



JOINT STATEMENT ON THE SINGING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BY THE SECRETARIATS OF THE KAVANGO ZAMBEZI TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA AND THE ZAMBEZI WATERCOURSE COMMISSION

Cresta Mowana Lodge, Kasane, 19th November 2024

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) and the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) is a key milestone in the respective evolutions of the two organisations.

The MoU is testament of the shared desire to deepen, expand, strengthen and reorient collaboration in areas of mutual interest, particularly around water resources management – both underground and surface water resources, the attendant transboundary governance requirements, development of key outputs to help in harmonisation of policies, strategies and practices.

In January 2019, ZAMCOM joined other stakeholders at a regional workshop convened by KAZA TFCA Secretariat to explore the freshwater risks in the landscape and the importance of formalised mechanisms to ensure internal integration between KAZA and the two River Basin Organisations operating within the TFCA, the Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM) and ZAMCOM.

Last year in Maputo during the SADC TFCAs Network meeting, the call for closer collaboration and coordination between TFCAs and River Basin Organisations was echoed.

KAZA TFCA and ZAMCOM have been working in the background to develop projects and deliver specific outputs such as the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan for Cuando River Basin; Cuando River Basin Health Score Card; State of the Cuando River Basin Health and the transboundary diagnostic assessment of underground water resources in the Cuando Wildlife Dispersal Area and the highly anticipated finalisation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Cuando River Basin.

In addition to surface water resources, KAZA TFCA and ZAMCOM have also paid increasing attention to underground water resources of the Cuando River Basin. Outputs in this regard include a transboundary diagnostic assessment, ground water quality assessment as well as a transboundary groundwater framework.

With this MoU, the two organisations will use their respective and collective convening powers and mandates to rally efforts of the various collaborators and partners to focus efforts on implementation of measures and interventions that will advance, among others, environmental flows, protection and securing key freshwater habitats and ecosystems, addressing transboundary risks to water pollution, water quality monitoring and connectivity of freshwater ecosystems and habitats as well as the principles of integrated water resources management and building resilience of people and biodiversity to climate change.

The MoU will go a long way in strengthening transboundary governance, collective action, coordinated efforts towards the sustainable water (ground and surface) development and management for humans, wildlife, and economic growth in the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area as an integral part of the Zambezi River Basin.