Summary of the meeting

This Round Table was held on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the World Bank and IMF held this year in Lima, Peru from 5 to 11 October 2015. The Round Table, organized jointly by the World Bank and the Niger Basin Authority (NBA), brought together several distinguished representatives of NBA member countries, like H.E. Mamadou Igor Diarra, Minister of Economy and Finance of Mali and H.E. Christine Gbédji-Vyaho, Minister of Water of Benin, Chair of the Council of Ministers of the Niger Basin Authority. The World Bank was represented by Mr. Makhtar Diop, Vice President of the Africa Region, Mrs. Laura Tuck, Vice President of the Sustainable Development Practice and Mr. Paul Noumba, Country Director for Mali, Niger and Chad, Mr. Jamal Saghir, Senior Advisor to the Vice President of the Africa Region, and Mrs. Paula Caballero and Mr. Junaid Ahmad, representing the Director of Environment and Natural Resources and the Director for Water, respectively. In addition, representatives of NBA Technical and Financial Partners attended the meeting; these were the African Development Bank, the French Development Agency and KfW.

This Round Table was held according to the following agenda:

- Opening of the Round Table
- Investment Plan for Strengthening Resilience to Climate Change in the Niger Basin (CRIP)
- Discussion and adoption of the Investment Plan presented
- Closing of the Round Table
• Opening of the Round Table:

Mr Makhtar Diop in his capacity as Vice President of the Africa Region thanked the participants for attending and expressed his satisfaction as he notes all the stages that have been completed since the Ministerial Round Table which launched this process in April on the sidelines of the Spring Meetings of the World Bank and IMF. The monitored process provided the unique opportunity offered by the holding of COP21 in December 2015 in Paris to develop in a participatory and inclusive way an ambitious investment plan for resilience to climate changes in the Niger River Basin. He recalled the importance of sustainable development issues characterizing the geographical area of the Niger basin and voiced the hope that the Investment Plan be adopted by the Ministers of Finance at this Round Table before its final validation by the Summit of Heads of State and Government scheduled in Bamako in early November 2015 and before its presentation at COP21.

In her turn, H.E. Christine Gbedji-Vyaho, Minister of Water of Benin and President of the Council of Ministers of the Niger Basin Authority, at the start of her opening speech at the Round Table, thanked the World Bank for organizing the meeting, in coordination with NBA, She lauded the successful initiative by the Ministers of Economy and Finance of NBA Member countries at the Ministerial Round Table on “the future of River Niger” held on April 19, 2015 in Washington DC, on the sidelines of the Spring Meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The Investment Plan is a result of this initiative and is now the tool for integration and harmonization of actions for better climate resilience in the Niger Basin. This plan is based on a coherent objective for sustainable and integrated development of the basin, as part of a planned vision for the next ten years. The amount of the plan is about US$ 3.1 billion of which 20% have already been identified. She took the opportunity to draw the attention of the Finance Ministers on the need for an effective mobilization of the respective national financial counterparties by the member countries. She ended her speech by reminding the audience that “Water is Life, and Life is the Integrated Vision for Water”; and also stressed that many development challenges facing many countries around the world are increasingly related to water.

Presentation of the Investment Plan for Strengthening Resilience to Climate Change in the Niger Basin (CRIP):

Dr. Abdou Guéro, NBA Technical Director, presented the CRIP to participants at the Round Table by first recalling the different stages from the Ministerial Round Table on the future of River Niger held on April 19, 2015 in Washington DC to this Round Table in Lima. He also reminded that the initiative's main objective was to establish a coherent set of concrete actions and investments to improve resilience to climate change effects in the Niger Basin, and consequently facilitate the mobilization of funding for adaptation to climate change. This
initiative is supported by the World Bank, ADB, AWF and WAEMU. CRIP seeks is aiming at a short, medium and long term (up to 10 years) consistent and complementarity with national programmes and initiatives and also with the NBA Operational Plan.

Furthermore, he mentioned that increasing climate variability has led to the focus of the plan on its ability to improve the resilience of populations and ecosystems with this increased variability.

Finally, he precised that the CRIP is comprised essentially of adaptation measures from existing planning documents and targets different time scales inherent in climate risk reduction. It is comprised of 246 actions identified by the Member countries and making consistent the national initiatives and initiatives of trans-boundary basin organizations in the region and regional institutions. These actions fall into two lots; “Knowledge and institutions” and “resilience and impacts of climate change”. The funding research strategy targets the adaptation financing fund (Green Climate Fund, Strategic Climate Fund or Adaptation Fund) as well as the multi-lateral and bilateral donors and financial institutions both international and regional.

Discussions and adoption of the CRIP:

Several interventions marked the discussions on the Climate Investment Plan. Mr. Mamadou Igor Diarra, Minister of Finance of Mali, present in person at the Round Table welcomed the feat achieved by the World Bank and NBA consisting of the development in a space of six months of an ambitious comprehensive plan which has followed a participatory process arbitrating and integrating the interests of all parties. He hoped that the Plan is successfully presented at CoP21 and advocated that the other partners present at the Round Table can already work to determine the level of their involvement in the funding of the Plan.

The Minister of Water of Benin insisted that member countries should show an unfailing solidarity in the advocacy to mobilize funding for the Plan.

Dr. Arnaud ZANNOU, Expert of Water-Climate-Environment and Early Warning System intervened to emphasize the need; (i) for setting up climate observing networks and knowledge development in order to reduce uncertainties and anticipate climatic hazards, (ii) to develop multi-risk early warning systems (flood, drought, food security, disease due to climate change, extreme weather phenomena, etc. ...); (iii) for a reasoned promotion of multi-purpose dams which are measures for both adaptation (reducing the risks of drought and flooding, improve food security) and climate change mitigation (carbon sequestration by hydro-agricultural activities; reduction of electricity of fossil origin source of major greenhouse gas emissions by promoting hydro-power plants). Certainly the CoP21 will inevitably be focused on the debate around the reduction threshold of temperature rises and the reduction rate of greenhouse gas emissions, but this event should also be operated as a unique opportunity to obtain funding commitments on the activities recorded in the CRIP.
National representatives and development partners in turn took the floor to express their satisfaction and hope that the CRIP will be implemented and they recommended that actions adopted should be prioritized in three-year periods so as to facilitate the progressive mobilization of the US$ 3.1 billion required. They requested that organizers of the CoP21 should be constantly contacted for the CRIP to be presented and defended at the Extraordinary Session on resilience.

After the meeting, the Ministers of Finance or their representatives and development partners agreed:

- to own the CRIP document that they adopted as well as the resolutions of the Extraordinary Session of the NBA Council of Ministers, held on September 30, 2015 in Cotonou, for subsequent steps to be taken in process;
- that the World Bank, leader of NBA Technical and Financial Partners, is particularly involved to advocate with other partners in order to ensure the success of the presentation of the CRIP at CoP21;
- that the Countries and NBA should proceed to a prioritization of CRIP actions for the first three years before the adoption of the Plan by the Summit of Heads of State, to enable him the start of its implementation from 2016;
- to mandate the World Bank to study the possibility of setting up a Trust Fund for the Niger Basin.

Closing of the Round Table:

Mrs. Laura Tuck, Vice President Global Practices of the World Bank, in her closing remarks expressed her satisfaction for the work accomplished and thanked all participants, especially the Ministers for their personal involvement in the political support and progress of this file. Following their advocacy, she reassured the meeting that the World Bank will be further involved to support this file alongside the NBA during CoP21, and to mobilize the funds needed to carrying out the CRIP.