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# Challenges and lessons learnt based on the recent meeting of the Global network of basins

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# Challenges

- **Climate change** causes irreversible losses to freshwater ecosystems and changes the availability of water for humanity
  - Ecosystem degradation - water pollution, wetland degradation, deforestation and habitat loss
    - Example: sand dunes formation and transportation in some parts of the Niger Basin
  - Water availability – decreased precipitation and water pollution
  - Extreme hydrological events (floods and droughts) in the same area over a very short period
- **Limited coordination and cooperation** between riparian countries, sometimes because of lack of an agreement
- **Different regulatory and legal frameworks** in riparian countries

# Challenges

- **Political instability** in one country is an obstacle to cooperation and the implementation of joint projects
- **Insufficient financial, technical and human resources**
- **Lack of data and information** for forecasting and decision-making
  - Sometimes data available but not shared
  - Data sometimes not reliable
- **Flood risk reduction** does not adequately integrate climate risk information, ecosystem-based and non-structural approaches to climate resilience
- **Increased salinity intrusion** through rising sea levels and declining freshwater
  - Risk for domestic, industrial or agricultural use.

# Lessons learned

- **Global Goal on Adaptation:** enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change.
- Integrated approaches that combine **climate change adaptation with ecosystem restoration and sustainable resource management**
  - Incorporating climate change adaptation in all institutional strategies
  - Apply a basin/landscape perspective
  - Promote sustainable land use practices, afforestation and reforestation initiatives, protection/ restoration of wetlands, and pollution control measures
  - Long term commitment of public funds
  - A mix of top-down and bottom-up measures
  - Willingness to change behaviors, e.g. water demand management
  - Develop joint strategic action programmes

# Lessons learned

- **Funding: partner with other organizations and institutions** such as GCF, IDB, KfW, EU, GIZ, AF
  - Become an Accredited Entity to the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund
- **Institutional strengthening and coordination**
  - Capacity building and knowledge sharing, and 'Learning-by-doing'
  - Decrease in asymmetries among basin countries
  - Joint understanding of scenarios, impacts and adaptation measures
  - Pay attention to both vertical and horizontal levels of collaboration
  - Applying ancestral knowledge

# Lessons learned

- **A joint body can serve as a platform for collaboration**, dialogue, joint decision-making, sharing experiences, facilitating regional actions and mobilizing and channeling financial resources for adaptation to climate change
  - Consultation on competing uses and priorities to prevent potential conflicts
  - Public participation
  - Use the enriching contribution of observers
  - Establish water user networks
- Establish a **regional hydrological and water quality monitoring network** covering the whole basin
  - Develop policy for data-sharing
  - Each river basin needs a water balance
  - Separate automated software programmes can support decision-making