



Minutes of the 2nd Steering Committee Meeting of the project: Improving the Management of the Lake Chad Basin

16 July 2020 by video conference

Programme/Project	Improving the management of the Lake Chad Basin by implementing the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Lake Chad Basin to strengthen climate change resilience and reduce stress on the ecosystem
Objective	Collectively develop a roadmap for the effective implementation by the Project Management Unit (PMU), and the other partners of all the components of the Regional Project to improve the Management of the Lake Chad Basin in a Covid-19 context.
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adoption of the agenda 2. Review of the implementation of the 2020 Annual Work Plan (AWP) 3. Guidelines on the reallocation of Global Environment Facility (GEF) resources in the fight against Covid 19 4. Presentation of the concept note of the support in the fight against Covid-19 5. Steering Committee, organization in connection with country representation 6. Recommendations
Date and time of the meeting	16/07/2019 from 09:30 a.m. to 13:30 p.m.
Venue of the meeting	Video Conferencing (Zoom Platform)
Participants	<u>See list of participants in the annex:</u>
Secretary	PMU

I. Proceedings

The meeting was chaired by the National Focal Point of LCBC, representing the Minister of Urban and Rural Hydraulics, Chad's First Commissioner to the LCBC and Chairman of the Steering Committee. Also in attendance was the Executive Secretary of LCBC, Amb. Mamman NUHU, the Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP, the National Focal Points of LCBC in Cameroon and Nigeria as well as other members of the Steering Committee of the project "Support to LCBC to Improve the Management of the Lake Chad Basin".

It is important to note that on 14 July 2020, Chad, which holds the presidency of the steering committee, had undergone a ministerial rearrangement that had divided the Ministry of the Environment, Fisheries and Water into two distinct departments: (i) Ministry of the Environment and Fisheries, and (ii) Ministry of Urban and Rural Hydraulics which became the first Commissioner of Chad for the CBLT, and therefore President of the Steering Committee. The new Commissioner was unable to attend and was represented by the Director General of Hydraulics and Sanitation, the focal point for the CBLT.

After the adoption of the agenda by participants, an individual introduction of the participants made it possible to confirm the quorum reached for the holding of the Steering Committee Meeting.

The event took place in two stages: the opening ceremony and presentations.



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1. Three remarks and speeches were delivered during the ceremony:

1.1 The Executive Secretary of LCBC, in his introductory and welcome remarks: recalled the difficult context created by the Coronavirus pandemic and its impact on the effective implementation of the project. He also underlined the advanced state of degradation of the resources of Lake Chad, its impact on the survival of the 47 million people living there and the special interest given to the achievement of the objective assigned to the project. This project aims to strengthen the capacity of LCBC and its member states to achieve systemic, integrated and resilient integrated ecosystem-based management of Lake Chad Basin through implementation of agreed policy, legal and institutional reforms and investments that improve water quality and quantity, on protect biodiversity, and sustain livelihoods. He also noted the importance for LCBC member states to pool their efforts to strengthen transboundary coordination for the management of the effects of Covid 19 in the already ecologically fragile Lake Chad Basin, which is affected by poverty and burdened by the effects of climate change and conflict. Finally, he expressed his optimism and confidence in the decisions that could be taken at the end of the Steering Committee Meeting to facilitate not only the effective implementation of the project but also the mobilization of resources for the achievement of development objectives of LCBC.

1.2 The Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP in Chad, in his speech, also recalled the problems that the Lake Chad Basin has been facing for several decades. In particular, he cited the negative effects of global warming and growing insecurity which continue to exacerbate the consequences of the environmental problems identified in the various transboundary diagnostic analyses. He noted that this project, which will support the development of a vast programme of structuring investments in terms of stress reduction and improvement of socio-economic conditions, should substantially contribute to the sustainable socio-economic development of Lake Chad.

Finally, he reassured LCBC and all its partners of UNDP's availability to work with them for the success of joint initiatives despite this difficult context imposed by COVID 19.

1.3 The opening remarks of the Minister of Urban and Rural Hydraulics, 1st Commissioner of Chad to LCBC, read by the Technical Director General of Hydraulics and Sanitation, Focal Point of Chad to LCBC, recalled the objective of the present meeting, not only in terms of evaluating the level of implementation of activities, but also in terms of improving future activities through debates and contradictory exchanges which, at the end of the discussions, should make it possible to find the best strategies for adaptation to the Covid context. He also stressed that the activities retained as part of the project are an integral part of the priorities defined by the LCBC member states in terms of natural resources conservation and ecosystems preservation and that they are perfectly in line with the Shared Vision which was born from the political will of LCBC Heads of State affirmed with the adoption of the Water Charter during the 14th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Lake Chad Basin Commission held on 30 April 2012 in N'Djamena, Chad. Like his predecessors, he highlighted to the difficult context created by Covid as well as to the situation of accelerated degradation of Lake Chad, its water resources and its related ecosystems. Optimistic, he stressed that the effective implementation of all the components of the project should enable member states and riparian communities to reverse the trend of degradation of the lake's resources and strengthen the resilience of the ecosystems and populations to the effects of climate change. Finally, he reassured partners of the firm will of LCBC member states to pursue the efforts underway, so that one-day Lake Chad can regain its former grandeur.

2. Presentations: They focused on the following

2.1 Review of the implementation of the 2020 AWP (first half of the year) Presented by the Monitoring and Evaluation Expert of the Project Management Unit. The presentation focused in particular on the following points:



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- The follow-up of the implementation of the recommendations of the 1st Steering Committee Meeting: globally the recommendations were all carried out;
- The level of implementation of the AWP at the end of the first semester 2020. It emerged from this presentation that the project is behind schedule in the implementation of activities, given the Covid 19 pandemic crisis that is shaking the entire planet. With 55 activities included in the AWP, only 12 (or 22%) have technically started and are being implemented. The budget implementation rate is 23%;
- The levels of implementation of activities and the perspectives by components including the disbursement scenarios for the following semester in the context of the Covid pandemic;
- The updated risk log,
- Constraints encountered and challenges identified that show that the pandemic is a major constraint that could hinder the implementation of the project.

2.1.1 Discussion points: Discussions focused on:

- The notorious delay in the implementation of the project due to the health crisis and the restrictive measures associated with it;
- The low level of project disbursement,
- The weak involvement of the network of parliamentarians in the project with the ownership strategy of the project by the beneficiaries,
- The duration of the project: the first meeting of the steering committee had decided to reduce the duration of the project from 5 to 3.5 years, but this change has not yet been registered with the GEF.

2.1.2 Recommendations:

- Development of a strategy enabling the Project to catch up on the delay in implementation despite the context;
- Consider the need for an extension of the project's duration at an opportune time;

2.2 Guidance on the reallocation of GEF resources in the fight against Covid 19: Presented by Ms. Clotilde Goeman, UNDP Technical Advisor, Istanbul Regional Office. The presentation focused in particular on the following points:

- GEF's position on the possibilities of reallocating project resources. As a matter of principle, GEF does not encourage the reallocation of funds from development activities to emergency activities. In fact, by considering Covid as a zoonosis resulting from human interactions with nature, project activities contribute substantially to reducing the underlying risk factors of these types of diseases related to environmental degradation.
- The two types of possible changes in budget heads under a GEF project are: minor changes and major changes.
 - (i) So-called minor changes do not require a change in project objectives and results and cannot exceed USD 10,000. They are authorised by the CTA (Chief Technical Advisor), reported and justified;
 - (ii) Major changes are greater than USD 10,000 and result in a modification of the project objectives and results. They require the approval of the GEF Executive Secretariat.

2.2.1 Discussion Points:

- The reallocation of project resources to support the fight against COVID-19;
- The management of the humanitarian and emergency situation created by COVID-19

2.2.2 Recommendations:

Explore alternative sources of funding to respond to COVID-19 while strengthening mechanisms for preparing



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for and preventing future health crises in the LCB.

2.3 Concept note for a project to combat Covid-19: was presented by the Regional Project Coordinator and focused in particular on:

- Strengthening cross-border health systems for community resilience through three intervention axes: inclusive response to COVID-19, crisis preparedness and post-COVID-19 socio-economic recovery.
- Budget and Resource Mobilization Strategy

2.3.1 Discussion Points:

The main point of discussion focused on GEF procedures for amending budget heads and the possibilities of using resources for COVID emergency response.

2.3.2 Recommendations:

The PMU and LCBC was directed to transform the concept note into a project document for fund-raising purposes.

2.4 Organisation of Steering Committee in relation to country representation

2.4.1 Notes

- The 1st Commissioners of Chad, Nigeria and Cameroon were represented by their National Focal Points of the LCBC.
- Niger and CAR did not take part in the meeting.

2.4.2 Discussion Points:

- Difficulties raised in relation to the availability of the 1st Commissioners for the Steering Committee meetings;
- Weak material capacities of countries for teleconferences and opportunities for capacity building;
- Country representation during the steering committee: It was noted that in view of the difficulties of making all the Ministers available at the same time, the composition of the steering committee should be reviewed and brought to an acceptable harmonised level while maintaining the functionality of the structure and quality of the project. The following two proposals emerged from the discussions:
 - (i) The National Focal Points of LCBC: This proposal has the disadvantage that the focal points are fully involved in the implementation of activities at the country level and they cannot be “judges and parties” at the same time;
 - (ii) The Secretaries General of the Ministries of the 1st Commissioners who are of a sufficiently high level and institutional stability may well represent the 1st Commissioners at the Steering Committee Meetings.

2.4.3 Recommendations:

- The regional network of parliamentarians of the Lake Chad Basin should be part of the Steering Committee and will be represented by Chad.
- In view of the above proposals, **LCBC recommends that Permanent Secretaries of the Ministries of First Commissioners be taken as country representatives on the Steering Committee;**

3. Summary of recommendation points

3.1 In view of the delay in the implementation of the project following Covid, the extension of the project duration could be considered at an appropriate time;



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- 3.2 The PMU and LCBC was directed to transform the concept note into a project document for fund-raising purposes.
- 3.3 The Permanent Secretaries of the Ministries of the First Commissioners will represent the countries in the Project Steering Committee meetings;
- 3.4 The Lake Chad Basin Commission Network of Parliamentarians will be represented in the Steering Committee by its focal point in Chad.

II. Results of the meeting

- 1. Strategic guidelines were adopted for the implementation of the project by the PMU and all stakeholders in the context of Covid-19
- 2. The concept note for the contribution of LCBC to the fight against Covid 19 was adopted and the PMU and LCBC were requested to work on resource mobilization for its implementation.
- 3. Relevant recommendations were made for country representation in the steering committee meetings.

SIGNATURES

Chairman of the Steering Committee

Tahir Abdel Aziz

M. TAHIR ABDEL AZIZ AWAM

Executive Secretary LCBC

MAMMAN NUHU

Amb. MAMMAN NUHU

Deputy Resident Representative of the UNDP Programme

Stephen Kinloch

Mr. STEPHEN KINLOCH PICHAT