



Organization and holding of six (6) national capacity building workshops for stakeholders in the Volta Basin on “nature-based solutions” with a view to developing bankable projects to be implemented in the national portions and in the region. 'scale of the Volta basin

Final Concept Note

Implementing partners



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1. Context and rationale

The Consortium, comprising the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), a specialized United Nations agency, the Volta Basin Authority (ABV) and the Global Water Partnership in West Africa (GWP-WA) implement the project titled “Integrating Flood and Drought Management and Early Warning for Climate Change Adaptation in the Volta Basin (VFDM).” Project activities, started in June 2019, are continue and will end in late June 2023. The project is financed by the Adaptation Fund.

The implementation of the project involves, in addition to the National Agencies in charge of meteorology, hydrology, water resources management, civil protection, etc.), regional institutions and partners of the OMM, such as the CIMA Research Foundation, the Italian Civil Protection Directorate, UNITAR / UNOSAT, IUCN and CERFE.

One of the activities of the Project is the evaluation of indicators and environmental services offered by ecosystems in connection with the prediction and management of disaster risks. This activity emphasizes the “nature-based solutions” approach to support flood and drought forecasting and management processes. It builds on and enhances the characteristic functions of ecosystems.

Indeed, climate change and climatic variability, associated with a decline in biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems, pose considerable risks that call for solutions that are not only sustainable, but also accessible and applicable locally. The sustainable management of ecosystems and ecosystem services is therefore increasingly seen as an effective approach to implement priorities for action in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA).

IUCN, through the environmental component of the VDFM project, proposes ways to integrate ecosystem benefits and ecosystem-based approaches into DRR and CCA actions, with an emphasis on long-term planning and risk prevention and preparation. The analysis and integration of ecosystems and the services they



provide to communities is one of the foundations of capacity building for the forecasting, warning and management of floods and droughts as well as adaptation to climate change. in the Volta basin.

It is in this sense that studies to evaluate the services rendered by ecosystems to environmental and human environments, to the forecasting, early warning and management system for floods and droughts, were carried out in 2020. These studies allowed, on the one hand, to analyse the feasibility of considering ecosystem services in the SAP and on the other hand, to analyse the scope of the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems to guide the use of the guidelines in planning for the sustainable management of wetlands, natural refuges for ecosystems and biodiversity that provide enormous services against floods and droughts in the Volta Basin.

The results of these studies were the subject of a regional workshop held on June 15 and 16, 2021 in Ouagadougou, whose theme focused on "nature-based solutions as a mechanism to respond to floods and drought", see Annex 1.

During this workshop, each of the six (6) VBA member countries was able to develop a summary action plan including some essential points such as:

- organize a national workshop for each riparian country to build the capacities of stakeholders in the Volta Basin in connection with nature-based solutions and the IUCN Global Standard;
- finalize national and / or regional disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) action plans for droughts and floods through nature-based solutions;
- prepare a concept note for each country and then for the regional level with the support of National Agencies, IUCN, VBA and GWP-AO;
- organize a national workshop to present to political decision-makers, national project designers, national structures in charge of investment plans and technical and financial partners the projects or action plans developed by the six (6) countries;



- organize a regional workshop to capitalize on the results of the work carried out at the level of each country, examine and validate the draft regional action plan for considering nature-based solutions in the forecasting, early warning and flood and drought management;
- capacity building stakeholders on the concept of and related approaches to nature-based solutions to allow its consideration in the development of bankable projects for the mobilization of funding.

It is with this in mind that the OMM-ABV-GWP-AO Consortium in collaboration with IUCN, as a partner in this project, is considering the holding of six (6) national workshops, the general objective of which is strengthening national capacities on the nature-based solutions approach and taking it into account in identification and development of bankable projects for the mobilization of related financing.

These terms of reference are prepared to serve as a guide for the organization and holding of these national workshops.

2. Objectives of the regional workshop

2.1.- General objective

The main objective targeted through these national workshops is to build the capacities of actors in the national portion of the Volta Basin on the nature-based solutions approach and its inclusion in the development of bankable adaptation projects. climate change.

2.2.- Specific objectives

- to improve participants' knowledge of the concept of "nature-based solutions" and its importance in building resilience and adaptation to climate change in the Volta Basin

- to present the approach for the integration of the nature-based solutions approach in national and transboundary flood and drought management projects and programmes in the Volta Basin;

- share with the participants the opportunities for financing existing climate projects with a focus on the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund among others;

- identify and explore ideas for projects to strengthen resilience and adaptation to climate change that meet the criteria for assessment of NbS in the national portion of the Volta Basin.

3. Expected results

The expected outcomes of the workshop are as follows:

- participants' knowledge of the concept of “nature-based solutions” and its importance in building resilience and adaptation to climate change in the Volta Basin is improved;



- the process for considering the “nature-based solutions” approach in national and cross-border flood and drought management projects and programs in the Volta basin is presented;
- funding opportunities for existing climate projects with a focus on the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund among others are shared with the participants;
- project ideas for building resilience and adaptation to climate change for meeting the evaluation criteria of NbS in the national portion of the Volta basin are identified and deepened;

4. Methodological approach

A. Workshop calendar

The OMM-ABV-GWP-AO team will be in contact with the national focal points to determine the best dates for holding the workshops. Please note that the deadline for the workshops is January 27, 2022. The OMM-ABV-GWP-AO team will therefore consult with IUCN to set the dates and then coordinate the logistics.

B. Virtual sessions

In order to optimize the time to be devoted during these workshops and to achieve the expected objectives, see section above, the OMM-ABV-GWP-AO team in collaboration with IUCN will organize a virtual session (duration: one hour - in French and English) on nature-based solutions. This will allow all participants to have a common level of understanding on the subject.

These sessions will be held in October, the connection link will be communicated later. Likewise, a reminder e-mail will be sent a week in advance to ensure the availability of all participants.

We advise all participants to read the two attached documents in the email sent by the VBA Secretariat:

- **IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions** -
<https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2020-020-Fr.pdf>
- **General Guidance for Using the IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions: First Edition** -
<https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/49074>

These documents will allow a better understanding of the NbS approach but also, they will make it possible to identify potential NbS projects and to develop the explanatory or guidance note for the choice of project or project ideas, appendix 1.

C. Methodology of national workshops

A total of ten (10) sessions will be organized throughout the workshop.

These sessions range from the preliminary presentation of project ideas or projects identified at country level, to the restitution of bankable project roadmaps and key messages and recommendations, to the evolution of the Nature-based Solutions approach and the sharing and explanation of the IUCN Global Standard.

The content of these ten (10) sessions is specified in the indicative agenda of these workshops, see section 8.

5. Duration and location of the workshop

The workshops will each last three (03) days according to the agenda indicated in section 8.

6. Workshop participants

They will include, among others, representatives of hydrological and meteorological services, Civil Protection, agencies specializing in environment



and sustainable development, projects and programs working on the theme or similar themes.

A category of participants will be invited for the last day. These are the heads of the Cooperation and Finance / Investment Directorates of the different countries, the technical and financial partners (Focal points: Green Fund, Adaptation Fund, ADB, World Bank, various development cooperation).

7. Schedule for the organization of workshops in each country

The organization and holding of national workshops for capacity building on nature-based solutions and the development of bankable projects for the mobilization of related funding are programmed in each country as follows:

Pays	Période
Burkina Faso	16 au 18 November 2021
Benin	23 au 25 November 2021
Côte d'Ivoire	30 November au 2 December 2021
Mali	11 au 13 January 2022
Togo	18 au 20 January 2022
Ghana	25 au 27 January 2022

8. Indicative agenda of national workshops

DAY	SESSION	CONTENTS	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
DAY 1			
8:30 am- 9:00am		Welcoming participants	Steering committee
9h00-10h00	Session 1	Welcome to participants	Coordinator of the National Focal Structure of the country concerned
		Speech by the Executive Director of the VBA or his Representative	ABV Executive Director or his Representative
		Speech by the IUCN Representative	IUCN
		Speech by the Representative of WMO on behalf of the Consortium	WMO representative
		Speech by the Minister of Supervision ABV of the Country	Supervisory Minister ABV
		Establishment of the Presidium	NbS Coordinator
		Media and photo sessions with the authorities	Steering committee
10:00 - 10:30		Opening cocktail	Steering committee
10:30 am - 11:00 am	Session 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VFDM project - activities 1231-1237 - Review and validation of the workshop program - Presentation of the objectives and results of the workshop - Participants' expectations 	Presidium, ABV / GWP-AO, IUCN

DAY	SESSION	CONTENTS	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
11h00-11h30	Session 3	Sharing of national environmental data and information	Head of National Structures / Agencies
11:30 am-12:30pm	Session 4	Presentation of projects or ideas for national projects followed by discussions	Head of National Structures / Agencies
12:30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Session 5	Concept development and ownership "Nature-based solutions"	IUCN
13h00-14h00		Lunch break	Steering committee
2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Session 5 continuation	Concept development and ownership "Nature-based solutions"	IUCN
3.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.	Session 6	IUCN Global Standard for NbS™	IUCN
DAY 2			
8:30 am-9:00am		Summary of day 1	Presidency-Rapporteurs
9h00-10h30	Session 7	Funding opportunities for bankable projects focused on "nature-based solutions"	ABV / GWP-AO / OMM / IUCN
10: 300-11:00 am		Coffee break	Steering committee
11h00-1200	Session 8	Presentation of current and future VBA projects focusing on NBS including the climate investment plan (PIC)	ABV
12h00-13h00	Session 9	Group work for the development of concept notes	Head of National Structures / Agencies

DAY	SESSION	CONTENTS	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS
		inspired by the results of sessions 5 and 6 (annex 2)	
13h00-14h00		Lunch break	Steering committee
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Session 9, continuation	Group work for the development of concept notes inspired by the results of sessions 5 and 6 (annex 2)	Head of National Structures / Agencies
DAY 3			
8:30 am- 9:00am		Sunnary of day 2	Presidency-rapporteurs
9h00-11h00	Session 10	Development of a roadmap for the finalization of concept notes, the development and presentation of bankable projects to the appropriate funding windows	Project participants and team
11h00-11h30		Coffee break	Steering committee
11:30 am- 1:00pm	Session 11	Presentation of project concept notes and roadmap to invited decision makers	Participants and Project Team
13h00-14h00		Closing of the workshop	Presidium

Annex 1. Nature-based solutions

Over the decades, IUCN has led innovative biodiversity conservation initiatives that have not only protected, managed and restored the environment, but also provided tangible and lasting benefits for humans. This type of approach is now widely known as nature-based solutions (Figure 1).



Figure 1. “Nature-based Solutions are actions aimed at protecting, sustainably managing and restoring natural or modified ecosystems, to directly address societal challenges in an efficient and adaptive manner while ensuring human well-being and benefits for biodiversity” (IUCN, 2016).

As the NbS is integrated into policies and adopted on the ground, it becomes urgent to clarify and specify what the concept implies and the conditions to be fulfilled for a successful deployment. Otherwise, the implementation of NbS could lack coherence and relevance. Thus, the Standard also provides a systematic learning framework so that the lessons learned can improve and evolve the applications, thus strengthening the confidence of decision-makers in the NbS.

This Standard comprises 8 criteria and 28 indicators (Figure 2). Criterion 1 aims to identify the societal issues that will find an answer thanks to the NbS. While societal challenges today include climate change (adaptation and mitigation), reduction of the risks of natural disasters, degradation of ecosystems

and loss of biodiversity, food security, improvement of human health, social development -economic and security of water supply, other specific issues could be addressed as the scope of NbS evolves. It is possible to tackle one or more societal issues but the priority is to exploit the possible NBS to draw multiple ones, knowing that a single intervention makes it possible to address several challenges.

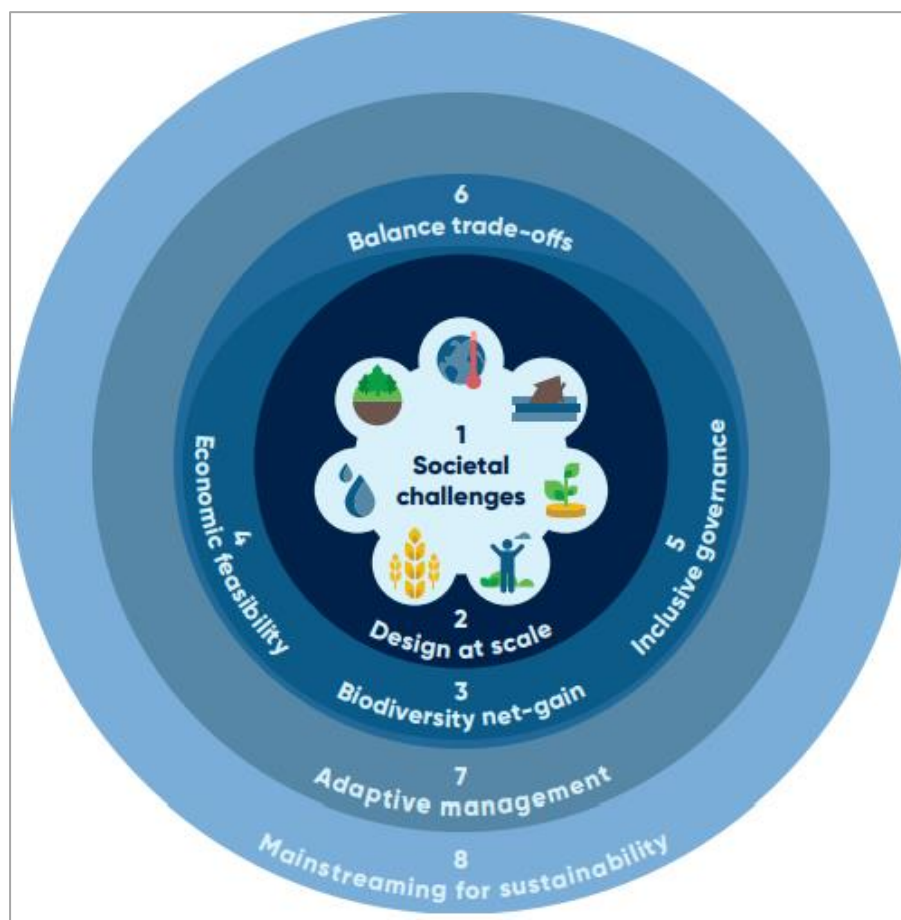


Figure 2. The eight criteria of the IUCN Global Standard for NbS™ are all linked.

The second criterion helps guide the design of a solution adapted to the scale of the problem. By scale, we mean here first of all the geographic, land and marine scale, as well as the economic, ecological and societal dimensions of the land / seascape. The target area where the societal challenge arises is usually part of a larger system, be it ecological, economic or social. If the activities of the intervention are limited to the scale of the site, the robustness, the applicability



and the adaptability of the solution must be thought out in such a way as to consider the larger systems in play.

Criteria 3, 4 and 5 correspond to the three pillars of sustainable development: environmental sustainability, social equity and economic viability. The establishment of an optimal NbS requires for each criterion a certain understanding of the existing resources and the context, which will serve as a reference, and sustainable measures are necessary for the implementation of strong NbS.

Criterion 6 deals with the balance to be struck between compromises and the choices to be made to achieve short and long-term objectives, and how to ensure an approach allowing these compromises to be defined transparent, equitable and inclusive. NbS rely on the resources of ecosystems, which are complex, dynamic and self-organizing systems. Ecosystems can respond favourably to a NbS, but the project can also cause unintended, unintended or undesirable consequences.

Criterion 7 therefore responds to the need to adopt an adaptive management mode that facilitates continuous process improvement at the system level and makes it possible to adapt the NbS according to systemic changes. The real potential of NbS lies in their long-term and large-scale implementation, made possible by an integration of concepts and measures into policy or regulatory frameworks and by their link with national targets or international commitments, such as the advocates criterion 8.

Annex: 2. Explanatory note or guidance for the choice of project or project ideas

1. Context. Describe the relevant environmental and climate challenges of the country / basin and note commitments, existing investment frameworks and if possible ongoing projects / activities on DRR and CCA in the country / basin.

2. Duration

3. Challenges and obstacles

4. Target area and beneficiaries

5. Policy review - NDC, regulatory frameworks, etc. in the country and the basin

6. Project objective and expected results - indicators if possible

7. Approach envisaged - Results and activities

Examples of activities

a) Components of local disaster management targeting local actors and populations in disaster-prone areas: early warning systems, mapping and computerization of data, local capacity building, training.

b) Institutional links and advocacy, targeting institutions involved in disaster management / disaster risk reduction: advocacy, facilitation of coordination, institutional strengthening.

c) Information, education, communication, targeting direct and indirect beneficiaries (population served): awareness of the general public and education.

d) Small-scale infrastructure and services at community level: infrastructure support and mitigation work, operation and maintenance systems; non-structural mitigation activities.

8. Implementation schedule