**Media Release**

Representatives of communities, business, research institutions and the public service from three countries gathered in Windhoek this week to tell the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) how they want to participate in planning and management of the Okavango River Basin. The Basin is shared by Angola, Botswana and Namibia.

 A two day workshop engaged the broad cross section of participants in discussions about what kind of information people need on basin-wide issues. These include livelihood improvement, water use, pollution, land use change and economic opportunities in the river basin.

Hosted by the OKACOM Secretariat and the Namibia Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the stakeholder integration workshop encouraged participants to exchange experiences and speak about their vision for the future of the river basin.

The aim of the workshop was to come up with an action plan that addressed the concerns and needs of all three countries.

This plan will fit in with the findings of a major research study, the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis, conducted by OKACOM over the past two years . This study, to be released in mid 2010, will provide the scientific evidence to help governments from the three affected countries make joint decisions about planning and management of the river basin for mutual benefit.

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