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## **The European Commission announces a new programme to strengthen institutions in charge of trans-boundary water management in Africa to mark World Water Day**

***The European Commission has announced €3 million to help strengthen regional cooperation at the political, economic and stakeholder level in the water management sector. The new programme will favour sustainable management of water resources which are shared by more than one country, by using African expertise, and therefore enhance peace and security as well as help alleviate poverty in the region.***

*"The African continent has the highest number of trans-boundary river watersheds that, collectively, cover 64% of Africa's surface area and contain slightly more than 93% of its surface water resources. Yet less than 4% of the available water is used. Trans-boundary water management in Africa is of paramount importance as water is a crucial resource for growth and development, but also a potential source of conflict",* said Gary Quince, Director for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries in EuropeAid Development and Cooperation Directorate-General, European Commission.

The project aims to transform the African Network of Basin Organisations (ANBO) in a sustainable and influential organisation under the framework of both the African Union and the African Ministerial Council of Water. The ANBO network will support the development of lake and river basin organisations as catalysts for policy and institutional development, knowledge and information management and capacity development on trans-boundary water management.

Improving water governance for trans-boundary water resources in Africa will lead to the development of Integrated Water Resource Management Plans in the river basins where they have not yet been developed and the implementation of plans where they already exist. Integrated Water Resource Management Plans address major issues such as vulnerability to floods and droughts due to the climate changes, priority issues for short and long term, water quantity analyses and water quality objectives, etc.

Better management of water will also help to increase the use of hydropower in the region. At the moment, only 7 % of hydropower is used to its full potential. Using more hydropower would both help the environment and provide a cheaper source of energy.

World Water Day takes place on 22<sup>nd</sup> March every year since 1993. The initiative grew out of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). For more information: <http://www.worldwaterday.org>

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[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/regionalcooperation/water/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/regionalcooperation/water/index_en.htm)

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