

« *Improving IWRM, knowledge-based management and governance of the Niger Basin and the lullemeden-Taoudeni/Tanezrouft Aquifer System (ITTAS)* ».

Country: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria

This project supports governance and knowledge management for ecosystem-based management for conjunctive and integrated water management within the Niger Basin and ITTAS. It will make best use of i) existing knowledge of the surface water systems, improved understanding of groundwater systems (to be achieved under this project) and of the linkages and connections between the ITTAS and the Niger Basin systems, and ii) as a result of a governance system which treats the two apparently superimposed systems as the one interconnected it actually is. The establishment of an efficient governance system of the transboundary water resource is supported by the strengthening of existing institutions and regulations to govern the management of groundwater and surface water on local, national and regional levels

This UNDP-GEF project has a focus to initiate the implementation of the ITTAS with the overall objective to improve knowledge-based management, governance and resource conservation of the Niger River Basin and the lullemeden-Taoudéni/Tanezrouft Aquifers (ITTAS), to support IWRM for the benefit of communities and the resilience of ecosystems.

The project will progress towards this objective through the achievement of four outcomes:

1. IWRM supported by a sound understanding of ground water resources and their linkages with surface water systems
2. Niger Basin Users Associations and National NGOs engaged in basin resources management and conservation for better control of flood/drought/pollution, reduction of pressure on land, forest and biodiversity while improving living conditions of households
3. Introduce systematic and integrated approach of industrial competitiveness and environmental/social responsibility to reduce wastewater discharges and pollution loads in the Niger River.
4. National Policies and Institutions, Civil Society Platforms support Niger River Ecosystem based management

Project Components

- **Component 1:** Promoting conjunctive management of ground and surface waters. As indicated earlier, the TDA is only partially complete for the ITTAS (currently covering the IAS only). The main aim of this component is to complete the TDA for the entire ITTAS and develop the ITTAS SAP. This should be done early on so that the findings can be fully taken into account in other components of the project, in particular defining conjunctive management pilots under Component 2.

- **Component 2:** Sharing responsibilities and benefits with local communities, civil society in conserving basin resources, including groundwater. The purpose of this component is to implement a wide range of community-based projects aimed at addressing many of the key issues and challenges originally identified in the TDA/SAP/SDAP as well as those conjunctive management pilots anticipated to be identified in the Niger and ITTAS TDA/SAP under Component 1.

- **Component 3:** Strengthening industries' environmental/social responsibility capacities. Component 3 aims at encouraging industry to reduce pollution through the adoption of best practices and new technology. A win-win approach is a key driver of this approach with private companies encouraged to invest in environmentally responsible behaviour for and making savings over time, especially since policy and legal changes are expected to increasingly punish environmentally irresponsible behaviour.

- **Component 4:** Capacity building and stakeholders involvement in Niger River ecosystem based management. Component 4 is cross-cutting in nature and is aimed at supporting the required building of capacity to ensure that national policies and institutions are in place towards ecosystem-based management of the Niger River basin.

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