Integrated Trans-boundary River Management Policy Development (INTREPID)

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Project Summary

Livelihoods in semi-arid areas depend upon a biological resource base underpinned by access to water. With increasing human populations and water stress come pressures to harness water resources for 'higher economic value' uses, instead of an integrated approach that includes provisions for ecosystem conservation and livelihood sustainability. Nowhere is this lack of integration more prevalent than in the semi-arid regions of Africa.

The linkages between Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) and Conservation of Biological Diversity (CBD) are poorly known. River basin management, biodiversity conservation, and livelihood programmes in Africa have evolved independently, with often overlapping and/or conflicting goals and responsibilities. The result has been persistent intra- and trans-boundary conflicts; leading to increasing poverty and declines in biological diversity.

This EC-funded project, which uses the Mara river basin system in Kenya and Tanzania as its case study, addresses this disparity by recognizing that IWRM, CBD and SL are irretrievably interconnected and that water management and policy initiatives focusing on individual aspects are likely to fail. It aims, therefore, to resolve this gap by initiating and promoting inter-disciplinary and international collaboration to integrate sustainable water resource management, biodiversity conservation and livelihoods using the Mara river basin as a case study. It provides a platform for policy makers, practitioners and researchers to consolidate expertise on African IWRM systems and draw on experiences from the implementation of the EU-Water Framework Directive (WFD) to promote and reinforce the vital synergies between IWRM, CBD and SL.

INCO-DEV

The INTREPID project is funded under the EC INCO-DEV programme which was set up to promote scientific and technological cooperation internationally; to reinforce Community capacities in the fields of science and technology; to support the achievement of scientific excellence within the wider international framework; and to contribute to the implementation of the Community’s external policy.
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Project Publications