

Zambia brief on progress made towards the establishment of the of Luapula River Authority presented at the 18th meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) under the Water Convention (Geneva, 19-21 June 2023)

Zambia' water resources are shared between the Zambezi and the Congo Basins. The transboundary Zambezi and Congo River Basins take up around 75% and 25% of Zambia's Geographical territorial area respectively. The Republic of Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) share the Luapula river in the Congo Basin. The Luapula River offers social and economic opportunities for investment in hydropower production, irrigation development, tourism, and fishing, among other things, for the benefit of the populations of the two nations. Zambia and the Congo DRC have to develop a bilateral agreement that will result into the establishment of a joint transboundary River Basin Institution to be known as the Luapula River Authority. This is, a special purpose vehicle that will among

others manage the shared water resources along the common border between the republic of Zambia and DR Congo.

So far, Zambia has made a number of key milestones which include among others

- National and subnational technical consultative meetings with the participation of UNECE, UN Water Convention Secretariat and CICOS Secretariat.
- Development of a draft layman bilateral agreement for the establishment of Luapula River Authority with stakeholder participation using the Practical Guide for the Development of Agreements or Other Arrangements for Transboundary Water Cooperation from the UN Water Convention Secretariat.
- Received Technical support from the UN Water Convention Secretariat
- Undertook the learning visit to Zambezi River Authority, Kariba town in Zimbabwe as part of consultation and benchmarking process on the establishment of the Luapula River Authority,

Note that the practical guide was used as a critical framework for developing the draft agreement, which took into account the Core building blocks found in transboundary water cooperation arrangements as well as the Supplementary building blocks covering specific areas such as hydropower, ecosystem protection, agriculture, tourism, and so on.

Zambia.

The remaining activities in line with the road map for the establishment of Luapula River Authority include:

- Consultation of selected Members of Parliament and Ministers from line Ministries to garner political support and commitment
- Incorporation of stakeholder inputs and validation of the Luapula River Authority Agreement which will later be translated into the into French version and shared with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) through Diplomatic channels.
- The first physical meeting over the agreement between Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo is

scheduled for the last week of August, 2023 in Lusaka, Zambia.

- The next process and timelines will depend on the outcome from the first consultative meeting with Democratic Republic of Congo
 - Preparation of parallel legislation
 - Operationalization of the Luapula River Authority
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