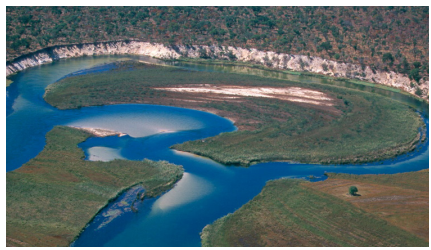


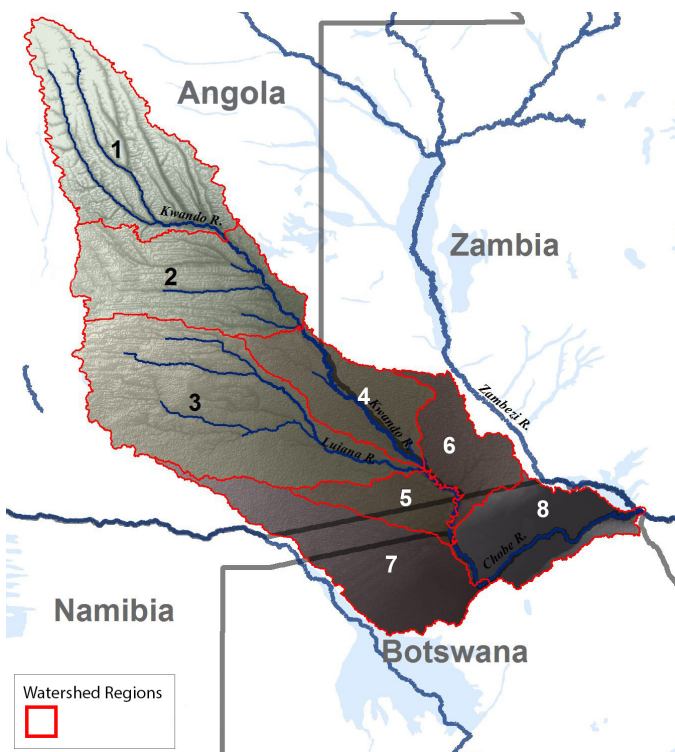
Kwando River Basin Report Card Stakeholder Workshop Summary

9–11 March 2020, Kasane, Botswana



This newsletter summarizes outputs from the initial stakeholder workshop to develop the Kwando River Basin Report Card. The workshop took place from 9–11 March in Kasane, Botswana. More than 35 diverse stakeholders from 19 institutions came together at this workshop to conceptualize the river basin, create a shared vision, and discuss indicators for the Kwando River Basin Report Card. The report card aims to strengthen transboundary water governance and inclusive decision-making mechanisms across the four countries (implementing states) that the basin traverses: Angola, Namibia, Botswana, and Zambia.

The report card is part of a larger project “Water Partnership for a Resilient Kwando Basin”, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and supported by the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) and the Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA).



The Kwando River Basin traverses four countries in south-central Africa (Angola, Namibia, Botswana, and Zambia). The watershed divisions are based on hydrological delineations.

The Kwando River is one of the major headwater tributaries of the Zambezi River, and provides critical water resources to the heart of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA), the largest transboundary conservation area on the planet.

The KAZA region, where Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe converge, is home to 2.5 million people, shelters half of Africa’s remaining savannah elephant population, and is critical for many other wildlife species. Due to a several decades of political and civil strife, the Kwando Basin has remained largely undeveloped, with a population of less than 200,000 people, but in recent years is seeing increasing pressure due to shifts in political leadership, climate change, and an increase in planned development in upstream Angola.

Without a shared transboundary vision that balances the needs of people and the environment, these pressures could result in negative impacts to the basin and the people who live within it.

This work will ultimately help ensure inclusive and sustainable water resource management and increased water security for the benefit of people and ecosystems in the Kwando River Basin, and downstream in the Zambezi Basin.

Kwando River Basin supports unique biodiversity

The Kwando River starts in central Angola and forms the boundary between Angola and Zambia for 225 km. The river flows through the Linyanti Marshes to join the Zambezi River. In total, the Kwando River runs 731 km and drains 96,778 square kilometers of land.

The region is known for its wildlife and biodiversity. Elephants, zebras, and wildebeests use the basin as a migration corridor. Endangered species such as South African cheetah and Cape wild dog make their homes along the banks of the river.

Because of the constant interface of human activity and the environment, assessing the condition of the Kwando River Basin and the surrounding communities is vital to the region's continued success and conserving biodiversity.



Elephants in Chobe National Park, one of several protected areas in the Kwando River Basin. Photo credit: Bernard Gagnon.

Developing the Kwando River Basin Report Card

Report cards evaluate ecosystem health based on a set of scientifically-derived indicators and thresholds. Ecosystem health encompasses the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of those systems. We broaden this definition to include the social and economic values that healthy ecosystems deliver to society, as well as the health of the management and governance systems that enable the maintenance or restoration of ecosystem health.

Key activities of the workshop included:

1. Building a common vision for the Kwando River Basin
2. Identifying values of, and threats to, the Kwando River Basin
3. Selecting indicators and thresholds to assess identified values and threats
4. Establishing sources and key points of contact for data in each of the implementing states
5. Discussing data collection and analysis methods
6. Developing a timeline of activities through to completion of the report card
7. Increasing cooperation and knowledge sharing amongst transboundary implementing states



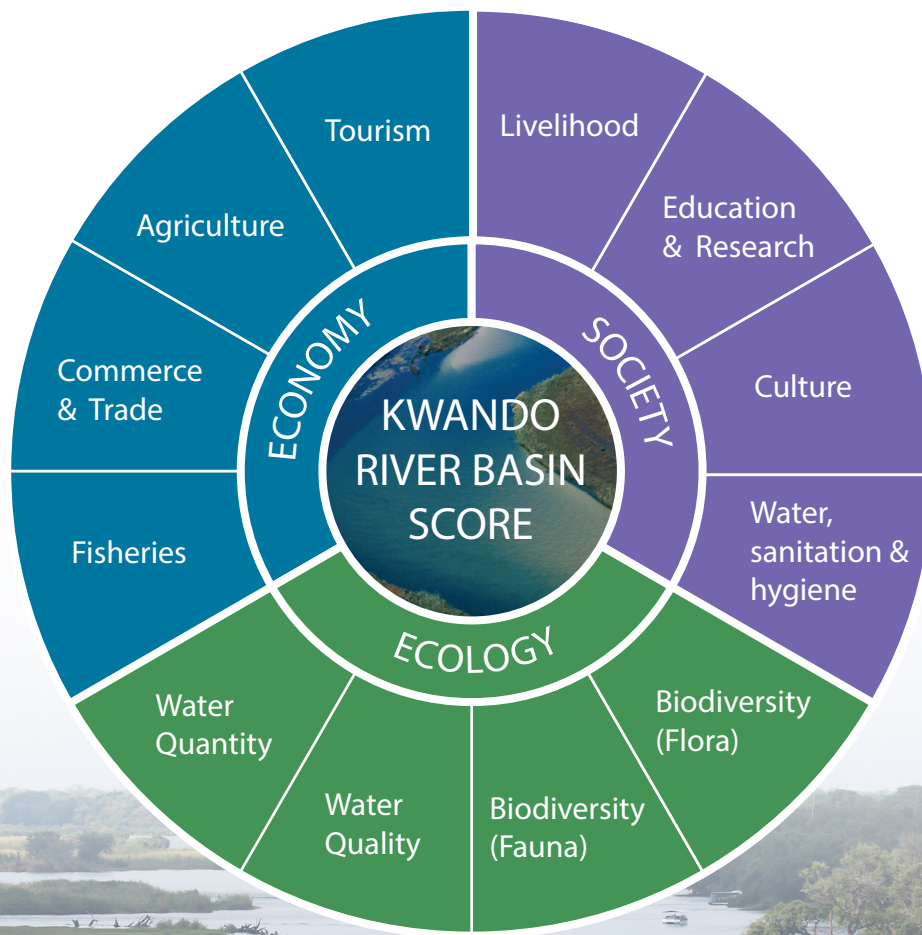
Stakeholders participating in the workshop to conceptualize the Kwando River Basin Report Card. Photo credit: WWF Zambia.

Opposite page photo credit: Bernard Gagnon.

Proposed indicators of Kwando River Basin health

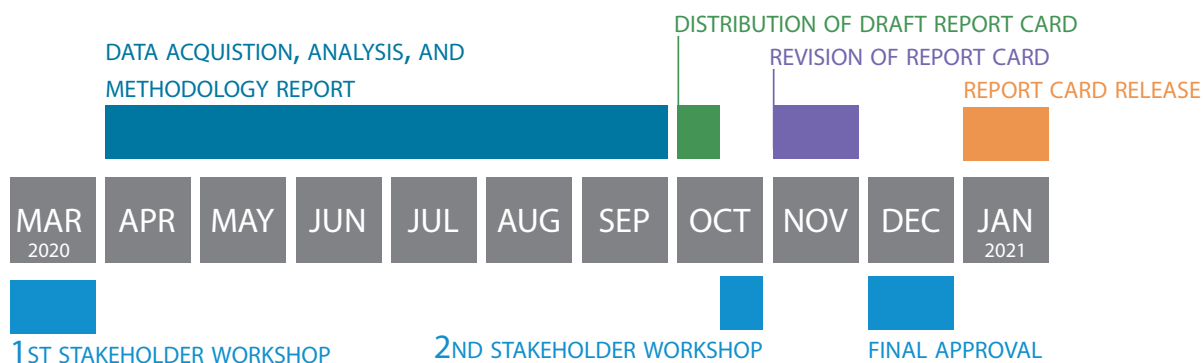
Indicators that were brainstormed during the workshop fall under three broad categories: ecology, economy, and society. All of the proposed indicators will be evaluated for inclusion in the Kwando River Basin Report Card. Approximately 40 indicators were identified as potential measures of the health of the ecological, social and economic health of the Kwando River basin. These indicators are grouped into the 12 categories outlined in the figure below.

There are four economy indicators that aim to assess the economic vitality of the Kwando River Basin: tourism, agriculture, commerce & trade and fisheries. There are four society indicators that examine the region's social health: livelihood, education & research, culture and water, sanitation & hygiene. Finally, there are four ecology indicators that assess the health of the Kwando River Basin's natural resources: water quantity, water quality, biodiversity (fauna) and biodiversity (flora).



Next steps and project timeline

The development and production of the Kwando River Basin Report Card is estimated to take 18 months, with the release planned for January 2021. Following the initial stakeholder workshop in March 2020, the next six months will entail collection and analysis of data for the identified indicators. A draft report card will be created between September and October 2020 based on the discussion and feedback from the stakeholder workshop. After review of the draft report card and a second stakeholder workshop in October 2020, the document will be revised and finalized for a public release event in January 2021.



Workshop participants



Participating organizations: USAID SA regional office, USDOS (US embassy in Botswana), ZAMCOM, KAZA, WWF Zambia, National Geographic-Okavango Wilderness Project, USAID Resilient Water SA, WaterNet, WARMA Zambia

Member States: Angola INRH, EPAS/Cuando Cubango, GABHIC; Botswana Department of Water, Utility, Office of the District Commissioner, Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Water; Namibia Department of Regional Planning, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Directorate of Water Resources Management, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Regional Council; Zambia Ministry of Water.

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Cover photos credit: WWF Zambia.

