TRANSBOUNDARY RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT CAN CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO PEACE AND PROSPERITY

Jordan, Indus, Zambezi, Nile and Limpopo River Basins

Presented by

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Overview

- Introduction
- Transboundary River Basin Management
- Core strengths
- Examples and needs
- Conclusion

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Introduction

- African continent has the highest number of shared river basins in the world (64), containing more than 93% of its surface water
- A number of international agreements have been established to facilitate cooperative management of the resource & minimise inter state conflict – effectiveness is a concern
- CC is further stressing a stressed resource with wide spread impacts on critical sectors
- Establishing international agreements has been a core occupation, but is this ambition preventing us from cooperating in other ways?
- Once agreements are established they often prove hard to alter (Lake Victoria)

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Transboundary River Basin Management

- Makes use of modern insights into water resources management (virtual water, hydro-hegemony and the economic values of water ecosystems)
- Contributes significantly to peace and prosperity between rivaling countries or regions
  - Partly also through increasing resilience to climate change

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The core strengths of transboundary river basin management

1) The prerequisite for all riparians to sit at the same table and to share data on water resources within the river basin

2) The requirement for all riparians to share at least generic plans for development of the water resources for whatever services they have in mind (irrigation, water supply, hydropower, industry, etc.)

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The core strengths of transboundary river basin management

3) Recognition of water rights and/or needs by all parties

4) Development of joint management plans and institutions that bring all parties closer together and can foster a platform for further cooperation

5) Explicit recognition of the positive attributes of transboundary/regional cooperation through benefit sharing whilst still safeguarding national interests

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Strengths and weaknesses of various types of water agreements within river basins

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Jordan River

- Only an agreement with Jordan;
- Temporary agreements with PA through Oslo;
- Fixed quantitative allocations based on multi-year averages;
- Problems with reductions in flow of Yarmouk and other Jordan River tributaries;
- No RBO of any kind (5 riparian countries)

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Indus Water Treaty

- Strong agreement;
- “Cutting” of the watershed;
- No fixed allocations needed as each gets what he gets;
- Problems with renewed interests in rivers “given” to other party (e.g. Baghlihar and Kishanganga);
- Strong arbitration but no RBO (no need).

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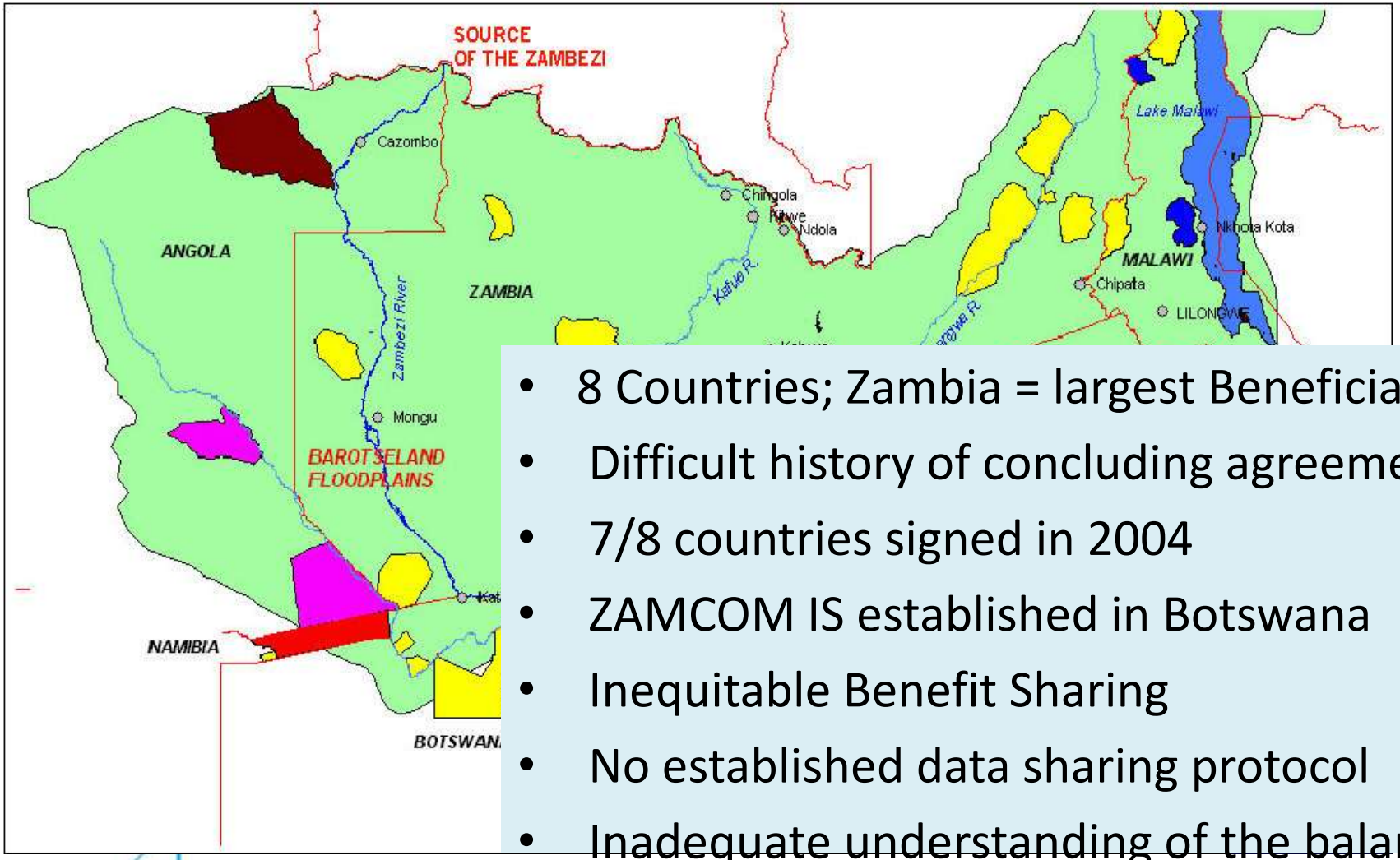
Zambezi Basin



- 8 Countries; Zambia = largest Beneficiary
- Difficult history of concluding agreement
- 7/8 countries signed in 2004
- ZAMCOM IS established in Botswana
- Inequitable Benefit Sharing
- No established data sharing protocol
- Inadequate understanding of the balance of power in the basin

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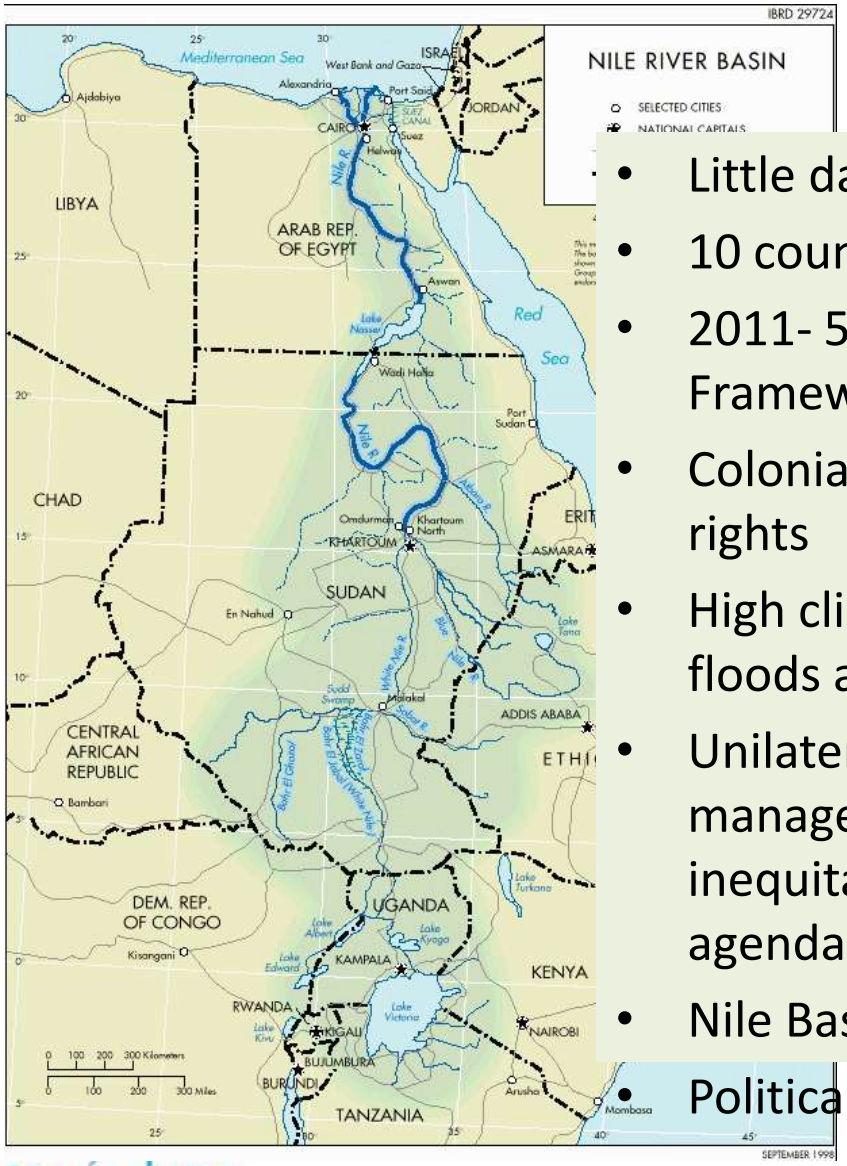
Nile Basin



- Little data sharing & hydrological information
- 10 countries; Egypt main Riparian State
- 2011- 5 countries signed NB Cooperative Framework Agreement in 2010; need 6 signatures
- Colonial treaties (1929 & 1959) gave Egypt veto rights
- High climate variability – frequent and intense floods and droughts
- Unilateral action demonstrates that shared management is critical – escalating tension, inequitable benefit sharing, different development agendas
- Nile Basin Initiative; NB Commission
- Political tensions are high

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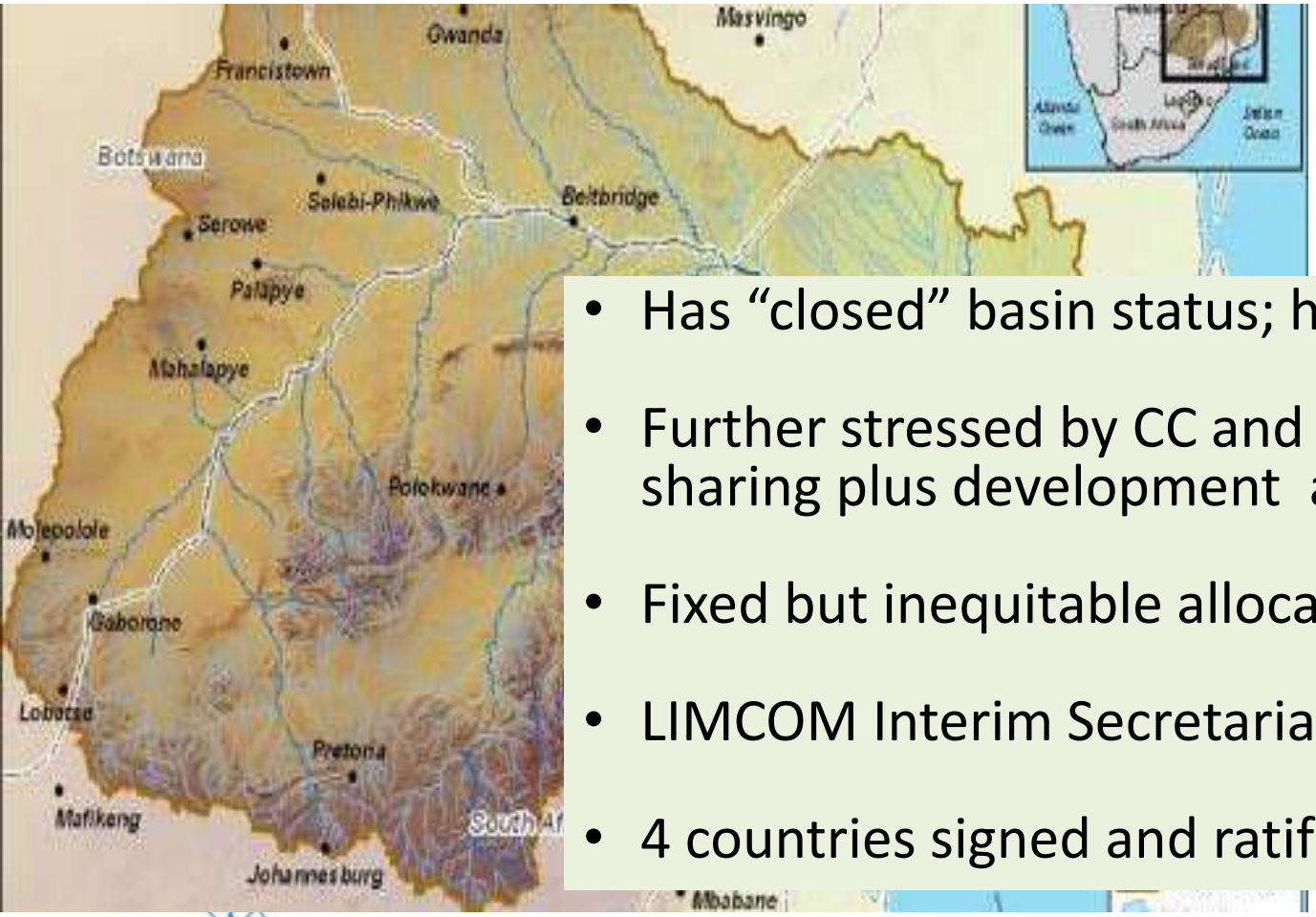
Limpopo Basin



- Has “closed” basin status; high pollution levels
- Further stressed by CC and inequitable benefit sharing plus development at all costs
- Fixed but inequitable allocation
- LIMCOM Interim Secretariat established 2011
- 4 countries signed and ratified

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Conclusions

- More dynamic allocation models are required
- Serious WDM measures are mandatory
- Transboundary River Basin Organisations & agreements still not a source of ready made solutions to the governance of TB basins – need more “small’ steps based on purpose-built cooperation
- Technical level cooperation is more “doable” than political
- Need to treat basins as integral and integrated systems – using the balance of power in a basin and its decision making is critical

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Conclusions

- Need to accelerate the pace of change substantially
- Pace of change needed usually crisis driven
- ***There are plenty crises to use to accelerate the pace – but how?***

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Conclusions - crisis catalyses change

CC poses particular threats to food security with multiple socio-economic impacts

World food stocks are at an all time low (droughts) – Price rises up to 20%

Recent history shows what can happen

- Bread price increases
- High reliance on food imports
- Violence saw the restoration of water and electricity subsidies
  – and reversal of bread prices

Why? currency value decline;

increase in global wheat prices – Russian drought

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