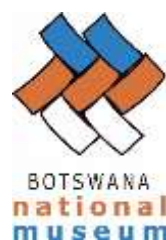




# Transboundary cooperation for protecting the Cubango-Okavango River Basin and improving the integrity of the Okavango Delta World Heritage property

Technical meeting 3-4 June 2019 Maun, Botswana

## Summary Report



Organisers of the meeting:



With thanks to:



Note from the editors: This report aims to provide a short summary of the proceedings of the expert meeting “Transboundary cooperation for protecting the Cubango-Okavango River Basin and improving the integrity of the Okavango Delta World Heritage property”. All meeting documents and presentations are available on the website of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1493/>).

Cover photo and photos of the report: UNESCO / © Nomination Dossier Okavango Delta, State Party of Botswana (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1432/documents>)

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## 1. Background

Effective transboundary cooperation among Botswana, Angola and Namibia on management of the shared Cubango-Okavango River Basin is critical for the conservation of the Okavango Delta World Heritage property (Botswana), inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2014 under criteria (vii) (ix) and (x) due to its exceptional biodiversity and scenic values<sup>1</sup>. Almost all water that flows to the Okavango Delta comes from Angola, passing through Namibia on its way to the Delta in Botswana.

The benefits of including additional key, upstream areas of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin, including those in Namibia and Angola, to the Okavango Delta World Heritage property have been recognised as ways to improve the ecological integrity and conservation of this unique landscape. While Namibia had already included parts of the Okavango river system in its territory on its World Heritage Tentative List in 2016, the Tentative List of Angola does not yet include any natural sites. The Okavango Delta<sup>2</sup> in Botswana and the Bwabwata–Okavango<sup>3</sup> in Namibia are also designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Angola is currently in the process of ratifying the Ramsar Convention and updating its World Heritage Tentative List.

The tripartite Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) has a number of ongoing initiatives to support sustainable management of the basin and its water resources, and the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) supports sustainable development, conservation and tourism in the broader Okavango and Zambezi River Basin regions. The State Party of Botswana is additionally pursuing bilateral discussions with Namibia and Angola regarding the possible transboundary cooperation and the extension of the World Heritage property.

At the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee in Manama in July 2018, the three States Parties of Botswana, Angola and Namibia met with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and IUCN to discuss the tripartite Action Plan for the protection of the Cubango-Okavango River basin. All parties agreed to continue the discussion towards assessing the feasibility of the potential transboundary or transnational extension of Okavango Delta World Heritage property.

The State Party of Botswana, through the Botswana National Museum and Monuments as the custodian agency to the *World Heritage Convention* in the country, hosted this technical meeting. The meeting was co-organised with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, with funding available through the UNESCO/Flanders Funds-in-Trust cooperation of the Government of Flanders (Belgium) for the project “Improving the representation of African sites on the World Heritage List: upstream support for natural heritage”.

### **Objectives of the meeting:**

- To review the existing knowledge and cooperation on the conservation and management of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin and the Okavango Delta World Heritage property.
- To assess the opportunities and obstacles for strengthening the conservation of the shared water basin and moving forward with the potential transboundary nomination of the Okavango Delta.
- To develop a roadmap to take forward the feasibility assessment and the potential transboundary nomination of the Okavango Delta.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1432>

<sup>2</sup> <https://rsis Ramsar.org/ris/879>

<sup>3</sup> <https://rsis Ramsar.org/ris/2193>

## 2. Proceedings of the meeting

### 2.1. Opening of the meeting

The formal opening aimed at setting the stage for the meeting and included introductory remarks and addresses by the host District in Maun, the host country, the meeting co-organisers, UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the Botswana National Museum and Monuments, as well as the States Parties of Namibia and Angola. The statements by the three States Parties and UNESCO are available in **Annex 3**.

Following the introduction by Mr Gaogakwe Phorano, the Director of the National Museum and Monuments, Mr Duncan Enga, the North West District Council Chairman, welcomed the participants to Maun. He noted the current conditions with a particularly dry Delta. He recalled the importance of the Delta to people's livelihoods and called for engagement with local stakeholders and communities as custodians of heritage resources – “every river has its own people”.

The Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Honorable Frans Van Den Westhuizen, representing the Minister of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism, gave the opening address on behalf of the host country. Hon. Van Den Westhuizen acknowledged the financial support of the Government of Botswana, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and Government of Flanders (Belgium) that made possible the organization of the meeting. He also acknowledged the presence of the local communities and organisations, and the support of other partners of the region. He went on recalling the biogeography of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin and stressed its importance in terms of hydrology, biodiversity and biological productivity.

Hon. Van Den Westhuizen reminded the audience that collaboration among the three riparian States started back in 1994 with the

adoption of the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission Agreement. It continued with the establishment of the Okavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA). He also referred to the Ramsar (1997) and World Heritage (2014) designations of the Okavango Delta. He was confident the technical meeting would result in the adoption of a clear roadmap with practical actions that will guide States Parties to ensure protection of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin.



*Hon. Frans Van Der Westhuizen, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of Botswana, gave the keynote address of the meeting (Photo: Botswana National Museum and Monuments © Phillip Segadika)*

In his opening remarks, Mr Guy Debonnet from the UNESCO World Heritage Centre expressed UNESCO's appreciation to co-organise the meeting, bringing the participants to the founding principles of the World Heritage Convention, which is to build peace through cultural cooperation and foster collective responsibility over the common heritage of humankind. He echoed the significance of Okavango Delta's inscription on the World



Heritage List in 2014 and the importance of transboundary cooperation among the three States Parties to ensure the transmission of its Outstanding Universal Value to future generations. He recalled the importance of the Convention to conservation and to formalising international cooperation, and how many sites inscribed on the World Heritage List had become important motors for national economies and sustainable development through tourism and shared governance and benefits. He also reminded the audience on the World Heritage Committee's recommendation that the cultural values and involvement of the traditional custodians of the delta be an integral part of the protection and management of the site. This justified UNESCO's recent support to the revision of the Delta's management plan and the COMPACT community support programme with the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme. Recalling the UN Agenda 2030 and the IPBES Global Assessment Report, Mr Debonnet also reminded that meeting the humanity's societal and environmental objectives would need to rely on ever-greater international efforts and cooperation.

According to Mr. Rui Lisboa, the Head of KAZA in Angola, "cooperation starts with understanding". He continued by stating that the presence of the representatives of Angola showed the country's commitment to collaborate with Namibia and Botswana to protect their shared heritage. He added that in past years the shared water basin was central to the Government's sustainable development and research agenda. He informed the audience about the forthcoming establishment of a national agency to coordinate all activities in relation to the water basin in Angola, and acknowledged the support of international organisations, notably mentioning the work of the National Geographic Society to help Angola identify priority areas, "the water tower of the delta", for protection. Mr Lisboa also iterated

Angola's interest to learn more from Botswana and Namibia in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, with a view to considering the possible extension to Angola.

Ms. Veno Kauaria from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture of Namibia recalled the discussions that had led to the organization of the technical meeting, including the bilateral meetings between Botswana and Namibia in 2018, and the importance of including Angola in the discussion. She acknowledged progress on the issue of transboundary cooperation for protecting the Cubango-Okavango River Basin, particularly at the levels of UNESCO and Namibia. She stressed the importance of harmonizing frameworks while referring to distinctive actions Namibian Government had taken to protect the State Party's heritage.

Although the State Party of Namibia agrees Africa should focus on increasing the number of sites on the World Heritage List, this should not be the end. Ms Kauaria noted the need for protection and sound management of the sites, following the inscription. She noted with concern the increasing number of African sites being inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger because of poor management. She urged African States Parties to adopt a pragmatic approach and praised the work of African World Heritage Fund, particularly its training courses that benefit African countries. Ms. Kauaria admitted the need to focus on transboundary cooperation, but mentioned the complexity of transboundary nominations and consequently urged stakeholders not to rush. She insisted on the need to carry out more consultations and noted the important role of civil society and communities, in accordance with the *Operational Guidelines*. The representative of Namibia also requested that a clear Action Plan be developed. She ended her intervention with a quote from Gandhi: "A Nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people".



*The meeting participants (Photo: Botswana National Museum and Monuments © Phillip Segadika)*

## 2.2. State of conservation and cooperation

The session provided an overview on the state of conservation and cooperation of the River Basin in relation to the Okavango Delta World Heritage site, presented by the three States Parties (Angola, Botswana and Namibia), UNESCO World Heritage Centre, IUCN, the Secretariats of the OKACOM and KAZA TFCA, the African World Heritage Fund and the local community representatives, respectively.

***Brief summaries of presentations are made in this report. Full presentations are available on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre's website, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1493/>***

The session started with presentations on current conservation issues over the management of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin in Botswana, Namibia and Angola. Mr Jobe Manga from the Department of Environmental Affairs of Botswana presented the governance and management of the Okavango Delta World Heritage site, revealing basics of the land use plan with its use zones, community-based initiatives and regional and international governance arrangements for this multi-internationally designated area.

Different mandates and stakeholder interests overlap in the management of the Delta, which require coordination and careful planning. The presentation also reviewed the conservation issues of the Delta, which have been followed by the World Heritage Committee in its deliberations and Decisions.

On behalf of Namibia and Angola, Ms Esther Moombolah-/Goagoses from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture of Namibia and Mr Vladimir Russo from the National Agency for the Management of the Okavango Region in Angola reviewed the ongoing livelihood and conservation issues within the river system in their countries. Namibia's presentation recalled that part of the River System had been added to Namibia's World Heritage Tentative List and inscribed as a Ramsar site. It also reviewed the outcomes of the preliminary stakeholder mapping and wetlands use assessment of the area. Angola's presentation looked at the Government development plan, which prioritises sustainable development and poverty reduction. It also touched on the regional and national priorities, practices and initiatives on water management and research,



and noted the complexity of the governance system within the river basin that overlaps with six provinces. Several research and development initiatives are ongoing in the country to understand water use and management requirements. The institutional framework is maturing and communities are taking an increasingly important role in governance arrangement over natural resources.

All presentations noted the importance of involving stakeholders, including local communities in governance of natural resources and sustainable development activities. The recommendations of the three presentations are summarised in **Table 1** below.

The discussion that ensued touched on several issues. The functioning of the community clusters to consult and involve local communities in the management of the World Heritage site in Botswana was questioned and debated. The review of the Okavango Delta management plan was seen as an opportunity to acknowledge the cultural values of delta, which are currently not fully visible in the site's World Heritage inscription. Nevertheless, the site's statement of Outstanding Universal Value recognises that the local custodians are an inseparable part of the management requirements of the site. Reference was also made to data collection and management, with an example of the Okavango Research Institute's existing database.

**Table 1.** Recommendations arising from the presentations by the three States Parties of Botswana, Namibia and Angola

| Botswana   | Namibia   | Angola  |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leverage the World Heritage and Ramsar Convention mechanism to enhance transboundary cooperation among countries.</li> <li>- Establish a network or information sharing centre among the countries.</li> <li>- Explore funding opportunities of the Convention Secretariats for transboundary cooperation.</li> <li>- Address cultural values in the review of the Okavango Delta Management Plan.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undertake a comprehensive environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) on the proposed transboundary/transnational World Heritage nomination to understand costs and benefits of designation.</li> <li>- Undertake full stakeholder mapping and comprehensive regional and national consultations.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build on the experience gained with the World Heritage nomination of Mbanza Kongo.</li> <li>- Complete the ratification of the Ramsar Convention and two site proposals.</li> <li>- Complete the national World Heritage Tentative List to include natural sites.</li> <li>- Operationalise ANAGERO for national coordination of activities in the River Basin.</li> <li>- Develop a road map and clear terms of reference for cooperation (regional road map with national activities).</li> <li>- Prepare a funding strategy.</li> <li>- Obtain expert support from the World Heritage Centre and IUCN.</li> <li>- Take into account the limited human resources.</li> </ul> |



Mr Guy Debonnet from the UNESCO World Heritage Centre<sup>4</sup> reviewed the *World Heritage Convention* provisions concerning transboundary and transnational nominations, with reference to the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*<sup>5</sup>. He provided several examples of existing transboundary and transnational World Heritage sites, and summarised some key benefits and challenges related to management of such sites, generally considered more complex. Yet, from a conservation and cooperation perspective, these sites may be more rewarding in many ways. With reference to the presentation, a list of useful publications on nominating and managing World Heritage sites, transboundary co-operation in the context of the Convention and multi-internationally designated sites is included in **Annex 4**.

Building on IUCN's publication "World heritage, wilderness, and large landscapes and seascapes"<sup>6</sup>, Mr Cyril Kormos from IUCN<sup>7</sup> focused on the contribution the World Heritage Convention can make to wilderness conservation around the world and how it can be used as a tool to address climate change and biodiversity loss. The Okavango Delta region is recognised as among the world's last undisturbed large wild areas, safeguarding valuable ecosystem services to its people. The IUCN presentation flagged the rapid loss of world's wetlands (as evidenced by the IPBES Global Assessment of May 2019), while noting their contribution to tackling climate change could be significant (IPCC). Overall, conservation needs a "systems approach" with a broader scale and international cooperation to address the contemporary challenges faced by the planet. The strengthened cooperation by Botswana, Angola and Namibia over the conservation of the shared river system is a highly commendable example of this.

Mr Liwena Sitale from the Secretariat of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area<sup>8</sup> (KAZA TFCA) presented the structure and objectives of the SADC-approved programme, aiming at promoting connectivity conservation, tourism and sustainable development, among other objectives. KAZA is currently the world's largest terrestrial TFCA, including three World Heritage sites and three Ramsar sites. Yet, the region faces significant pressure from unsustainable development and environmental degradation, which the programme is aiming to overcome. KAZA TFCA also cooperates with OKACOM.

Ms Tracy Molefi from the Secretariat of the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission<sup>9</sup> (OKACOM) reviewed the history of the OKACOM since its establishment in 1994 and the current organogram. The OKACOM Strategic Action Programme (SAP) sets the current work priorities and commitments for action. OKACOM has been an important vehicle to raise the profile of the basin and the region's development challenges. It has also attracted partners and resources that otherwise would not have been available. The benefits cascade is an interesting way to describe OKACOM cooperation (Figure 1): The basin's characteristics have led to cooperation focused on environmental benefits. Securing them requires realizing economic and social benefits. The trust built working together has generated peace and security benefits, and paves way for benefits from regional economic integration. The presentation also flagged important lessons learned from transboundary cooperation: it requires consultation, dialogue and trust building among countries, partners and structures. Political will, issues of sovereignty, varying priorities and socio-economic contexts were mentioned as issues to consider.

<sup>4</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46825>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.iucn.org/theme/world-heritage>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.kavangozambezi.org/en/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.okacom.org/>



*Figure 1. The benefits cascade of cooperation  
(Source: OKACOM)*

Mr Jacob Nyangila from the African World Heritage Fund<sup>10</sup>, a UNESCO category II centre, recalled the objectives of the organisation, followed by a detailed account of the Fund's nomination programme. The programme aims at capacity building of the African heritage managers and increasing the number of African sites on the World Heritage list. The financial and technical assistance – through grants, mentorship arrangements and nomination courses – provided by the Fund can be crucial for States Parties working on World Heritage nomination dossiers. This assistance is also available to Botswana, Namibia and Angola in their possible future efforts to nominate the extension of the Okavango Delta. The State Party of Botswana had benefitted from the Fund's assistance in preparing their nomination dossier for Okavango Delta.

Mr Gakemotho Satau from the Trust for Okavango Cultural & Development Initiative and Mr Keikabile Mogodu from Khewdom Council presented the experiences of the local communities and indigenous peoples in the nomination and conservation of the Okavango Delta, focusing on current challenges and opportunities that exist in having their rights and values recognised in the governance of the World Heritage site. The Okavango Delta is the

ancestral home of the indigenous San peoples, and meaningful engagement is considered as a prerequisite for the management and future of the site.

The international instruments recognizing indigenous peoples were reviewed, including the UNESCO Policy on engaging with Indigenous Peoples<sup>11</sup>, and the importance of recognizing cultural values and involving indigenous peoples in the World Heritage processes was emphasized. The presenters also acknowledged the opportunities of the World Heritage designation to improve the engagement with the indigenous peoples: World Heritage Convention recognises indigenous peoples and local communities as partners in conservation of shared heritage and the designation can improve opportunities for capacity building and involvement of indigenous peoples in research as co-researchers and research assistants. The World Heritage designation can also improve benefit sharing and help promote and preserve the customs and traditions of indigenous peoples and local communities, notably as regards their indigenous knowledge systems.

The discussion focused on options and opportunities for recognition of community values and rights in management of heritage sites. Reference was made to Botswana's current efforts and interest in taking on board concrete suggestions for improvement, the existing provisions on communities under the World Heritage Convention (such as communities as among the 5 strategic objectives), the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on World Heritage<sup>12</sup> and the opportunities presented by the 2003 Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, with funding available to capacity-building and inventorying of elements of intangible cultural heritage<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://awhf.net/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/indigenous-peoples/policy>

<sup>12</sup> <https://iipfwh.org/> and

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/496/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://ich.unesco.org/en>



### 2.3. Options for future cooperation in conservation of the shared water basin

The aim of the session was to discuss in small groups (4) and identify opportunities, obstacles and possible activities for each specific sub-theme, including:

- 1) Strengthening the conservation of the shared water basin through transboundary cooperation;
- 2) Taking forward the potential transboundary nomination of the Okavango Delta;
- 3a) Strengthening interagency and multi-stakeholder cooperation in Botswana for effective governance and conservation of the existing World Heritage site (national level);
- 3b) Strengthening interagency and multi-stakeholder cooperation in Botswana for effective governance and conservation of the existing World Heritage site (World Heritage site level).

While the focus of the meeting was to discuss the proposed extension of the Okavango Delta World Heritage site, the participants were encouraged to reflect on cooperation more broadly, due to the varying roles, responsibilities and mandates of the participating organisations and individuals. The summary outcomes of the group discussions are presented in tables below, based on the rapporteurs' inputs.

| Group 1. Strengthening the conservation of the shared water basin through transboundary cooperation   |   |
|---|---|
| Opportunities/strengths   | Challenges/weaknesses   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional frameworks are in place (OKACOM, KAZA TFCA).</li> <li>- Legislative frameworks are established on environmental protection (each country), shared water resource utilisation (OKACOM) and conservation of the landscape for wildlife protection, community development and tourism (KAZA).</li> <li>- OKACOM /SADC Protocol notification procedure for major developments.</li> <li>- Same landscape, similar stakeholders and communities.</li> <li>- Countries are embarking on process for KAZA univisa to increase tourism (Okavango Delta important as a destination).</li> <li>- Communities acknowledged as important stakeholders.</li> <li>- The landscape is already generating financial support by donors (US Delta Act and USAid, ongoing KfW support, partner countries making financial commitments, etc.).</li> <li>- Existing support by the Ramsar and World Heritage Conventions, including to communities, which provide a platform for transboundary cooperation.</li> <li>- UNESCO initiated programmes.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harmonisation of policies and legal frameworks not yet ready.</li> <li>- Weak accessibility in the landscape and lack of infrastructure.</li> <li>- Need for capacity enhancement.</li> <li>- World Heritage Convention is not well understood by all stakeholders.</li> </ul> |

Group 2. Taking forward the potential transboundary nomination of the Okavango Delta

| State Party /institution | Opportunities/strengths  | Challenges/weaknesses  |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Botswana</b>          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is political will right from the top level (relevant Ministers and Heads of States). Botswana has already developed a document to engage with relevant ministries.</li> <li>2. Botswana has two institutions – Okavango Research Institute and Botswana Wildlife Training Institute – that do some training and research that can be shared among the three countries.</li> <li>3. There are existing data systems, like the Okavango Delta Information System (ODIS) within Okavango Research Institute, which can be shared with other countries.</li> <li>4. Taking the cooperation of OKACOM and KAZA to higher level.</li> <li>5. Funding: Botswana has natural Environmental Fund and Tourism Fund, which can assist the transboundary process. The three countries can also benefit from the AWHF Grant facility (Nomination grants). There might also be possibilities to direct some of the KfW funding to this process as Germany is a strong supporter of the World Heritage Convention.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Okavango Delta (Botswana) has multiplicity of management levels involving different institutions (OKACOM, Water Affairs, land board, Wildlife Authority) which do not always pull together.</li> <li>2. Tourism sector is well developed but they are not yet on board (it will be good to bring the Tourism sector as a partner to the process as they are beneficiaries of the World Heritage listing). Botswana has not yet fully engaged with HATAB.</li> </ol> <p><b>Suggestion – to come up with a mechanism that will bring everyone/every sector on board.</b></p>   |
| <b>Angola</b>            | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is political will led by the Government of Angola.</li> <li>2. There is also existing OKACOM structure.</li> <li>3. There is the “Resilient Water project” on water resource management and other monitoring.</li> <li>4. Through OKACOM the TNC (The Nature Conservancy) discussions have been held on creating an Endowment Fund to better protect the resources.</li> <li>5. Availability of data that has been collected for the last 20 years; it will be good to review the existing information and knowledge.</li> </ol>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The nomination process should be clarified to the political level given that this is a longer-term project.</li> <li>2. It is important to identify the data gaps; for Angola, there is a huge area to be worked on and covered.</li> <li>3. The language challenge/barrier is a potential obstacle to be considered.</li> <li>4. Consultation – there is a big area to be covered; there are six provinces that need to be covered in Angola only.</li> <li>5. No national World Heritage committee exist in Angola compared to those that exist in Namibia and Botswana.</li> <li>6. Political will is there and needs to be escalated in the region, but expectations need to be managed given that the process will take time.</li> <li>7. Need to bring all stakeholders together including on tourism and water.</li> <li>8. Okavango is not on the Tentative List of Angola; however, the process can be parallel with the nomination preparation.</li> </ol> |



|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Namibia</b>                         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is political will but there is a need for further consultation. The Ministry of culture is favourable to the project.</li> <li>2. There is existing agreement with OKACOM.</li> <li>3. Namibia has a national committee for the implementation of the 1972 Convention. The Committee is composed of representatives from: Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (including the National Museum of Namibia); Ministry of Environment and Tourism; Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation (Namibia National Commission for UNESCO); the National Heritage Council.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is a challenge to find alternative livelihoods for all stakeholders who depend on the water resources. This is a critical challenge, which has been experienced elsewhere.</li> <li>2. Lack of community engagement at consultation stages can endanger the whole process.</li> <li>3. Consultation – this a key component that needs to be looked into and must involve the local communities who are the key stakeholders; community awareness is also critical.</li> </ol> |
| <b>UNESCO<br/>IUCN</b>                 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Important to identify a more concrete way forward. Suggestion to conduct a feasibility study on the transnational nomination, which can be used to rally support from the political level. However, a decision should be made on when the feasibility study can be done/begin (Namibia has already done initial study, however in depth study needs to be done).</li> <li>2. Use the existing frameworks to push forward the process.</li> </ol>   |   |
| <b>KAZA,<br/>OKACOM<br/>and others</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Joint studies and monitoring within the three countries.</li> <li>2. Development of Community awareness (e.g. what OKACOM has already done).</li> <li>3. There is already existing structure through OKACOM.</li> <li>4. There is operational MoU signed between KAZA and OKACOM and they are ready to work through OKACOM to move the process forward.</li> </ol>   |   |

**Group 3a. Strengthening interagency and multi-stakeholder cooperation in Botswana for effective governance and conservation of the existing World Heritage site (national level)**

| <b>Opportunities/strengths</b>   | <b>Challenges/weaknesses</b>   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existence of legal and institutional frameworks.</li> <li>- Okavango wetlands management committee (multi-partner cooperation at district/site level).</li> <li>- Multiple ministries involved/concerned.</li> <li>- OKACOM + KAZA.</li> <li>- Opportunities in strengthening the engagement and social responsibility of the business community (benefits, understanding the needs of different parties).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Buy-in from stakeholders, local community ownership.</li> <li>- Funding: new financial partners and players needed.</li> <li>- Structural challenges, lack of clarity in authority and responsibilities.</li> <li>- Insufficient participation of the business community.</li> <li>- Insufficient participation of the heritage sector in KAZA.</li> <li>- National World Heritage Committee not effective/active.</li> </ul> |

Group 3b. Strengthening interagency and multi-stakeholder cooperation in Botswana for effective governance and conservation of the existing World Heritage site (World Heritage site level)

| Stakeholder analysis   | Opportunities/strengths   | Challenges/weaknesses  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Government</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Museum and Monument</li> <li>- DEA</li> <li>- DFFR</li> <li>- Water and Sanitation</li> <li>- Land Board</li> <li>- DWNP</li> <li>- Waste Management and Pollution</li> <li>- Ministry of local government</li> </ul> <b>Civil Society Organizations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Khwedom Council</b></li> <li><b>Tocadi</b></li> <li><b>Sankuyo Tshwaragano Management Trust</b></li> <li><b>Mababe Zokotsama Community Development Trust</b></li> <li><b>Khwai Development Trust</b></li> </ul> <b>Private sector and parastatals</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Open dialogue.</li> <li>– Funding.</li> <li>– Multi-stakeholder collaboration.</li> <li>– Training for various stakeholders.</li> <li>– Existence of structure for managing the site – Okavango Delta Wetlands Management Committee (OWMC).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Government-led.</li> <li>– Inadequate consultation during the nomination process: it was more of information sharing than getting the views of the communities.</li> <li>– Not all Stakeholders are fully knowledgeable on the process of World Heritage listing and Convention.</li> <li>– Limited financial resources.</li> <li>– Lack of transboundary stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>– The <i>Convention</i> was not fully implemented.</li> <li>– Conservation priorities may not be the same in transboundary countries and stakeholders.</li> <li>– Conflicting interest of stakeholders.</li> </ul> |



### 3. Way forward and adoption of the road map

This chapter presents the recommendations of each group, including the road map developed by group 2 and approved in plenary that focuses on how to take forward the potential

transboundary nomination of the Okavango Delta. The results are presented based on the rapporteurs' inputs and in the order of Group 1, Group 3a and b, followed by group 2.

#### Group 1. Strengthening the conservation of the shared water basin through transboundary cooperation

##### Options of activities

- States Parties to initiate comprehensive stakeholder engagement process at all levels on the nomination of the extension of the Okavango Delta World Heritage site.
- KAZA, OKACOM, UNESCO, AWHF and other partners to mobilise financial resources for the national consultations (e.g. through KFW, EU, US Delta ACT).
- KAZA and OKACOM to engage research and other institutions to facilitate research and consolidate research results in the Basin area.
- KAZA and OKACOM to undertake a gap analysis in the legislative and policy frameworks of the partner states for the conservation of the basin.
- Partner states to conduct a capacity needs assessment and implement a capacity development plan for stakeholders and towards their empowerment.

#### Group 3a. Strengthening interagency and multi-stakeholder cooperation in Botswana for effective governance and conservation of the existing World Heritage site (national level)

##### Options of activities

##### Activities (1)

- Reactivate the national World Heritage committee.
- Mapping of potential donors.
- Establish a depository of applied research work on heritage/livelihoods.

##### Activities (2)

- Carry out consultative meeting(s) with Dept. of Wildlife and see what can be borrowed from them in terms of community engagement and empowerment.
- Carry out a needs assessment (through organisation of work).
- Develop a comprehensive work plan (must include community conservation and beneficiation projects).
- Along with a budget.

Group 3b. Strengthening interagency and multi-stakeholder cooperation in Botswana for effective governance and conservation of the existing World Heritage site (World Heritage site level)

Options of activities

| Activity   | Responsibility  | Timeline               |
|--|---|------------------------|
| – Conduct stakeholder planning meeting:  | Botswana National Museum and Monuments                    | August 2019            |
| – Conduct periodic networking forum:   | OWMC (Okavango Wetlands Management Committee) secretariat | Bi-annually            |
| – Training of trainers of the Convention and its procedures to all stakeholders e.g. government, CSO:  | Convention Focal Point World Heritage Centre              | September 2019         |
| – Resource mobilization:   | Botswana National Museum and Monuments, CSO, UNDP         | August 2019            |
| – Transboundary stakeholder engagement forum:  | OKACOM, Botswana National Museum and Monuments, DEA KAZA  | Bi-annually            |
| – Community mobilization and empowerment:  | CSOs  | November-December 2019 |
| – Inventory of the cultural aspects of the Okavango Delta system:  | University of Botswana and CSOs                           | September 2019         |
| Potential donors: African World Heritage Fund, <a href="https://awhf.net/grants/">https://awhf.net/grants/</a> ; NEF-Local, UNDP, GEF/SGP, UNESCO (World Heritage Fund, <a href="http://whc.unesco.org/en/intassistance">http://whc.unesco.org/en/intassistance</a> ; Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, <a href="https://ich.unesco.org/en/requesting-assistance-00039">https://ich.unesco.org/en/requesting-assistance-00039</a> ) |   |                        |



## Group 2. Taking forward the potential transboundary nomination of the Okavango Delta

| Activity  | Action  | Responsible Institution/<br>Country | Timeframe                              |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Consultation meetings                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Botswana will take responsibility of organizing regional consultation meetings at both Ministerial and Heads of State level (Angola, Botswana and Namibia).</li> <li>This process is important for buy in at high political Level. The Initiative should take advantage of regional meetings including the African Ministers of Environment conference (AMCEN), which will take place in South Africa in September 2019.</li> <li>Will also take advantage of other meetings taking place in the SADC region.</li> </ul> | Botswana                            | September 2019 (AMCEN) & December 2019 |
| 2. Focal points for the Steering Committee (SC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Angola, Botswana &amp; Namibia to appoint two (2) people per country as focal points to form the steering committee.</li> <li>OKACOM, KAZA, UNESCO, IUCN and AWHF were invited as Observers to the steering Committee.</li> </ul>  | Angola, Botswana, Namibia           | 4 June 2019 (Done)                     |
| 3. Steering Committee Meetings                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first steering committee meeting to take place in Botswana. The Exact date to be scheduled by the steering Committee.</li> <li>However, an informal meeting of the SC will take place during the World Heritage Committee meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan in July 2019.</li> </ul>   |                                     | August                                 |
| 4. Terms of reference (SC)                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terms of Reference will be drafted and circulated to the focal points for inputs by 30 June 2019.</li> </ul>   | Botswana/ AWHF                      | 30 June 2019                           |
| 5. Consultation with OKACOM                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report back from the Technical meeting held in Maun, 3-4 June 2019.</li> </ul>   | Botswana                            | 8–12 July 2019<br>Gaborone             |
| 6. Feasibility study                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Steering Committee will develop the ToRs for the feasibility study.</li> <li>It will start with option paper for review by the three countries (ABN).</li> </ul>   | Steering Committee                  | October 2019                           |
| 7. Develop Tentative List for Nature            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Tentative List (Nature)</li> </ul>  | Angola                              | December 2019                          |
| 8. Funding opportunities                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicit funding for the above activities</li> <li>Other funding opportunities to be explored following the Ministerial meeting in Sept 2019.</li> </ul>  | All                                 | December 2019                          |

## Annex 1. Programme

| <b>MONDAY, 3 June 2019</b><br><b>Cresta, Maun, Botswana</b>                  |   |
|--|---|
| 06:30–08:00am  | Breakfast   |
| 08:00–08:30am  | Registration  |
| <b>OPENING OF THE MEETING (Director of Ceremony: Mr Gaogakwe Phorano)</b>    |   |
| 8:30–10:15am   | <b>Prayer</b><br><b>Introductions</b> – Mr Gaogakwe Phorano, Director of National Museum & Monuments<br><b>Welcome remarks</b> – Mr Duncan Enga, North West District Council Chairman<br><b>Keynote Address</b> – Hon Frans Van Der Westhuizen, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development<br><b>Address by the representative of UNESCO:</b> Mr Guy Debonnet, UNESCO World Heritage Centre<br><b>Address by the representative of Angola:</b> Mr Rui Lisboa, Head of the Kaza Unit in Angola<br><b>Address by the representative of Namibia:</b> Ms Veno Kauaria, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Lifelong Learning, Arts and Culture, Ministry of Education, Arts & Culture |
| 10:15am  | Group photo   |
| 10:15–10:45am  | <b>Tea break</b>  |
| <b>STATE OF CONSERVATION AND COOPERATION (Moderator: Prof Joseph Mbaiwa)</b> |   |
| 10:45–11:30am  | <b>Okavango Delta World Heritage property – history, governance and current conservation issues</b><br>Mr Jobe Manga, District Coordinator, Department of Environmental Affairs<br>Ms Gertrude Matswiri, Principal Curator, Department of National Museum & Monuments   |
| 11:30–12:15pm  | <b>Management and conservation of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin in Namibia</b><br>Ms Esther Moombolah-/Goagoses, Director of Culture, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture of Namibia   |
| 12:15–13:00pm  | <b>Overview of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin in Angola: Challenges and Perspectives</b><br>Mr Vladimir Russo, ANAGERO (National Agency for the Management of the Okavango Region in Angola)  |
| 13:00–14:00 pm   | <b>Lunch break</b>  |
| 14:00–14:30pm  | <b>Transboundary cooperation for conservation of World Heritage – a global view</b><br>Mr Guy Debonnet, UNESCO World Heritage Centre  |
| 14:30–15:00pm  | <b>The World Heritage Convention, wilderness and large landscape conservation</b><br>Mr Cyril Kormos, International Union for Conservation of Nature – IUCN   |
| 15:00–15:30pm  | <b>Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA)</b><br>Mr Liwena Sitale, Project Manager – Stakeholder Engagement, KAZA Secretariat  |
| 15:30–16:00pm  | <b>The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM)</b><br>Ms Tracy Molefi, OKACOM Secretariat / Dept. of Water Affairs   |
| 16:00–16:15pm  | Discussion and closing of day 1   |
| <b>Voluntary training session – Basics of the World Heritage Convention</b>  |   |
| 16:30–17:30pm  | Quick introduction to the World Heritage Convention and its procedures, UNESCO and IUCN<br>Questions & Answers  |
|  | Dinner hosted by Hon. Minister of Local Government and Rural Development  |



| TUESDAY, 4 June 2019<br>Cresta, Maun, Botswana                              |   |
|---|---|
| STATE OF CONSERVATION AND COOPERATION (Moderator: Ms Gertrude Matswiri)     |   |
| 8:15–8:30am   | Recap of day 1  |
| 8:30–9:00am   | <b>African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) Nomination Programme in Africa</b> , Mr Jacob Nyangila  |
| 9:00–10:00am  | <b>Role of Local Communities in the Nomination Process – Experiences from the Nomination of the Okavango Delta</b><br>Mr Gakemotho Satau, Coordinator, Trust for Okavango Cultural & Development Initiative<br>Mr Keikabile Mogodu, Coordinator Khewdom Council   |
| OPTIONS FOR FUTURE COOPERATION IN CONSERVATION (Moderator: Mr Cyril Kormos) |   |
| 10:00–10:30am   | In small groups, identification of opportunities and obstacles for:<br>1) Strengthening the conservation of the shared water basin through transboundary cooperation;<br>2) Taking forward the potential transboundary nomination of the Okavango Delta;<br>3) Strengthening interagency and multi-stakeholder cooperation in Botswana for effective governance and conservation of the existing World Heritage site.<br><br><i>(Each group will work on one of the above topics and should choose one presenter and one note-taker for documenting the outcomes of the discussion on behalf of the group)</i>  |
| 10:30–11:00am   | <b>Tea break</b>  |
| 11:00–11:45am   | Continuation of group work  |
| 11:45–13:00pm   | Report back and discussion  |
| 13:00–14:00pm   | <b>Lunch break</b>  |
| WAY FORWARD (Moderator: Mr Guy Debonnet)                                    |   |
| 14:00–15:00pm   | In small groups, identification of options for activities, responsibilities and timelines for:<br>1) Strengthening the conservation of the shared water basin through transboundary cooperation;<br>2) Taking forward the potential transboundary nomination of the Okavango Delta;<br>3) Strengthening interagency and multi-stakeholder cooperation in Botswana for effective governance and conservation of the existing World Heritage site.<br><br><i>(Each group will work on one of the above topics and should choose one presenter and one note-taker for documenting the outcomes of the discussion on behalf of the group)</i><br><i>Options of topics may include but not limited to Draft Terms of Reference for a feasibility assessment for the potential transboundary nomination; Draft Terms of Reference for a joint nomination task force; Draft roadmap of future activities</i> |
| 15:00–16:00pm   | Report back and discussion  |
| 16:00–16:30pm   | Agreement on the roadmap  |
| CLOSING OF THE MEETING (Moderator: Mr Mosimanegape Nthaka)                  |   |
| 16:30–17:00pm   | Closing of the meeting<br><b>Closing remarks:</b> Mr Gaogakwe Phorano, Director of National Museum & Monuments  |
|   | Dinner  |

## Annex 2. List of Participants

|    | Name of Expert   | Organisation  | Country  |
|----|--|---|----------|
| 1  | Mr Vladimir Russo<br><a href="mailto:vladyrusso@gmail.com">vladyrusso@gmail.com</a>                                | Representative of Angola as a member of the World Heritage Committee, Responsible for ANAGERO (National Agency for the Management of the Okavango Region in Angola) | Angola   |
| 2  | Mr Rui Lisboa<br><a href="mailto:jjorgerui@hotmail.com">jjorgerui@hotmail.com</a>                                  | KAZA Unit Representative, Ministry of Tourism of Angola   | Angola   |
| 3  | Mr Nascimento António<br><a href="mailto:kidima.nascimento@yahoo.co.uk">kidima.nascimento@yahoo.co.uk</a>          | National Director of Biodiversity, Ministry of Environment of Angola  | Angola   |
| 4  | Ms Sandra Vigário<br><a href="mailto:svigario@hotmail.com">svigario@hotmail.com</a>                                | Head of the Law Department, Ministry of Tourism of Angola   | Angola   |
| 5  | Ms Esther Moombolah-/Goagoses<br><a href="mailto:esthermuseum9@gmail.com">esthermuseum9@gmail.com</a>              | Director of Culture, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture of Namibia   | Namibia  |
| 6  | Ms Veno Kauaria<br><a href="mailto:Veno.Kauaria@moe.gov.na">Veno.Kauaria@moe.gov.na</a>                            | Commissioner for Culture, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Lifelong Learning, Arts and Culture, Ministry of Education, Arts & Culture of Namibia                         | Namibia  |
| 7  | Mr Apollinaris Kannyinga<br><a href="mailto:Apollinaris.Kannyinga@met.gov.na">Apollinaris.Kannyinga@met.gov.na</a> | Deputy Director, North and Eastern Regions, Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Namibia  | Namibia  |
| 8  | Proff Joseph Mbaiwa  | Okavango Research Institute   | Botswana |
| 9  | Dr Susan Keitumetse<br><a href="mailto:keitumetses@ub.ac.bw">keitumetses@ub.ac.bw</a>                              | Okavango Research Institute   | Botswana |
| 10 | Mr Goemeone Mogomotsi<br><a href="mailto:gmgomotsi@ub.ac.bw">gmgomotsi@ub.ac.bw</a>                                | Okavango Research Institute   | Botswana |
| 11 | Mr Gaogakwe Phorano<br><a href="mailto:gphorano@gov.bw">gphorano@gov.bw</a>  | National Museum & Monuments – Director  | Botswana |
| 12 | Ms Gertrude Matswiri<br><a href="mailto:gertymatswiri@gmail.com">gertymatswiri@gmail.com</a>                       | National Museum & Monuments – Principal Curator II  | Botswana |
| 13 | Mr Vasco Baiteseng<br><a href="mailto:vascobai@gmail.com">vascobai@gmail.com</a>                                   | National Museum & Monuments – Principal Curator II  | Botswana |



|    |   |   |                     |
|----|---|---|---------------------|
| 14 | Mr Phillip Segadika<br><a href="mailto:psegadika2014@gmail.com">psegadika2014@gmail.com</a><br><a href="mailto:psegadika@gov.bw">psegadika@gov.bw</a> | National Museum & Monuments – Head of Archaeology & Monument Development  | Botswana            |
| 15 | Mr Charles Mojalemotho<br><a href="mailto:cmojalemotho@gov.bw">cmojalemotho@gov.bw</a>  | Dept. of Environmental Affairs – Director   | Botswana            |
| 16 | Mr Jobe Manga<br><a href="mailto:mangaj25@gmail.com">mangaj25@gmail.com</a><br><a href="mailto:jmanga@gov.bw">jmanga@gov.bw</a>                       | Dept. of Environmental Affairs – District Environmental Coordinator   | Botswana            |
| 17 | Mr Bathusi Batsile<br><a href="mailto:dwnp.maun.reseacr@gmail.com">dwnp.maun.reseacr@gmail.com</a>  | Dept. of Wildlife & National Parks  | Botswana            |
| 18 | Ms Malebogo Somolokae<br><a href="mailto:mlsentsho@gov.bw">mlsentsho@gov.bw</a>   | Dept. of Wildlife & National Parks  | Botswana            |
| 19 | Mr Mcdonald Segola<br><a href="mailto:msegola@gov.bw">msegola@gov.bw</a>  | Dept. of Mines – Deputy Director  | Botswana            |
| 20 | Mr Oduetse Kgokong<br><a href="mailto:odkgokong@gov.bw">odkgokong@gov.bw</a>  | Dept. of Mines  | Botswana            |
| 21 | Mr Keikabile Mogodu<br><a href="mailto:gsatau@gmail.com">gsatau@gmail.com</a>   | Khewdom Council – Coordinator / San Rights Advocate   | Botswana            |
| 22 | Mr Gakemotho Satau<br><a href="mailto:gsatau@gmail.com">gsatau@gmail.com</a>  | Trust for Okavango Cultural & Development Initiative  | Botswana            |
| 23 | Mr Siyoka Simasiku<br><a href="mailto:director@ncngo.info">director@ncngo.info</a>  | Ngamiland Council of Non-governmental Organisations   | Botswana            |
| 24 | Ms Iris Sitayelo<br><a href="mailto:irsitayelo@gov.bw">irsitayelo@gov.bw</a>  | North West District Council – Physical Planner  | Botswana            |
| 25 | Ms Ingrid Otukile<br><a href="mailto:iotukile@gov.bw">iotukile@gov.bw</a>   | Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation & Tourism – Coordinator, Transfrontier Conservation Areas | Botswana            |
| 26 | Dr Michael Flyman<br><a href="mailto:mflyman@gov.bw">mflyman@gov.bw</a>   | Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation & Tourism – Coordinator, Research                         | Botswana            |
| 27 | Ms Abigail Engleton<br><a href="mailto:abigail.engleton@undp.org">abigail.engleton@undp.org</a>   | Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme – National Coordinator   | Botswana            |
| 28 | Ms Tracy Molefi<br><a href="mailto:tracy@okacom.org">tracy@okacom.org</a>   | Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) / Dept. of Water Affairs                                 | Regional / Botswana |

|    |  |   |                     |
|----|--|---|---------------------|
| 29 | Mr Janeiro Avelino<br><a href="mailto:janeiro.avelino@undp.org">janeiro.avelino@undp.org</a>     | UNDP, OKACOM – Regional Project Manager, Strategic Action Programme Implementation – Cubango-Okavango River Basin | Regional / Botswana |
| 30 | Mr Liwena Sitale<br><a href="mailto:lsliwena@kavangozambezi.org">lsliwena@kavangozambezi.org</a> | Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, Project Manager, Stakeholder Engagement                          | Regional            |
| 31 | Dr Karen Ross<br><a href="mailto:dr.karensross@gmail.com">dr.karensross@gmail.com</a>            | Independent expert  | Great Britain       |
| 32 | Mr Cyril Kormos<br><a href="mailto:cyril@wild-heritage.org">cyril@wild-heritage.org</a>          | IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) Vice-Chair for World Heritage                                     | International       |
| 33 | Mr Jacob Nyangila<br><a href="mailto:JacobN@awhf.net">JacobN@awhf.net</a>                        | African World Heritage Fund AWHF  | International       |
| 34 | Mr Guy Debonnet<br><a href="mailto:G.Debonnet@unesco.org">G.Debonnet@unesco.org</a>              | Chief of Unit, Nature, Sustainable Tourism and Outreach, UNESCO World Heritage Centre                             | International       |
| 35 | Ms Susanna Kari<br><a href="mailto:s.kari@unesco.org">s.kari@unesco.org</a>                      | Associate Programme Specialist, Africa Unit, UNESCO World Heritage Centre   | International       |
| 36 | Ms Yvette Kaboza<br><a href="mailto:y.kaboza@unesco.org">y.kaboza@unesco.org</a>                 | Regional Programme Specialist, UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa   | International       |

## Annex 3. Opening addresses

Republic of Botswana  
Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development

ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF A TECHNICAL MEETING FOR THE TRANSBOUNDARY  
COOPERATION FOR PROTECTING THE CUBANGO-OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN AND IMPROVING THE  
INTEGRITY OF THE OKAVANGO DELTA WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY  
BY  
HON. FRANS VAN DERWESTHUIZEN ACTING MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES  
CONSERVATION & TOURISM  
3-4th JUNE 2019 MAUN

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Good Morning.

It is my singular pleasure and honour to officiate at this first technical meeting meant to discuss the potential feasibility of the Transboundary cooperation for protecting the Cubango-Okavango River Basin and improving the integrity of the Okavango Delta World Heritage property.

I am reliably informed that the first initiative to discuss the possibility of a Transboundary cooperation started with a meeting in Manama, Bahrain, in July 2018, during the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee. The meeting brought together representatives from the State Parties of Angola, Botswana and Namibia, UNESCO World Heritage Centre and IUCN. The meeting that we are about to start today is a result of the agreement by all parties to continue the discussion towards assessing the feasibility of the potential Trans boundary extension of the Okavango Delta World Heritage property.

I am also informed that this meeting is made possible due to the generous support of the government of Botswana as the host and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, with funding available through the UNESCO/Flanders Funds-in-Trust Cooperation for a project *'improving the representation of African sites in the World Heritage list: upstream support for natural heritage'*. This demonstrates the commitment of the State Party of Botswana in cooperating with State Parties of Angola and Namibia in protecting the Cubango-Okavango River Basin and in particular the Okavango Delta World Heritage property. It also demonstrates the commitment of the international community in particular UNESCO World Heritage Centre in assisting State Parties to protect their outstanding heritage.

I am further informed that the meeting has brought together experts from the three State Parties of Angola, Botswana & Namibia, regional organisations such as OKACOM, KAZA, academia from ORI, representatives of local communities from Botswana, TOCaDI, Khewdom Council, NCONGO, Independent experts and International experts from UNESCO World Heritage Centre, African World Heritage Fund, IUCN and UNDP. I am therefore confident that the team will have fruitful discussions that will culminate with a clear roadmap on how the three State Parties with the support of regional and international organisations can improve or strengthen the protection of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin.

As we are all aware, the Cubango-Okavango River Basin originates from the Angolan highlands, passing through Namibia before it reaches Botswana. This river which transcends boundaries has brought three State Parties together for its protection. The Cubango-Okavango River Basin is internationally important for its hydrology, biodiversity and biological productivity. The Cubango-Okavango River system is a flood-plain driven system, with floodplains that sustain the river in the dry season and store flood waters that would otherwise increase flooding upstream. The Cuito River in Angola is key to the functioning of the whole lower river system, because of its strong year round flow, its wet season storage of flood waters on vast floodplains and the gradual release of water back into the river in the



dry season. Hence, the need for the three State Parties to strengthen cooperation to protect in its entirety this important yet fragile water source and its natural resources is very critical.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is important to note that the cooperation between the three State Parties in protecting the Cubango – Okavango River basin dates back to the early 1990s. In 1994, the three riparian states signed the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission Agreement. The agreement commits the member states to promote coordinated and environmentally friendly sustainable water resources development, while addressing the legitimate social and economic needs of each of the riparian states. Over the years, the OKACOM Secretariat has embarked on a number of initiatives some of which are still on-going, with the support of donor agencies such as USAID/SAREP and UNDP to support sustainable management of the basin and its water resources.

In 2006, the three riparian states further committed to the sustainable development of its water resources and natural resources in the Kavango-Zambezi area by establishing the Kavango Zambezi Trans frontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA). The KAZA TFCA initiative focuses on the coordinated development and management of the wildlife and tourism assets in the Kavango and Zambezi River Basins. It is my hope that the representatives of the two regional organisations will provide a better picture of the cooperation initiatives in place to protect the river basin, hence paving way for discussions on how these can be strengthened.

The international importance of the Cubango-Okavango River basin was put into the spotlight when the Okavango Delta part of the basin in Botswana was declared a Ramsar site in 1997 and a World Heritage site in 2014. This was further cemented by the declaration of the Namibia part of the basin, the Okavango Bwabata as a Ramsar site in 2013 and the inclusion of part of the basin in Namibia in its World Heritage National Tentative list in 2016. These new developments require the State Parties and the regional bodies to find ways of strengthening our Trans boundary cooperation of our river basin in line with the international requirements.

Let me remind you that the effective management of heritage resources rests on the owners of the heritage, the local communities. Hence, in our endeavour to strengthen the protection of the CubangoOkavango River basin, we should not lose sight of the important role of local communities in this process.

Ladies and gentlemen, let our deliberations in this meeting lead us to practical actions that will guide the State Parties to ensure protection of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin. We look forward to the success and outcomes of this meeting.

I declare this technical meeting on the transboundary cooperation for protecting the Cubango-Okavango River Basin and improving the integrity of the Okavango Delta World Heritage property officially opened.

I thank you.

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Address by Ms. Veno Kauaria  
Deputy Executive Director: Life Long Learning, Arts and Culture  
Deputy Chairperson of UNESCO Namibia  
National Commission and Commissioner for Culture

Address at the Technical Meeting on Transboundary Cooperation Okavango Delta  
Maun, Botswana 3-4 June 2019

Representatives of the World Heritage Centre, especially the Colleagues from the Africa Unit  
Representatives of the Governments of Republic of Botswana and Angola  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour for me to be here with you in Maun, Botswana to attend this very important “Technical Meeting on Transboundary Cooperation for Okavango Delta”. My Colleague and I, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Namibia, extend a warm word of gratitude for the World Heritage Centre for facilitating this meeting as well as the Government of the Republic of Botswana for convening this meeting and hosting us in this beautiful city of Maun.

I am wearing a couple of hats, my official responsibility, is that of a Deputy Permanent Secretary but today I am talking to you in my capacity as the Deputy Chairperson of UNESCO National Commission of Namibia and as Commissioner for Culture.

Except the many hats I am wearing, my involvement and interest in this project of *“possible expansion of Okavango Delta transboundary nomination”* started in early 2018 when we as a Ministry participated in a meeting between the governments of the Republic of Botswana and Namibia during the state visit of Botswana's former Head of state to Namibia. The then Minister of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism of Botswana (Hon. Tshekedi Khama), paid a curtesy call to our Minister of Education, Arts and Culture Hon. Katrina Hanse-Himarwa and discussed this topical issue at length. The two Ministers agreed at that meeting that Botswana will organize a meeting of this nature, to further engage on this important matter with experts and technical staff of all three countries involved. Angola was not represented at this meeting and all parties felt that such a meeting would not be complete without Angola. I am delighted to see that we are all here now at this meeting, from my understanding and briefing, there has been some progress made, especially at the level of UNESCO and more so from the Namibian perspective. My colleague, Ms. Ether Moombolah-Goagoses-the Director for Heritage and Culture Programmes will talk more on the developments from the Namibian side in detail in her presentation.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Namibian government recognises the fact that Cultural and Natural Heritage faces unprecedented threats almost every day, often due to the fact that Governments do not prioritise their protection against other development needs. Due to the nature of the budgets allocations.

The Namibian Government through the ratification of various UNESCO Conventions and strengthening of its own legal and policy framework, has taken a decisive action to prioritise the protection of our heritage.

We have embarked upon a process of reviewing the National Heritage Act and the Heritage, Arts, and Culture policy to ensure that aspects covered in other broader frameworks, i.e. the UNESCO Conventions; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Agenda 2063 are assimilated. Harmonization of frameworks is key to the success we would like to achieve in Namibia.

As a State Party to the Convention, Namibia agrees that Africa should focus on increasing her number of sites on the World Heritage List. However, we believe having sites inscribed is not an end in itself but a means to whole, which represent an important journey towards the improvement of

conservation processes at all levels. This in our view commits the States Parties to the ongoing care of the properties to ensure that their Outstanding Universal Values are protected, conserved and managed for all times.

Having read the report of my colleague who attended the 42nd session in Manama, Bahrain, I noted with concern and regret the increasing number of African sites that are either listed as Heritage Sites in Danger or some that were de-listed because of poor management and protection of these sites. It is thus imperative that we strike a balance between nominating more sites vs. strengthening the management and protection of those that are already recognised as World Heritage sites. Currently according to the World Heritage Fund Report, Namibia and Botswana each has two, Angola has one Zambia has one South Africa has ten. The statement I make earlier that we should try to strike a balance between more vs. strengthening is not meant to discourage the efforts of the possibility for expanding the Okavango Delta but should be seen as a pragmatic approach to the future of African World Heritage.

Namibia was fortunate to have been visited by Mr. Varissou the Executive Director of the African World Heritage Fund last week in Windhoek. The work of the AWHF is crucial to the management and conservation of our sites. I was particularly delighted to hear that a hands-on 12-month nomination course is planned for the Anglophone Countries starting this September in Nigeria. This is a milestone for the fund.

Africa is a continent that is rich when it comes to Heritage Sites. Before Colonialism, Africans managed and protected many of these sites by making them sacred. Had our ancestors not done that, there will be no Twyfelfontein, Tsodilo Hills, Namib Sand Sea, Mbanza Kongo and many other sites.

Dear Colleagues, We have observed, and I am sure the delegates will agree with me that there is a dire need to focus on transboundary nominations, particularly from an African point of view. Therefore, the idea of considering the expansion of Okavango Delta is a welcomed one. However, we also take cognisance of the fact that these types of nominations are complex and involves a journey that takes time, consultations and effort. Nevertheless, this is a step in the right direction.

You will recall that the Kavango River (in Namibia) as an extension of Okavango Delta (in Botswana) is one of the sites that has been on the Tentative List for nomination to the World Heritage Listing for Namibia since 2016. However, you will agree with me that a lot has changed since that period, at least from the Namibian point of view, including the split of the then Kavango region into Kavango East and West (my colleague will talk to that). Additionally, as a country, we feel that more consultations are necessary in order to fulfil the provisions of the operational guidelines, particularly Paragraph 64 that encourages States Parties to involve a wide variety of stakeholders' engagement in the preparation of tentative lists for World Heritage Nominations.

In the past few years that the Convention has been functioning in Namibia, the role of the civil society and non-governmental organisations has increased drastically. Heritage is people - heritage is us: its creators, interpreters, and users. The links between society and heritage have been identified as central to the debate on human inheritance and its preservation.

To emphasise the special role of the civil society and other stakeholders, including local communities, in the field of heritage in general, and for the Okavango Delta, we strongly believe that there is a need to continue with consultations on this issue. In this regard, we appreciate the opportunity to participate in this technical meeting, which we believe will mark an important milestone in understanding the long journey that the three member states must undertake in order to arrive at a common position, and hopefully prepare a joint transboundary nomination for the extension of Okavango Delta as well as strengthening existing conservation mechanisms and efforts.

From the Namibian point view, my colleague will present the processes we have undertaken thus far; some critical questions for deliberation by this gathering; and recommendations on the way forward with a clear action plan.



In Namibia, we hold the conviction that heritage protection serves to reinforce identity, and at the same time to preserve cultural diversity. Thus, heritage protection for today and tomorrow is not a niche, but a NECESSITY!

I am not a Ghadhi fan, but I would like to end my engagement with you with one of his famous quote due to its relevancy: "A Nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people".

*Hence our efforts as a government to put the people at the forefront of all the efforts aimed at identification, promotion, preservation and protection of Namibian Heritage!*

I thank you all for your kind attention.

Address at the Technical Meeting on Transboundary Cooperation Okavango Delta  
Maun, Botswana 3-4 June 2019

Mr Rui Lisboa, KAZA Unit Representative, Ministry of Tourism of Angola  
on behalf of the Delegation of Angola

Your Excellency, Minister of the Local Government and Rural Development  
Distinguished Representatives of the three member countries of the Cubango-Okavango Basin,  
Representatives of our partners and international organizations,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like, on behalf of the Angolan delegation, to express my gratitude to the hosts of this meeting; we have felt at home since our arrival, and we are enjoying the hospitality of the brotherly people of Botswana.

The presence of a multi-sectoral delegation from Angola at this meeting is an unequivocal proof of the Angolan government's willingness to work with Namibia and Botswana in the preservation of this important River Basin, the Cubango-Okavango basin, which we consider as a common property of the three Member States of the OKACOM.

Our country Angola has taken up its responsibilities for the protection of this common property by hosting the springs that feed the two large rivers representing the water source to the watershed, which runs to Botswana, forming the Okavango Delta, designated as a World Heritage site. In recent years, the Cubango River in Angola has received special attention from the Government of Angola, which has focused efforts on its study, protection and sustainable development, focusing on improving the living conditions of communities along the rivers that make up the basin. Thus, efforts have been made to create a National Okavango Region Management Agency, which will be the body to coordinate among all ministerial departments that have significant projects in the area. This agency will coordinate all initiatives aimed at protection, integrated management and sustainable development of the Angolan Okavango region.

It is also fair to highlight the great interest of international organizations in supporting Angola for the preservation of the Cubango-Okavango. I would like to name here the work of the National Geographic Society, which has allowed us to identify an area we call the Okavango Zambezi Water Tower, the preservation of which is essential for maintaining the integrity of the Okavango basin. This and other unidentified areas may form the extension of the Okavango Delta World Heritage site.

We therefore express our full willingness to implement the tripartite plan and wish to learn from the experiences of Botswana and Namibia in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, for the potential extension of the Okavango Delta as a World Heritage site in Angola.

Thank you for your attention.

Maun, June 3, 2019.

**Address by Guy Debonnet, UNESCO World Heritage Centre on the occasion of the Expert meeting  
Transboundary cooperation for protecting the Cubango-Okavango River Basin and improving the  
integrity of the Okavango Delta World Heritage property**

**3 June 2019 Maun, Botswana**

Your Excellency Mr Frans Van Der Westhuizen, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development,  
Excellences,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to express my sincere greetings to the participants of this meeting to discuss the existing and prospective transboundary cooperation among the States Parties of Botswana, Angola and Namibia towards the conservation of the shared water basin and the Okavango Delta World Heritage property. This meeting serves as an important consultation towards strengthening the transboundary cooperation and establishing the feasibility of the potential extension of the World Heritage site.

UNESCO is pleased to partner in organizing this meeting. It brings us to the founding principles of the World Heritage Convention, which is to build peace through cultural cooperation and foster collective responsibility over the common heritage of humankind. Transboundary and serial transnational World Heritage nominations perhaps most clearly demonstrate the growing interest of countries in the conservation of the shared heritage among nations, as was demonstrated in the recent meeting organised by UNESCO for the Africa Region in February 2019. Today's discussions are also very close to the mandate of UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme that promotes Transboundary Water Cooperation and builds the scientific knowledge base to help countries manage their water resources in a sustainable way.

My sincere thanks go to the authorities of Botswana, including the National Museum and Monuments and the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation & Tourism, for hosting the meeting. We are grateful to the Governments of Angola and Namibia for their unreserved support to this meeting. I also wish to express my appreciation to the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) for its generous financial support to co-fund the meeting, which is part of an initiative to improve the representation of African sites on the World Heritage List. This initiative is implemented in close cooperation with our long-term and trusted partners, the African World Heritage Fund, which is a UNESCO category II centre and IUCN, the Advisory Body to the World Heritage Committee on natural heritage.

As you are probably aware, the World Heritage Convention was created by UNESCO Member States in 1972, with a view to safeguarding humanity's most exceptional cultural and natural sites to ensure that future generations could continue to enjoy them and derive benefits from them. Almost five decades later, the Convention is one of the most widely ratified and best-known intergovernmental agreements, with 1092 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List to date. The political support and popular appeal of the Convention pave the way for the uncompromised support and oversight of these unique and exceptional sites by the global community. Many World Heritage sites have also become important motors for national economies and sustainable development through tourism and shared governance and benefits.

When the World Heritage Committee inscribed the Okavango Delta on the World Heritage List in 2014, as the 1000<sup>th</sup> site inscribed on this prestigious list, the event was celebrated as a major conservation accomplishment, and with good reason. Okavango Delta is a globally unique ecosystem with outstanding biodiversity values, and it is an exceptional example of the interaction between climatic, hydrological and biological processes. Its wetland values, which extend to the shared water basin with



Angola and Namibia, have been recognised also under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance.

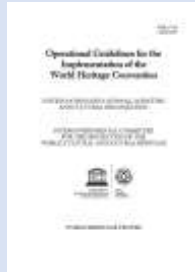
Although Okavango Delta became a World Heritage site owing to its outstanding natural value, it has also played a major role in nurturing human cultural diversity and knowledge systems. Consequently, the World Heritage Committee has recommended that the cultural values and involvement of the traditional custodians of the delta be an integral part of the protection and management of the site. This decision is in line with the strategic objectives of the Convention, and the World Heritage policy on sustainable development, by which the States Parties have acknowledged the great potential of World Heritage to contribute to inclusive social and economic development, environmental sustainability, peace and security. That is also why UNESCO has partnered with the UNDP implemented Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme on the COMPACT programme, which aims to deliver small-grants for community-based initiatives that benefit people and nature alike, and to increase the engagement of local communities in the stewardship of World Heritage. The programme is implemented in a number of World Heritage sites around the world, including in Okavango Delta. In parallel, UNESCO is supporting complementary work to review the management plan of the Okavango Delta through International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund.

While Okavango Delta was inscribed on the World Heritage List in its own right, the future of the delta will greatly depend on how Botswana, Namibia and Angola, together with their partners, will succeed in the joint management of the shared Cubango-Okavango River Basin. Several initiatives, including OKAKOM and KAZA, are critically important in this effort. The World Heritage Convention, in turn, can be a powerful tool to formalize international cooperation over shared heritage resources and promote sustainable development by combining a global standard framework with the development of operational projects and concrete collaboration. Namibia's decision to include Okavango Delta on its Tentative List in 2016 is a positive effort in this direction. Key partner in these discussions is also Angola, where the headwaters of the delta are located. We appreciate Angola's constructive role to serve currently at the intergovernmental World Heritage Committee, which increases the country's institutional capacity on World Heritage. At the same time, it is clear that any transboundary initiative on World Heritage will require careful consideration and planning. Whatever decision is taken about the transboundary or transnational nomination and future boundaries of the World Heritage site, Okavango Delta needs shared responsibility, dialogue and understanding across national boundaries. We believe that today's meeting is an important and timely contribution to this.

Before closing, allow me to recall that the global community has only a decade before the expiring of the UN Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. Meeting the humanity's societal and environmental objectives is a pressing challenge, as was demonstrated by the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which was launched at UNESCO in May 2019. Success in conservation is going to rely on ever greater international efforts and cooperation. We therefore also wish to salute the University of Botswana's application to become a UNESCO Chair, joining the global network of higher education and research institutions that can pool expertise, resources and knowledge for the benefit of UNESCO's Member States and the UNESCO-designated sites.

In closing, I would like to reiterate UNESCO's ongoing commitment to accompany the States Parties of Botswana, Angola and Namibia in their discussions over the conservation of the shared water resources, and the conservation of Okavango Delta World Heritage property that depends on peaceful and effective cooperation. I wish you fruitful and stimulating deliberations.

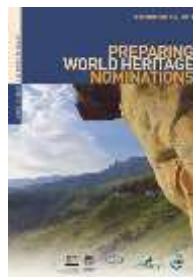
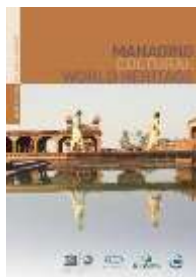
## Annex 4. Reference list of publications related to nominating and managing World Heritage properties, transboundary co-operation in the context of the World Heritage Convention and multi-internationally designated sites



The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>

*Provisions concerning nominations and management of World Heritage properties, including transboundary and transnational properties (see particularly paragraphs 134-139, 114)*



World Heritage Resource Manual on Nominating and Managing World Heritage properties

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/resourcemanuals/>



World Heritage at the Vth IUCN World Parks Congress

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/16/>

*Several events and articles touch on transboundary co-operation in the context of the World Heritage Convention*



UNESCO World Heritage: Serial Properties and Nominations

<https://whc.unesco.org/document/124861>

*Conclusions and recommendations of the “International World Heritage Expert Meeting on serial nominations and properties”*



Conference Report “Perspectives of Transboundary Cooperation in World Heritage – Sharing Experiences in and around Germany”

[https://www.unesco.de/sites/default/files/2018-01/conference\\_report\\_perspectives\\_of\\_transboundary\\_cooperation\\_in\\_world\\_heritage\\_2017.pdf](https://www.unesco.de/sites/default/files/2018-01/conference_report_perspectives_of_transboundary_cooperation_in_world_heritage_2017.pdf)



Serial natural World Heritage properties: An initial analysis of the serial natural properties on the World Heritage List

<https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/9268>



Transboundary conservation: a systematic and integrated approach

<https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/45173>



Managing MIDAS: Harmonising the management of Multi-Internationally Designated Areas: Ramsar Sites, World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks

<https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46176>



Ramsar and World Heritage Conventions: Converging towards success  
How cultural values and community participation contribute to positive conservation outcomes for internationally designated wetlands

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1709/>

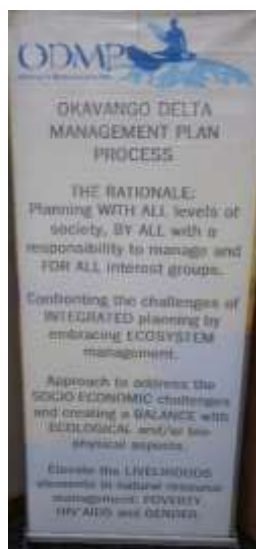


World heritage, wilderness, and large landscapes and seascapes

<https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46825>



## Annex 5. Photos of the meeting



Photos: S. Kari / UNESCO

