

BIOPALT Project

BIOSPHERE AND HERITAGE OF LAKE CHAD

REGIONAL REVIEW MEETING OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOPS AND LAUNCH OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Main Results

28 – 31 MAY 2018

Hotel Ledger
N'Djamena
Chad



Introduction

The BIOPALT project aims to strengthen the capacity of the member states of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) to safeguard and sustainably manage the hydrological, biological and cultural resources of the Lake Chad Basin, in order to contribute to the reduction of poverty and to promote peace. In particular, the project will focus on assisting States in the preparation of a nomination dossier for the creation of a transboundary biosphere reserve and World Heritage site in the basin.

UNESCO in cooperation with the Lake Chad Basin Commission is implementing the BIOPALT project in the five beneficiary countries Cameroon, Central African Republic Chad, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, from 2018 to 2020. The project officially launched on 26 February 2018 in Abuja, Nigeria, during the International Conference on Lake Chad, in the presence of more than 150 people including representatives of the five beneficiary countries and their development partners. Main activities of the BIOPALT project have commenced already, with extensive national consultative workshops held in each of the five beneficiary countries, from 15 January to 16 February 2018. In order to consolidate the gains of the National consultation workshop, a Regional Review Meeting of the National Consultation Workshops took place at Ledger Plaza Ndjamena, Chad from 28 to 31 May 2018. During the occasion, the Scientific and Technical Committee was also launched.

The regional meeting attracted 54 participants from 11 countries comprised of experts specialising in the focus fields of the project, elected officials and decision makers, technical partners and representatives of civil society and indigenous populations. The objectives of the meeting were to

- Return the results of national workshops and promote information sharing between countries;
- Create a framework for dialogue and exchange between the partners on their respective implications and promote a synergy of action in cross-border collaboration; and
- Define potential biosphere reserve and transboundary World Heritage sites and agree to retain them as priority project intervention sites.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the workshop was structured into four themes according to the four components of the BIOPALT Project:

- (i) Gathering the information: update and improve knowledge on the hydrologic and natural resources, and socioeconomic and cultural data of Lake Chad's ecosystems;
- (ii) Information, Advocacy and Training: reinforce management and protection of natural and cultural resources of Lake Chad and develop the nomination files for Biosphere reserves and world heritage sites;
- (iii) Sustainable Rehabilitation: launch a pilot project for the rehabilitation of ecosystems and the promotion of a Green economy
- (iv) Valorization and Dissemination: monitore the project and communicate the results

MEETING OPENING AND PROGRESS

The Regional Meeting received welcome addresses from representative of UNESCO by Ms. Noeline Rakotoarisoa and the Executive Secretary of the Lake Chad Basin Commission represented by the technical Director of LCBC Mr. Boubakari Mana. The meeting was officially declared open by the Honorable Minister of Environment, Fishery and Water of Chad, represented by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, M. Olivier Seid Kinto.

Researched presentations addressing the specific activities of the project were displayed and discussed for each of the themes. The participants, then, made observations, recommendations, established synergies and made useful suggestion to strengthen the planned activities of the BIOPALT project

MAIN OBTAINED RESULTS

- ✓ **THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOPS' RESULTS WERE SHARED AND APPROPRIATED**
- ✓ **THE PARTICIPANTS RECEIVED A CLEAR VIEW OF THE IDENTIFIED AND POTENTIALS PARTNERS 'INTERVENTIONS:**
 - **AGRHYMET, IUCN¹, CNRD², RC-IRMB³, ERAIFT⁴, ECOLE DE FAUNE DE GAROUA, VISIOTERA, FRIN⁵, JARDINS BOTANIQUES DE TOORO ET LIMBE**
- ✓ **THE SYNERGY OF ACTION BETWEEN THE PARTNERS WAS STRENGTHENED IN TRANSFRONTIER COLLABORATION**
- ✓ **THE PARTICIPATORY MAPPING OF THE PROJECT'S TRANSBOUNDARY PRIORITY AREAS WERE DEFINED AND AGREED UPON**

¹ International Union for the Conservation of Nature

² Centre national de recherche pour le développement du Tchad (National Research Center for the Development of Chad)

³ Regional Centre for Integrated River Basin Management, Nigeria

⁴ Ecole régionale postuniversitaire d'aménagement et de gestion intégrée des forêts et territoires tropicaux (Regional Postuniversity School of Planning and Integrated Management of Tropicals Forests and Territories)

⁵ Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria

✓ THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE WAS LAUNCHED

The Committee is composed of multidisciplinary experts specialized in the areas of intervention of the project who represent the diversity of the actors of the five beneficiary countries of the project. This committee plays a key role in the execution of the project's activities. This consultative body will advise and guide the Project Management Unit. This team consists of the following people:

- Oumarou Ibrahim Hindou, Expert on International Law and Indigenous Peoples' Rights (Chad)
- Aboukar Mahamat, socio-economist (Cameroon)
- Adeogun Paul F, Ecologist (Nigeria)
- Amadou Boureima, Geographer, MAB expert (Niger)
- Baba Mallaye, World Heritage Expert (Chad)
- Dimbele Michel Kombè, Hydrogeologist (RCA)
- Ngounou Ngatcha Benjamin, Hydrologist (Cameroon)

✓ THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS WERE FORMULATED

THEME 1: GATHERING INFORMATION

- Consolidate an inter-institutional collaboration and synergy between partners AGRHYMET-LCBC-Universities-RC-IRMB;
- Taking into account the monitoring of aerial and fluvial deposits in the basin of Lake Chad;
- Ensure that the study results are used;
- Take into account mapping vulnerable areas (ecological, security, humanitarian crises), to assist decision making;
- Provide local communities with suitable communication means to facilitate the communication, comprehension and ownership of the studies' results.

THEME 2: INFORMATION, ADVOCACY AND TRAINING

- Analyse and map all the kinds/types of conflicts in the Lake Chad basin before training in order to provide guidance on the suitable kind of training to be undertaken;
- Increase the number of people to be trained on PCCP in order to strengthen the impact and sustainability of the activities;
- Support the development of training manuals in French and English;
- Take into account UNESCO's Programme for the Management Of Social Transformations (MOST) in the consultation platforms considering its important part in the relations between policy and academia;
- Strengthen the IHP and MAB committees in the BIOPALT in BIOPALT's beneficiary countries; to facilitate the nomination process of Biosphere reserves and the PCCP training;
- Involve national structures in training, information and awareness-raising activities to promote the sustainability of the project's achievements;
- Conduct an inventory on existing training centers in the countries related to the focus areas of BIOPALT;

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- Involve students and local communities in the mapping activities: from the design to use of the results.

THEME 3: SUSTAINABLE REHABILITATION

- Pool experiences and learn from success stories concerning the implementation of green economy activities (ie: green economy model of the Omo Biosphere Reserve).
- Capitalise on PRODEBALT's experience and develop a synergy with PRESIBALT's approach to rehabilitation;
- Take into account traditional techniques of ecosystem rehabilitation;
- Valorise indigenous species with medicinal value and avoid the importation of exotic species;

THEME 4: VALORIZATION AND DISSEMINATION

- Develop indicators to assess the rate of progress in the execution of activities;
- Improve communication on the project's implementation in the beneficiary countries;
- Consider gender equality;
- Take into account the security issues and adopt, as possible, preventative measures.

GENERAL

- Create a joint MAB and World Heritage working group composed of representatives of the five beneficiary countries, led by the partners involved in the elaboration of the nomination of a transboundary portion of the lake as a Biosphere Reserve and Heritage Site;
- Promote collaboration between LCBC and IHP on the management and functions of IHP national platforms in the basin's states;
- Establish communication between BIOPALT and politicians to inform, assist and receive comments;
- Create a database of all specialized centers on hydrology in the five beneficiary countries, to encourage information sharing and to support BIOPALT's project's implementation;
- Strengthen the capacities of local actors, experts and communities to develop a fruitful collaboration and contribute to the project's valorization;
- Conduct constant activities of awareness raising and advocacy for all local communities.