Plans to prepare the Action Plan for Sustainable Development (SDAP) were first made in February 2002 at the 7th Summit of Heads of State and Governments in Abuja. The summit requested that the Niger Basin Authority (NBA) develop a clear, shared vision in order to create a cooperation-instigating environment.

When the Heads of State and Government signed the Paris Declaration in April 2004, it was a reiteration of the same request, recognising the need for all to adopt integrated water resource management principles. Last of all, at their meeting in May 2005, the Council of Ministers of the NBA described the SDAP as being a strategic document to define and guide the "shared vision" process conducted by all the Niger Basin countries by means of integrated management of their water resources and the associated ecosystems in order to improve the living standards and the prosperity of their populations by 2025.
This report is the SDAP first phase report, the Appraisal Report. In other words, it is an assessment of the issues and priority development themes in the Niger catchment area.
The top priority concerns and potential action of the SDAP are (i) the conservation of the basin's ecosystems, (ii) the development of socio-economic infrastructure, and (iii) capacity building and stakeholder involvement. These priority concerns are all intricately linked to sustainable development which cannot exist without them.

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