

Africa is unique in that all continental countries in Africa share one or more river or lake basins with their neighbours and all major river and lake basins in Africa are shared by two or more countries. The continent has over 80 major trans-boundary river and lake basins, some of which are the largest in the world. Some basins are shared by as many as ten countries, and each of the ten major basins is shared by more than four countries. These rivers and lakes, in combination with some large aquifers, offer great opportunity for developing and sharing the full potential of water resources of the region for household needs, hydropower generation, agriculture and aquaculture production, navigation, industrialization and other needs. However, much of this potential remains unexplored as the needed political support, institutional mechanisms and resources for cooperative development and sustainable utilization do not exist in a large number of basins. It is clear that the development goals for Africa cannot be achieved until the international river and lake basins are developed and shared in cooperative, sustainable and equitable ways. AMCOW has recognized River and Lake Basin Organizations (R/LBOs) as important building blocks in fostering proper management of water resources. For better coordination of the work of the River / Lake Basin Organizations, AMCOW has encouraged the formation of the African Network of Basin Organizations (ANBO). Download documents for more on AMCOW work with R/LBOs. Conference of African River and Lake Basin Organizations, Source Book on African River – Lake Basins