annual renewable water resources in the Zambezi River is estimated at 3600 m³/s or 87 mm of equivalent rainfall, which is just under 10% of the average rainfall in the basin (Table 5; Savenije and van der Zaag, 1998). The figures for flow during the wet and dry seasons serve as a useful overview of seasonal flow variation.

Table 5: Runoff of Zambezi River and its Main Tributaries (m³/s). (Savenije and van der Zaag, 1998).

Tributary	Annual	Wet Season	Dry Season	Catchment Area (km ²)
Zambezi River at sea	3600	5000	1500	1,300,000
Shire River Basin	500	550	360	150,000
Luangwa River Basin	620	1500	90	144,000
Kafue River basin	350	450	100	152,000
Kambopo River Basin	260	400	120	37,000
Zambezi River at Kariba	1350	1500	900	664,000
Zambezi River in Angola	670	900	150	76,000

The tributaries of Chobe/Cuando, Luenginga and Lungue Bunguo, Gwayi and Sanyati rivers occupy large portions of the Zambezi River Basin, but make little contributions to its flows compared to those listed in Table 5.

Plans for further development of the Zambezi River and its tributaries focus mainly on the expansion of agriculture to secure food supplies, the tapping of hydro-electrical energy and the construction of water transfer schemes to supply large urban centres. It is estimated that a further 500 000 hectares of agricultural land could be brought under irrigation by 2030 (Pallett, 1997). No major dam projects are planned for the foreseeable future.

Hydrogeology

The basin is predominantly underlain by basement rocks (Figure 14). Wells located in fractured or weathered zones may be moderate to high yielding (1 – 5 m³hr⁻¹). Groundwater from these areas is generally of good chemical quality, although it may be potentially corrosive (Chilton and Foster, 1995). The southern part of the basin is underlain by sedimentary rocks of the Karoo succession with sandstone layers and dolerite intrusion forming the aquifers. Groundwater abstracted from these rocks tends to be of poorer quality, with higher dissolved solids than the hard-rock (basement) aquifers. The quality usually varies spatially, both over short distances and with depth. This variability is usually a reflection of locally complex groundwater flow regimes (UN, 1988; Botha, et al., 1998).

3.2.2 Socio-Economy

Demography

Population figures from 1994 indicate that there are just over 25 million people living in the Zambezi Basin (Seyam, 1999). This would translate in an average population density of 18 people per square kilometre. Table 6 shows the population size in the Zambezi Basin per basin country. Ten large urban centres with populations > 100 000 are found in the basin. The present rate of growth of urban centres is estimated at 5% (Revenga et al., 2000).

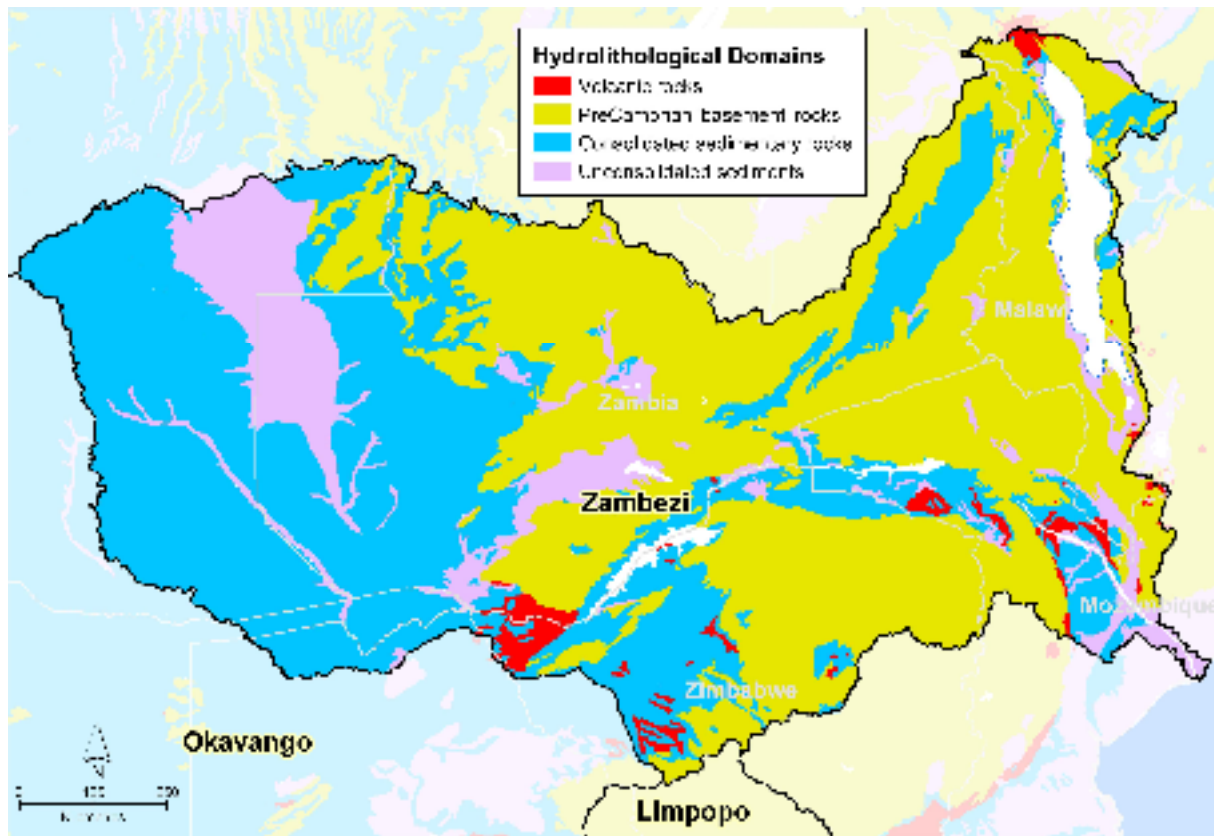


Figure 14: Hydrolithological Domains Zambezi River Basin.

Source

Adapted from USGS World Energy Resources Products, Generalized Geology of Africa

<http://energy.cr.usgs.gov/oilgas/wep/products/geology/africa.htm>

After MacDonald, A.M. and Davies, J. 2000.

Table 6: Population of Zambezi River Basin countries in 1994 (Seyam, 1999).

Country	In-basin Population (millions)
Angola	0.4
Botswana	0.0
Malawi	8.4
Mozambique	2.2
Namibia	0.1
Tanzania	0.6
Zambia	7.3
Zimbabwe	6.5
Total	25.4

Economy

The Zambezi River and its tributaries are vital to the livelihood of more than 25 million people who derive benefits from its water, hydroelectric power, irrigation developments, fisheries and a wealth of natural resources (Pallett, 1997).

Over 30 large dams in the Zambezi River basin serve domestic, industrial and mining water supply, irrigation and power generation. The estimated hydropower potential of the Zambezi Basin is 20000 MW, of which about 4500 MW has been installed to date (Pallett, 1997).

The main focus of economic activity in the Zambezi Basin is on agriculture and mining. The region is largely under-developed, with high unemployment and widespread poverty. Main agricultural products include corn, sorghum and rice, while mining concentrates on copper deposits.

Tourist revenue attracted by the natural beauty of the Zambezi River Basin makes significant contributions to the economies of the basin countries. At the same time the ecosystems of the Zambezi River provide a wide range of natural resources (including fisheries and forestry) that support local populations.

3.2.3 Management

Legislation and Institutional Framework

The majority of the Basin population lives in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Of these countries, Zimbabwe has only recently (1998) changed its water legislation and institutional framework to a holistic approach to water resource management. In Zambia, legislative and institutional reform is currently underway (<http://www.zambia-water.org.zm/wrap.htm>).

Zimbabwe water legislation and institutional framework

Main legislation regarding water resources development and management in Zimbabwe relates to the Water Act (1998) and the associated regulations. The aim of the new Act is to improve the equity and access to water by all stakeholders and the effective and sustainable management of water resources by stakeholders. Major changes in comparison with the old (1976) Act are:

- water rights are abolished and water permits of a fixed duration introduced. The permits are subject to review and renewal,
- groundwater elevated to the same status as surface water and the two are now jointly referred to as water resources hence effectively removing the perception of private water (water now vested in the State). The concept of the Hydrologic Cycle is fully recognised,
- priority date system in issuing water in times of scarcity discarded,
- the environment is appreciated as a rightful user of water,
- pollution now attracts heavy fines,
- administration of the Act less cumbersome,
- water resources management devolved to stakeholders through the formation of Catchment Councils and Sub-Catchment Councils which are technically and professionally backed by Catchment Manager's Offices.

Associated regulations such as the Water (Permit) Regulations (2001) provide a legal framework for both surface water and groundwater development, use and management. Water (waste and effluent disposal) regulations (2000) provide a legal framework for water quality issues and also provide the guidelines and concepts for water quality monitoring.

Administration and management of the Water Act (1998) required the establishment of bodies outside the government. This saw the formation of the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) in 2000 and Catchment Councils and Sub-catchment councils with specific roles and responsibilities.

River Basin Management

In the mid 1980s riparian states formulated and adopted the Zambezi River Basin Action Plan (ZACPLAN) to establish mechanisms for common management of the Zambezi River (Shela, 1998). Unfortunately, only few of the 19 envisaged projects of the Action Plan have since been financed and implemented. One of the projects: the establishment of a basin treaty for common management became redundant by the development of the SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems in 1995. The setting up of a competent basin institution and capacity building inside the basin for co-ordination and implementation of ZACPLAN was not pursued. The institutional weaknesses and lack of budget provisions are likely to blame for the failures of water resources management programmes as well as the slow progress in the implementation of ZACPLAN (Shela, 1998). According to Hirji et al. (2002), the success of ZACPLAN will only be realized when an institutional framework with a mandate over the whole basin and political backing of the basin states has been adopted. Bilateral agreements between basin states (such as for instance between Zambia and Zimbabwe: Zambezi River Authority) and major water related projects need to be adequately integrated into the management strategy and adopted by the basin states. They further recommend that the database ZACBASE should be operationalised by linking it to real-time data sources and utilized to provide alternative large-scale development and management scenarios for the basin.

Data availability

References to data sources for the Zambezi River Basin and the riparian countries are given in Table 8 in Section 5.1.

3.3 Orange River Basin

The Orange River Basin is highly developed, with many dams and transfer schemes harnessing and controlling its flow. About 60% of the ~1 000 000 km² area of the Orange River Basin lies in South Africa. The remainder falls within Botswana (13%) and Namibia (25%), completely encapsulating Lesotho (2%; Figure 15).

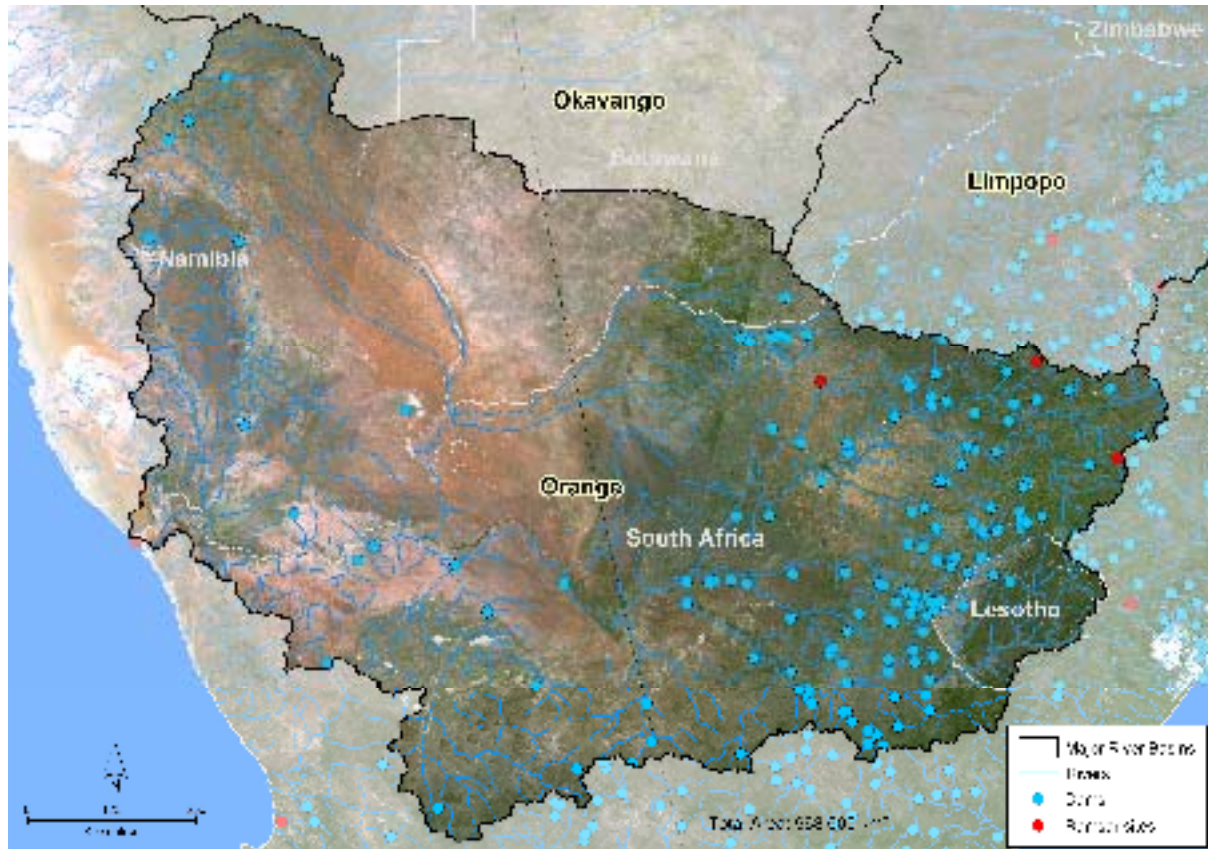


Figure 15: Orange River Basin.

Source

Satellite Image: USGS MODIS, 28 December, 2001

Rivers and Dams: FAO Atlas of Water Resources and Irrigation in Africa – Aquastat, FAO 2001

Ramsar Sites: Ramsar 2003 www.ramsar.org


Although Botswana and Namibia are part of the basin, their role in the watercourse is less significant due to the fact that the nearest point of the Botswana border is 200km away from the river and very little input is gained from the Fish River in Namibia except from floods. The Orange River originates in the Lesotho Highlands in the east and drains into the Atlantic Ocean in the west. Box 2 summarizes the main characteristics of the basin.

3.3.1 Physiography

Climate

The mean annual rainfall for the basin is about 400mm per year, with a high degree of variability from approximately 2000mm per year in Lesotho to about 50 mm per year at the Orange River mouth. Potential evaporation is equally variable, from 1 200 mm per year in Lesotho to 3 500 mm per year at the mouth.

Box 2: Orange River Basin – Main characteristics.

Basin Surface area: 1 000 000 km ² MAP: 50 – 1 500 mm/a	Water Use Agriculture Domestic Industry Mining Hydroelectric
Demography Population: 11 million Density: 12 persons/km ²	
Water Resources River length: 2 300 km MAR: 11 500 Mm ³ /a	Vulnerability Increasing aridity to the west
Major dams Gariep 5 675 Mm ³ Vanderkloof 3 237 Mm ³ Sterkfontein 2 617 Mm ³ Vaal 2 122 Mm ³ Katse 1 950 Mm ³ Total dam storage: 20 412 Mm ³	
Major Aquifers: sedimentary	

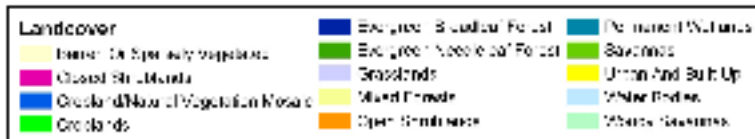
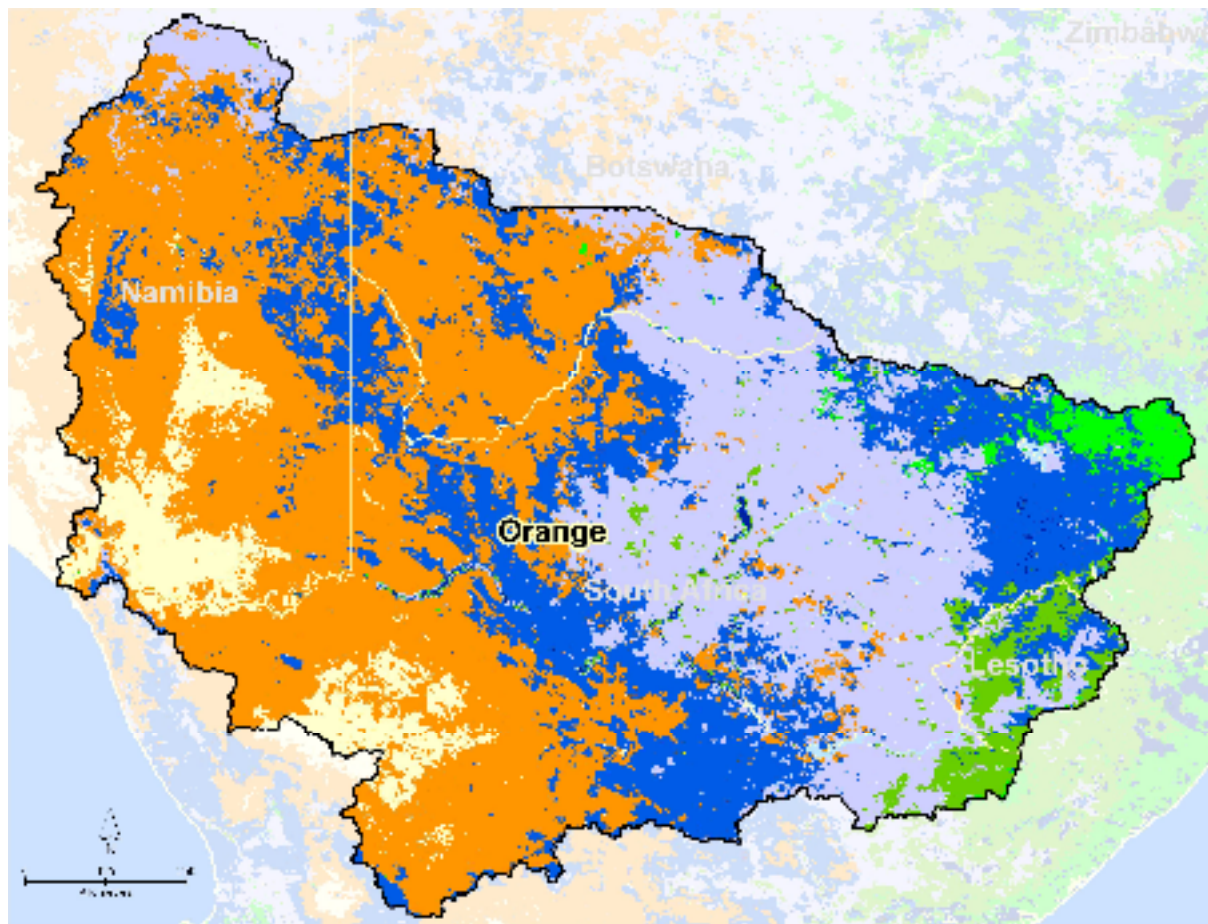
Source
Pallett, 1997; Hirji et al., 2002, <http://www.dwaf.gov.za/orange/>

Ecosystems

The landcover and ecology of the Orange River Basin reflect the large variation in precipitation and change in elevation that is found in the basin. The largest part of the basin is (semi-)arid (see Figure 4), which limits agricultural activity in most of the basin to livestock husbandry. An analysis of Landsat imagery shows that grassland and shrubland dominate the landcover in the basin.

Among the more valued natural resources in the basin is a transboundary Ramsar protected wetland at the mouth of the Orange River. Important nature conservation areas include the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, the Ai-Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park and the Augrabies Falls Nature Reserve. A review of biodiversity information by Revenga et al. (2000) shows that a total of 24 fish species are found in the basin, of which 7 are endemic, two of which are threatened by extinction. Two endemic bird species occur in the basin.

Figure 16 shows the change in landcover with increasing aridity from east to west from cropland/natural vegetation and grasslands (46%) to open shrublands (42%) and barren/sparsely vegetated soils (6%).



Description	Percentage
Barren Or Sparsely Vegetated	6
Cropland/Natural Vegetation Mosaic	23
Croplands	2
Evergreen Broadleaf Forest	0
Grasslands	23
Open Shrublands	42
Savannas	3
Urban And Built-Up	0
Water Bodies	0
Woody Savannas	0

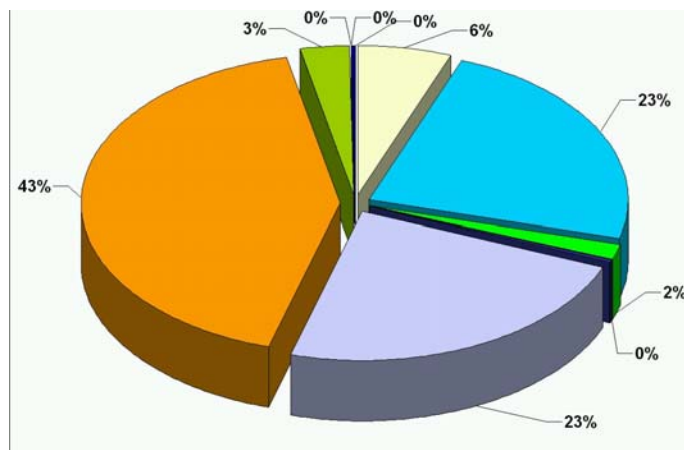


Figure 16: Landcover Orange River Basin (IGBP Legend).

Source
 USGS Africa Landcover Characteristics Data Base (2003) - <http://edcdaac.usgs.gov/glcc/glcc.html>

Hydrology

A wealth of information from the South African part of the Orange River Basin is available on surface water resources, both digitally and in various books of maps and data volumes at a quarternary catchment scale (Midgley et al., 1994):

- Quarternary and tertiary catchment information
- Rainfall, evaporation, streamflow (on a monthly basis)
- Landcover and water use
- Simulated natural streamflow
- Rainfall-runoff relationships
- Low-flow analysis, and
- Storage-yield

The data and map series cover a time span of 70 years of monitoring (1920-1990). Valuable information is also found in Schulze's 1997 Atlas of agrohydrology and climatology.

Large scale infrastructural development (dams, etc.) in the catchment results in only half of the 11 000 million m³ annual runoff reaching the Orange River estuary in the west. Runoff extremes have been recorded between 26 000 million m³.a⁻¹ and as little as 1 100 m³.a⁻¹ due to climatic variations (Conley and Van Niekerk, 1998). Through a number of dams and transfer schemes, water is moved in and out of the Orange River. These include:

- The Orange River project: transfer of water from the Caledon and Orange Rivers to the Modder and Riet Rivers of the Eastern Cape,
- Tugela – Vaal Water project that transfer water from the Tugela River into the Vaal River to meet high water demand in the large industrial and population centres of the Gauteng Province of South Africa,
- The Orange-Fish tunnel project that supplements flow in the Fish and Sundays Rivers of the Eastern Cape (Pallett, 1997), and
- The Lesotho Highland Water scheme, that transfers water from the headwaters of the Orange River to the Vaal River (<http://www.sametsi.com/>).

Surface water resources of the Orange River Basin are largely exploited to their optimum. The completion of the Mohale dam in Lesotho will probably signal the end of large-scale water resource developments in the basin. The large number of dams and transfer schemes in the Orange River basin controls flow and mitigate the occurrence of flood and drought events. Climate change may however result in increased precipitation variability and a resultant increased frequency in flood and drought events.

Hydrogeology

The geology of the Orange River Basin is dominated by the consolidated sedimentary rocks of the Karoo succession, the volcanic extrusives of the Lesotho Highlands, dolomite successions and Kalahari sand cover (Figure 17). Of these, only the Kalahari sands contain water in primary openings. Groundwater is contained mainly in fractures and larger dissolution openings. For the South African part of the Orange River Basin hydrogeological information can be obtained from the following maps (Vegter, 1995; 2001):

- Borehole Prospects (1: 2,500,000)
- Saturated Interstices - a qualitative indication of groundwater storage (1: 4,000,000)
- Depth to groundwater level (1:7,500,000)
- Mean annual groundwater recharge (1:7,500,000)
- Groundwater component of river flow (1:7,500,000)
- Groundwater quality (1:7,500,000) and
- Hydrochemical types (1:7,500,000)

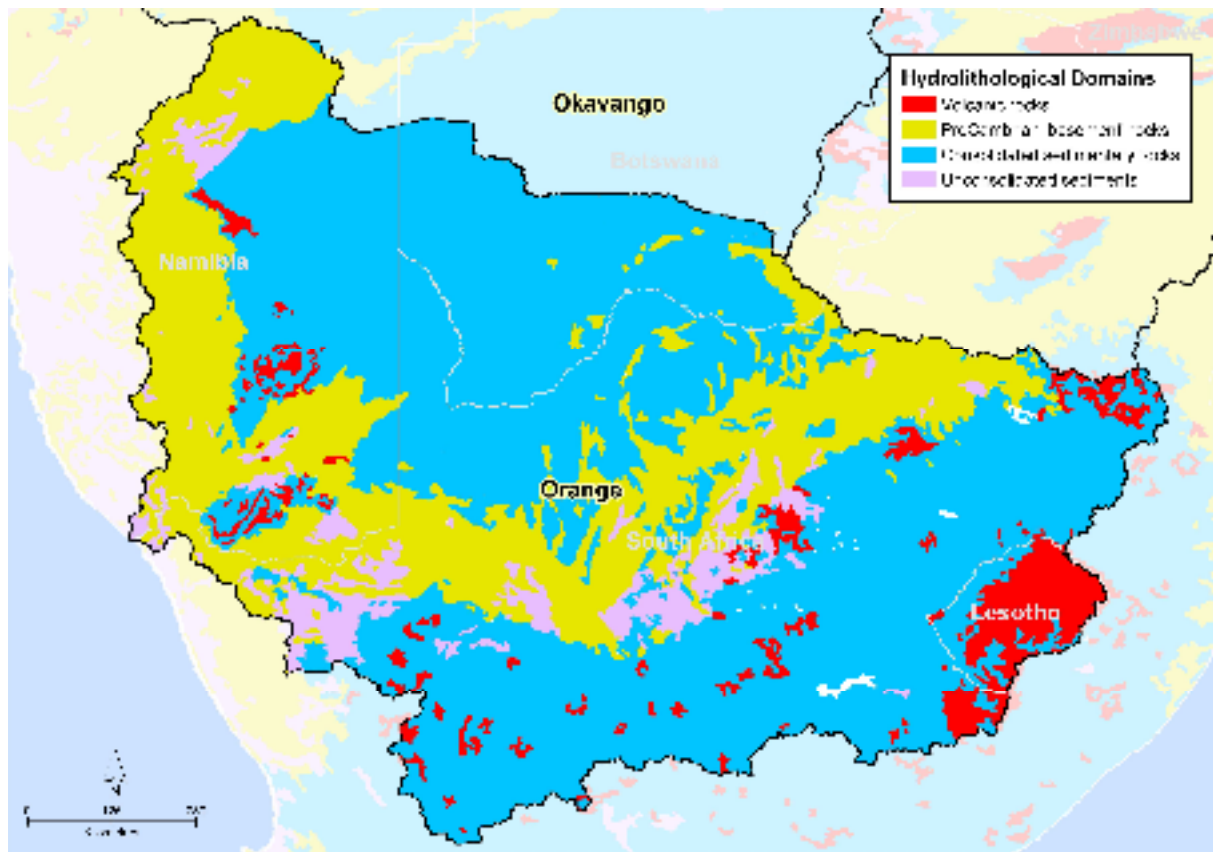


Figure 17: Hydrolithological Domains Orange River Basin.

Source

Adapted from USGS World Energy Resources Products, Generalized Geology of Africa

<http://energy.cr.usgs.gov/oil/gas/wep/products/geology/africa.htm>

After MacDonald, A.M. and Davies, J. 2000.

The maps depict groundwater conditions on a regional scale. In 1996 the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWA) of South Africa published the harvest potential map (1:3,000,000). This map was the first attempt to produce a national coverage on the maximum volume of groundwater per km² per year that may be abstracted without depleting the aquifer. It is based on recharge and groundwater storage. A second phase of DWA's groundwater resources assessment programme, which aims at greater detail is underway.

Groundwater exploration is presently focussed on the location and development of:

- Zones of dolerite intrusions and their hardened contact zones in the Karroo sediments. Yields vary, but is generally less than 4 m³/hr (Botha et al.,1998). The value of this aquifer is that it occurs in the semi-arid interior of the region where little other sources of water are available.
- Cavities in the Karstic dolomite and limestone deposits. In places these caverns are traversed by veins of dolerites and syenites, which divide them into independent water-bearing compartments with considerable stocks of water. Examples of the storage in these compartments are the 730 Mm³ in the Oberholzer compartment and 450 Mm³ in the Venterpost compartment.

- Beds of higher permeability in the Kalahari sand succession. In parts of the Kalahari, groundwater quality is poor, and in places it may be too saline for use (UN, 1988).

Groundwater use in the basin largely serves agricultural demand (livestock watering) and water supply to rural towns and villages. Water quality in the Karoo succession is often poor. Sophisticated (geophysical) exploration methods are often required in order to locate aquifers associated with fracture systems, relatively thin sandstone layers and igneous intrusions.

Groundwater recharge is one of the critical parameters in determining water availability and when related to water use also in determining water scarcity (see Section 3.1). Figure 18 depicts the mean annual recharge (mm) for the Orange River Basin. The map is a composite of Vegter's provisional recharge map of South Africa (1995) and the recharge map which was published in the Botswana National Water Master Plan in 1992 (Department of Water Affairs Botswana, 1992; Gabaake, 1997). Despite the great number of recharge studies which have been carried out in Botswana and South Africa (e.g. Gieske, 1992; Bredenkamp et al., 1995; Beekman et al., 1996; 1999; Xu and Beekman, 2003), much more work is needed before coverages can be produced that depict spatial and temporal variability in recharge reliably at local and regional scales. Particularly in semi-arid areas such as in the western parts of the basin, recharge should rather be evaluated in terms of episodic events than in terms of mean annual rates.

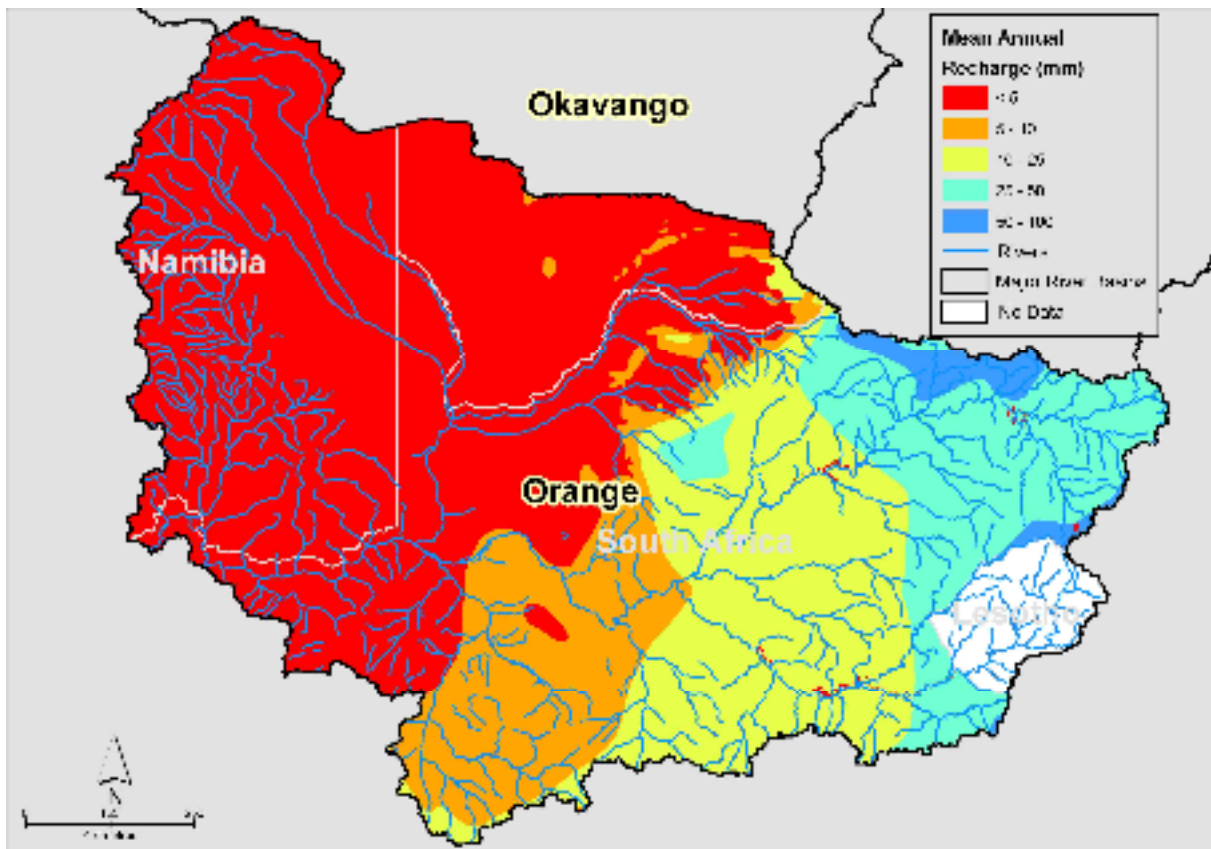


Figure 18: Mean annual groundwater recharge in the Orange River Basin.

Source

Department of Water Affairs Botswana, 1992; Vegter, 1995;
 Namibian part of the Basin: pers. comm. J. Wrabel – Department of Water Affairs

3.3.2 Socio-Economy

Demography

The large industrial conurbation in the Gauteng Province of South Africa dominates the population distribution of the Orange River Basin. The lure of apparent opportunity and wealth has resulted in an urban growth rate of 4.6%. The northern and western parts of the basin are sparsely populated. The Orange River basin is home to over 11 000 000 people, with an average population density of 12 people per square kilometre.

Economy

Economic activity in the Orange River basin is dominated by industrial and mining activity in the Gauteng province. The highly developed economy of this province contributes close to 40% to the GDP of South Africa. Important economic sectors include mining, manufacturing and services. Much of the dam construction in the basin is geared towards meeting the water demands of the Gauteng Province.

3.3.3 Management

Legislation and Institutional Framework

South Africa plays a key role in the management of water resources within the Orange River Basin. Note that the majority of the Basin population lives in South Africa. South African water resources are governed by the Water Services Act of 1997 and the National Water Act of 1998.. The Acts are complementary to each other; they serve to provide the framework for sustainable water resources management, while enabling improved and broadened service delivery. The National Water Act is founded on the principle that all water forms part of a unitary, interdependent water cycle, and that all water should thus be governed in a consistent manner. An integrated water resources management (IWRM) approach is adopted which recognises the connection between water, land, human development and the natural environment. The Act serves to ensure that water resources are protected, developed, conserved, managed and controlled in order to:

- Meet the basic human needs of present and future generations;
- Promote equitable access to water;
- Redress the results of past racial and gender discrimination;
- Promote the efficient, sustainable and beneficial use of water in the public interest;
- Facilitate social and economic development;
- Provide for growing demand for water use;
- Protect aquatic and associated ecosystems and their biological diversity;
- Reduce and prevent pollution and degradation of water resources; and
- Meet international obligations.

To achieve this, the National Water Act (1998) requires the establishment of institutions with appropriate community and racial/gender representation. The catchment is recognised as the structural level at which local level participation can best be effected. This is inline with establishing institutions that are democratic, self-driven and require only limited State intervention.

Management of water resources under the National Water Act takes place both at national (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry), regional and local levels. At regional level the country is divided into 19 Water Management Areas. They will be managed through

community-based Catchment Management Agencies. At local level water resources are managed by Water User Associations and Water Services Authorities.

Most important issues which the South African water sector should address according to Reed et al. (2003) are:

- Development of capacity at operational, strategy and policy levels: attention should be paid urgently to this;
- Equitable trans-boundary agreements. These should encompass shared local development, as well as social and economic objectives in order to avoid potential conflict and expedite planning and development in shared river basins;
- Planning for the impacts of climate change on water availability. This should be given more attention and should be underpinned by reliable scientific information; and
- Public-private partnerships between government and industry should be stimulated as they would help to support water resources management functions through provision of capacity and data.

Orange-Senqu River Commission

An agreement was signed in 2000 by the River Basin States Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa to establish the Orange Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM), which serves to enable the development of the Orange River for the benefit of all in the respective basin States (www.namibian.com.na/2000/November/news/00B5F76236.html). It was the first of its kind since the Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems became an instrument of international water law in the Southern African Development Community. The Commission will develop a comprehensive perspective of the Orange River Basin, study the present and planned future uses of the river system and determine the requirements for flow monitoring and flood management. It is expected to strengthen regional solidarity, contribute to peace and harmony and enhance socio-economic cooperation. The multi-lateral Orange-Senqu River Commission will not replace existing bilateral Commissions between any of the watercourse states but rather provide a broader forum for overall consultation and co-ordination between the watercourse states for sound, integrated water resources management and development in the Orange River basin. Despite all good intentions, the central problem of unequal access to water still remains essentially unsolved.

Data availability

References to data sources for the Orange River Basin and the riparian countries are given in Table 8 in Section 5.1.

4 SYNTHESIS

4.1 Comparison of Zambezi and Orange River Basins

In Table 7 a brief summary is given of main aspects of water resource vulnerability for the Zambezi and Orange River Basins and grouped into the physiographic, socio-economic and management clusters.

Table 7: Water Resource Vulnerability Zambezi and Orange River Basins.

Cluster	Vulnerability Indicator*	Zambezi River Basin	Orange River Basin
Physiography	Aridity	<20% of the area	>50%
	Water Availability	Vulnerable	Stressed
	Storage and Supply Infrastructure	Well developed - middle course	Highly developed - upstream
Socio-Economy	Population Density	18 p/km ² ; downstream increase; variable	12 p/km ² ; upstream increase; variable
	Access to Safe Water	Urban ~70%, Rural ~45%; highly variable	Urban ~70%, Rural ~45%; variable
	Water Use	Agriculture ~80%	Agriculture ~60%
	Poverty	Higher	Lower
Management	Conflicts	Eastern Caprivi region	Lower Orange River
	Sector reform	In progress	Advanced
	Implementation and adaptive capacity	Moderate to bad	Reasonable
	Data availability, gaps, and quality	Moderate to bad	Reasonable

Physiography

- Over 50% of the area of the Orange River Basin can be classified as hyper-arid to semi-arid with aridity increasing to the west. Although the Zambezi River Basin is less arid on an average annual basis, severe droughts as occurred during the early 1990s caused temporary conditions of increased aridity.
- Water availability is particularly critical for the Orange River Basin. Climate change and climate variability for the coming years are expected to aggravate the situation by decreasing rainfall, runoff and recharge in large parts of both the Orange and Zambezi River Basins.
- The Orange River Basin is highly developed in comparison with the Zambezi River Basin, with many dams and transfer schemes in the upstream regions, but the total storage of its major dams is a tenfold less.

Socio-Economy

- Some projections (UN World Population Prospect) foresee a doubling of SADCs population by 2050 but this is likely to be less due to the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS.
- The combination of population growth (though reduced) and urbanisation puts further pressure on the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation, especially in the urban areas of the river basins. Access to safe water and sanitation is usually much better in urban than in rural areas but differs strongly between nations (CIA, 2000; Ashton and Ramasar, 2002). The figures given in Table 7 are averaged values and are merely indicative. Differences between nations in terms of access to safe water and sanitation are more pronounced for the

Zambezi River Basin case. About one third of the total SADC population live in formal urban areas.

- The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of each of the riparian states of the river basins (except for Lesotho) suggests a healthier economy for the Orange River Basin as a whole than for the Zambezi River Basin. If poverty is expressed as a per capita GDP or as a Human Development Index (HDI), poverty is more prevalent for the Zambezi River Basin than for the Orange River Basin.
- Agricultural water use dominates in most Southern African countries when compared to the domestic and industrial water use sectors: ~80% of the total use for the Zambezi River Basin and ~60% for the Orange River Basin (WRI, 2000; Ashton and Ramasar, 2002).
- Many of the water related conflicts in Southern Africa that occurred in the past are likely to continue in the future as a result of escalating demands and pressures that continue to be placed on its finite and scarce water resources (Ashton, 2000). The degree of international conflicts, however, is expected to be limited. Ashton (2000) observed a remarkable correspondence between sites of actual or potential water conflict and the absence or scarcity of perennial rivers or lakes in Africa. Examples of actual and potential conflict in Southern Africa are the Eastern Caprivi region bordered by Botswana, Namibia and Zambia (ownership of islands) and the lower reaches of the Orange River bordered by Namibia and South Africa (territorial and water-related rights; Ashton, 2000).

Management

- Water Sector Reforms are in progress in both river basins with new water-related legislation and guidelines in place or in preparation and the establishment of new institutions for the management of water resources on the basis of hydrologic boundaries. The Orange River Basin is the most advanced with its reforms and implementation. On a river basin level an agreement was signed in November 2000 by the 4 riparian states for the establishment of the Orange-Senqu River Commission.
- Regarding data availability and knowledge gaps, more information of a better quality and greater detail is available for the Orange River Basin for all the physiographic, socio-economic and management clusters than for the Zambezi River Basin. Although the majority of the rural communities in both river basins rely on groundwater for their domestic water requirements, information on groundwater resources is less detailed and accurate in comparison with surface water resources.

Water Scarcity

- Water availability in the Orange River Basin is already at a critical stage. When combined with the relatively high water demands and withdrawals for agricultural use, this river basin is among the most severe, water scarce, regions in Africa. Future projections of the various physiographic, socio-economic and management parameters suggest a further aggravation of the situation, that is if there would be no appropriate human intervention. The same holds true for the Zambezi River Basin although water availability seems to be less critical at the moment.

4.2 Virtual Water Trade - An adaptation mechanism for water stress

The concept of Virtual Water (VW), defined as the amounts of water used to grow crops (virtually embodied in the crops) and traded internationally (Allan, 1996), is currently gaining momentum (see e.g. Hoekstra, 2003; Meissner, 2003). The concept has the potential to be used as an element of an adaptation strategy regarding present and future water scarcity and thus food-insecurity amongst others resulting from global change. Trading in VW (VWT) can therefore be an instrument in solving geopolitical problems and preventing conflicts over water. Ideally this relatively new concept should form a basis for drafting water policy plans, both at local, national and regional (transboundary) levels.

Status of Virtual Water in Southern Africa

The level of trade in virtual water between the states in Southern Africa is very low, despite the contrast between high levels of water stress experienced in some countries (e.g. Botswana and South Africa) and the abundance of water available in other countries (e.g. Zambia; Earle and Turton, 2003). The amount of virtual water entering the region – mostly from overseas - was estimated at $8 \cdot 10^9 \text{ m}^3$ in 2002 (about 1 m^3 for each kg of grain) and is far greater than the amount of water physically transferred through large-scale water transfer schemes between the SADC states, which amounts to about $5 \cdot 10^9 \text{ m}^3$ (Heyns, 2002). Earle and Turton (2003) suggest that the current low level of Virtual Water Trade (VWT) has much to do with political instability and a lack of second order resources (institutional, economic and human capital) in water-rich countries that potentially could export virtual water. They propose that investing in the grain production and transportation infrastructure of the well-watered, but less developed SADC states by the richer states, is more sustainable and viable than building new large water transfer schemes. According to Meissner (2003), a VWT strategy is, under the current environmental, political and economical conditions not possible for many SADC countries. Meissner (2003) emphasized, however, that further research into the concept of virtual water is justified as its power lies within its ability to assist in increasing food security without compromising water security.

5. REFERENCES AND DATA SOURCES

5.1 Africa / Southern Africa

Results of an inventory of data availability at regional and national scales are shown in Table 8. References (numbers in the table) are grouped according to the main vulnerability assessment clusters and sub-clusters (see Section 2.3).

Table 8: Data availability for the vulnerability assessments in Southern Africa.

COUNTRY / REGIONAL	PHYSIOGRAPHY				SOCIO-ECONOMY			MANAGEMENT					
	Climate	Climate Change and Impacts	Ecosystems	Hydrology	Hydrogeology	Sociology - Health	Hydro-politics	Economy	Legislation, regulations and guidelines	Water Sector Reform - IWRM	Water Master Plan	Data-bases and Maps	Digital Coverage
Angola									34 35		1	1	
Botswana					1 2 7 11 12						2		
Lesotho		2 20		17	19				1				
Malawi		8							2 3 4		3		
Mozambique				5					5		4		
Namibia					8 9 20			1 2 3 8 9	6 7 8	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	5		
South Africa	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	1 3 5 9 11 13 14 15 18	4 10 13 14 15 18	1 2 3 6 8 12 13 16	3 4 16 17 18 19	5 6 13 14 15 21 22	6 7 9 11 13 19 20 21 24 26 27	1 2 4 5 10 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 22 23 26	9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	6		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
Swaziland		16		9	19				20				
Zambia		7 17		7					21 22 23 24 25	18 19 20	7 8 9		
Zimbabwe			10 19	11		10			26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33		10 11		

Africa / Southern Africa
 Country-specific

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