PRESS STATEMENT

HISTORIC MILESTONE FOR TRANSBOUNDARY WATER GOVERNANCE IN THE LIMPOPO BASIN
…as LIMCOM Prepares to Convene Inaugural Council of Ministers

16 November 2026, Maputo, MOZAMBIQUE — In a landmark achievement for regional water governance, the Limpopo Watercourse Commission (LIMCOM), will host its Inaugural Council of Ministers Meeting in Maputo, Mozambique on 26 November 2026.

This momentous gathering of Ministers responsible for Water Affairs from the Republics of Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe marks the formal establishment of the Council of Ministers as LIMCOM's primary policy and decision-making body.

Article 4 of the LIMCOM Agreement, signed in November 2003, did not include the Council of Ministers. However, in March 2024, Member States agreed to start the process to amend the agreement to formally establish the Council.

The formalization of the Council of Ministers elevates transboundary water management to the highest level of political commitment, reinforcing collective governance, climate resilience and economic integration across the basin. It also fosters closer cooperation for judicious, sustainable, and coordinated management, protection and utilization of shared watercourses in line with the 2000 Revised SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses.

As host nation of the Inaugural Council of Ministers Meeting, Mozambique, represented by the Minister of Public Works, Housing and Water Resources, the Honorable Fernando Rafael, will assume the first LIMCOM Chair and provide guidance on the basin's shared water resources over the coming year. Thereafter, the LIMCOM Chair will rotate annually in alphabetical order among the four Riparian States.

LIMCOM Executive Secretary, Mr. Sergio Sitoe, said that the inauguration of the Council of Ministers represents a transformative leap forward in how to effectively manage shared water resources for present and future generations. "By aligning high-level political leadership with sustainable transboundary basin management, we are ensuring that the basin continues to anchor economic development, environmental protection and community livelihood security for generations to come," he said.

Another major highlight of the Inaugural Council of Ministers Meeting will be the endorsement at the highest political level of the basin Strategic Action Programme (SAP) and the respective National Action Plans (NAPs), building upon the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) for the LRB.

The TDA identified seven major transboundary water challenges impacting ecosystems, livelihoods and socio-economic conditions in the basin. These challenges are Land Degradation; Sedimentation; Declining Availability of Water Resources; Deteriorating Water Quality; Loss of Biodiversity; Weak Transboundary Water Resources Management; and Low Resilience to Extreme Climatic Events.

To address these issues, the SAP outlines practical basin-wide interventions for healthier waterways and stronger regional cooperation, while the NAPs seek to address challenges unique to each of the four Member States, ensuring local priorities feed into basin-wide strategies.

Development of these strategic documents were supported under the project "Integrated Transboundary River Basin Management for the Sustainable Development of the Limpopo River Basin." LIMCOM implemented the project in partnership with the Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA), with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), through funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Ahead of the Council of Ministers meeting, LIMCOM Member States will on 24-25 November 2026 convene several technical meetings to review progress on regional water cooperation. Discussions will among other issues focus on enhancing implementation and investment pathways for the SAP and NAPs, flood forecasting and early warning systems, sustainable water resources and river basin management through resilient investment options, critical measures for a basin frequently threatened by climate-induced droughts and floods.

LIMCOM
The Limpopo Watercourse Commission (LIMCOM) was established through the LIMCOM Agreement signed in November 2003 by the four Member States — Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The main objective of LIMCOM is to advise and "provide recommendations on the uses of the Limpopo, its tributaries and its waters for purposes and measures of protection, preservation and management of the Limpopo." www.limpopocommission.org

Enquiries
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