

# Resonance

The Newsletter of the Sahara and Sahel Observatory

OSS

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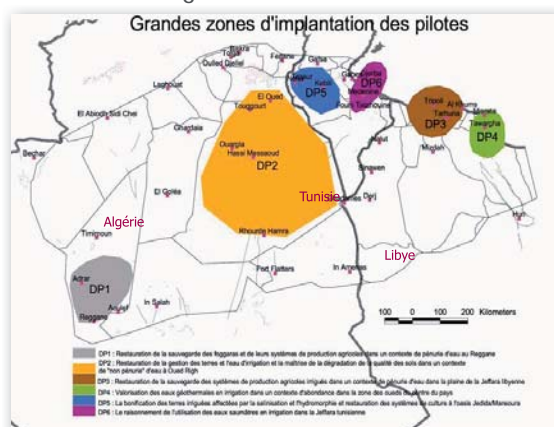
## The North-Western Sahara Aquifer system (NWSAS)

### Launch of the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of phase III of the NWSAS project « Concerted management of North-Western Sahara Aquifer System »

The Executive Secretariat of the OSS has announced the launch of the second Part of the third Phase of the NWSAS project for a «Concerted management of the Northern Sahara Aquifer System, shared by the three countries (Algeria, Libya and Tunisia).

This project, launched in partnership with the African Water facility (AWF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF ) and the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) , should promote the knowledge of socio-economic aspects to lead the development of operational recommendations for local sustainable use of water resources for agriculture and proposals of tangible actions for the decision makers in the

concerned countries. It also aims to underpin action at the regional, national and local levels for the implementation of sustainable development



policies, particularly in the agricultural sector.

It is worth mentioning that the contribution of the AWF in the first phase of the NWSAS project (GeoA-quifer, see box), allowed the design and the implementation of this new project.

The NWSAS project's objectives are the concerted management of the shared water resources and the preservation of the quality of water and soil. This component of Phase III of SASS aims at conducting socio-economic surveys on practices related

### Closing of the 1<sup>st</sup> part of phase III of NWSAS

The OSS held its second meeting of GeoA-quifer Steering Committee, which constitutes the 1st part of Phase III of the SASS Project, on 15-16 November 2009 at the National Agency for Water resources (ANRH), Algiers, Algeria.

Participants submitted reports on technical results, the implemented methodology, the presentation of the financial balance, the summary report and the recommendations. The meeting brought together the representatives of Algeria (ANRH), Libya (GWA), Tunisia (DGRE) and the members of the Steering Committee as well as the OSS experts.

[www.oss-online.org/programmes/Shared water resources/GeoAquifer](http://www.oss-online.org/programmes/Shared%20water%20resources/GeoAquifer)

to irrigated agriculture --which accounts for 70% of total water demand in the basin--, and testing recommendations on the field through 6 pilot sites. The sites will test the feasibility of technical and organizational solutions proposed for constraints such as soil salinization.

With a better knowledge of cultivation and irrigation practices in the surveyed areas and their envi-

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### Our mission

Our partnerships underpin sustainable development in the circum-Saharan by enabling members and network peers to address water management, land degradation and the variabilities of a changing climate.

ronmental impacts, the project will identify the best appropriate areas to serve as a demonstration pilots.

The 6 pilot sites selected with the assistance of the concerned countries are the areas of Kebili and Djeffara (Tunisia), Adrar and Oued Righ (Algeria), Djeffara and Oued Merdoum (Libya).

Each area has a set of specific issues including: soil and ground-water vulnerability, organization, improvement of agricultural practices for a better environmental protection, development of traditional systems for water collection and distribution, water resources protection and crop yield enhancement. Thus, the developed experiences and methods in each of these issues will be capitalized, exchanged between the stakeholders and implemented in all relevant SASS areas.

To ensure the success of the project, the expertise of the OSS and the contribution of national institutions will be combined with those of national and international experts, who will be contributing according to the needs of the surveys •

[www.oss-online.org/programmes/Shared water resources/North-Western Sahara Aquifer System](http://www.oss-online.org/programmes/Shared%20water%20resources/North-Western%20Sahara%20Aquifer%20System)

## The OSS strategic Orientation Committee

*Tunis, October 15 and 16, 2009.*

The preparation of the OSS Strategy for 2020 has been the focus of the proceedings of the 10th Session of the OSS Strategic Orientation Committee (SOC). The discussions focused on various institutional, operational, technical and financial issues ... starting from the as-

essment of the programmes and projects since the implementation of the Strategy 2010 of OSS and

### Each

*day that goes by reminds us of the sheer scale of desertification in circum-Saharan countries.*

*Habib Ben Yahia, General secrétaire de l'Union du Maghreb arabe*

the orientations provided by the SOC members on remote-sensing (Ms. Lefevre-Fonollosa), adaptation to climate change (the OSS Secretariat), combating desertification (Prof. G. Enne), water management (M. O. Salem) and regional integration (Mr. H. Ben Yahia and Mr. M. Touré). A draft roadmap was proposed to develop an outline

H. Ben Yahia (UMA)

Y. Sokona (OSS)

of strategy 2020 which will rely upon the main axes of the strategic planning that resulted from the discussions on the relevant sub-regional and regional issues in the circum-Saharan region. It will also draw on a vision for partnerships and synergies to be induced with the institutions in Africa and beyond... As for adaptation

O. Salem (GWA, Libye),  
H.A. Diallo (GWP)

G. Enne (Italy),  
A. Kallala (OSS)

M. Ismail (UMA), M. Bouchard (Canada),  
M.J. Lefevre-Fonollosa (CNES)

to climate changes, the OSS has a key role to play with the countries that fall within its area of action and may support them in designing and implementing their programmes (capacity building, development of adaptation measures, cost estimate, negotiation support) •

## Activities in brief

### The Tree Day Celebration

*Tunis, 8 November 2009.*

The Association of the Mediterranean Network for Sustainable Development (AREMEDD), chaired by Mr. Mohamed Mehdi Mlika, took the



Y. Sokona (OSS), le représentant de l'ambassade du Mali (Tunis), M. Mlika (AREMEDD)

initiative with the OSS and the AfDB marked tree day with the participation of representatives of diplomatic missions and Civil Society. Children of various nationalities in their traditional dress planted trees which were given various affectionate names related to universal values of respect and solidarity.

### Air and climate

*Gothenburg, 19-21 October 2009.*

The OSS took part, with delegates from other organizations, experts, researchers, policy makers, and private-sector representatives at the workshop organized by the Swedish Government on air pollution and climate change. The participants discussed in particular the interactions between climate change, air pollution and ecosystems, control of sectoral policies, options for developing countries, international platforms and costs and benefits of Air-Climate integrated approaches ... Air pollution and climate change have common causes and combined impacts on human health and therefore requires a global vision.

Global Atmospheric Pollution Forum (GAP Forum) held the meeting of its Steering Committee on the fringes of the Air & Climate Conference.



# African Consultation on climate change

*Addis Ababa, 15-23 October 2009.*

The OSS participated in two major African events on the eve of the next Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 15, Copenhagen, December 2009): the consultative meeting on the draft conceptual framework of Central African programmes on Climate Change (15-17 October) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the African panel of high level experts on Climate Change (October 21 to 23). The purpose of these meetings was to review the process of developing a framework to identify mitigation and adaptation programmes to climate change, to enhance the knowledge of experts on the topics under negotiation on a comprehensive post-2012 international regime on climate change. The recommendations of these meetings will be presented at an AMCEN special meeting to be held in Copenhagen on the evening of the meeting of the high-level segment of COP15.

It is worth mentioning that OSS has contributed, in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), to reviewing and analyzing work of the negotiation text under discussion by the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long Term Cooperative Action. OSS presented the preliminary results of this work to the



A. Touré & D. Amwata (Research-Development Programme, OSS)

high-level experts' panel in Addis Ababa during the African pre-COP meeting. It noted that some aspects could be addressed through the draft African framework programme on climate change, the opportunities to be seized and the topics that may be subject to negotiation, upon which Africa should position itself to protect its interests.

The OSS is strategically positioned to support countries in developing approaches and methodologies to assess the costs and the benefits of climate change adaptation in Africa •

## Water resources management

### Remote sensing to support water management

*Abu Dhabi, 25-27 October 2009.*

The OSS participated in the training programme organized by the Arab Academy for Water in partnership with NASA and the Office of Middle East Programs, USAID\*, on the use of remote sensing for water management

held in Abu Dhabi from October 25 to 27, 2009. This training brought

\* United States Agency for International Development

The GAP Forum supports the OSS and the UNEP in organizing a sub regional workshop\* on better air quality in North Africa vision globale •

### Better Air Quality in North Africa

The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) are jointly organising, with support of the Tunisian Ministry for Environment and Sustainable Development, a sub-regional workshop on improving air quality in the North African region to be held on 23-25 November 2009 in Tunis, Tunisia.

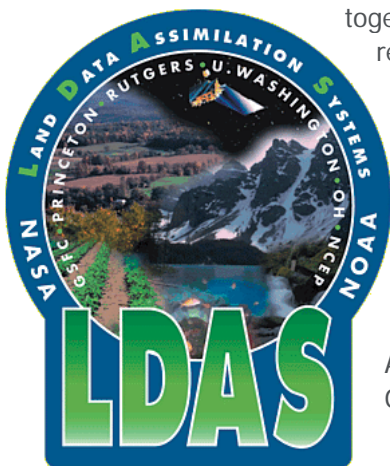
This workshop builds on the Better Air Quality process for Africa that has led to the adoption of framework agreements to address air pollution in the Southern, Eastern, West and Central Africa regions in 2008/09.

The main objectives of the workshop are to foster scientific and technical cooperation on air pollution management in the North African region; to discuss long-range transboundary air pollution; to review national priorities, policies and achievements on air pollution abatement; and propose concrete steps to address air pollution from key sectors. Partnership opportunities to implement some of the recommendations will also be identified. The outcomes of this workshop will be presented for consideration to Ministers and senior environment and economic officials at a high-level meeting to be convened in early 2010.

To download the flyer : [www.oss-online.org](http://www.oss-online.org)

### L'OSS is participating...

••• in the training session Gender / Equality between women and



together remote sensing specialists representing major national and regional centres from Arab countries.

The contribution of remote sensing to the monitoring and the management of water resources has been part of recent OSS activities. The Observatory has played an important role in two projects of the European Space Agency (ESA), namely Aquifer and GeoAquifer. Aquifer (2004 - 2007) was intended to provide spatial data on the Northwestern Sahara Aquifer System (SASS) and the

Iullemeden Aquifer System (IAS) from satellites ERS and ENVISAT of the ESA for the management and monitoring of these groundwater resources. GeoAquifer, which ends in 2009, has helped develop a set of digital maps at various scales and dates of land use in the area of NWSAS and field digital models in eleven pilot areas.

This training provided an opportunity to learn about the adapted version of the model developed by NASA and its contribution to the region, particularly in water resources management. This version will use satellite NASA data, field observations of Arab countries, weather analysis and provide estimates of hydrological conditions, flows... and generate projected water balances.

Various aspects were reviewed:

- Evolution of surface patterns with a few illustrative examples;
- Data required for the functioning of the model;
- Prospects for its use by Arab countries;
- Technical and IT Pre-requisites for its installation and use.

The emphasis was placed upon the products which will support decision making processes.

## Transboundary Water Resources Management

*Tunis, 26-30 October 2009.*

The OSS participated in the seminar organized by the Africa Multilateral Institute and the Institute of African Development of the African Development Bank (ADB), in cooperation with the African Water Facility (AWF) and the ADB's Water and Sanitation Department, on the management of transboundary water resources. It was a crucial issue and a key challenge to improve the situation and the governance of water on the continent to which it is important to sensitize policy makers and technical managers at the regional level. The OSS focused its interventions on groundwater management in the context of variability induced by climate change, management of data on shared groundwater, the creation of a common information system for countries sharing a resource, technical, scientific and possibly political constraints. The OSS developed within the context of some of its projects-- particularly those related to the Northwestern Sahara Aquifer System and the Iullemeden Aquifer System--tools for information sharing, including mapping servers (GeoOSS, GeoSASS), databases, a virtual library, a virtual training platform, a virtual globe... •

men organized by the Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (Canada) and the Foundation for International Training (FIT) from 3 to 5 November 2009 at the OSS headquarters in Tunis. The objective was to study ways and means to integrate the issues of gender equality in strategic planning;

••• In a workshop on vulnerability assessment of transboundary freshwater (surface water and groundwater) to climate change, organized by UNEP, UNESCO and the Water Research Commission from 4 to 6 November 2009, in Pretoria, South Africa...

••• in the 2<sup>nd</sup> African Water Week held from 9 to 13 November 2009 in Johannesburg, South Africa...;

••• in the training workshop on environmental assessment to combat desertification and adaptation to climate change from November 16 to 21 2009 in Marrakech, Morocco...;

••• in the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Africa Soil Science Society on "Soils and new challenges for sustainable development" in Africa from 22 to 28 November 2009 in Yaoundé, Cameroon...;

••• in the sub-regional training workshop on identification and risk management, organized by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the Economic Community of West African States in, Dakar (Senegal) from 25 to 27 November 2009.

**Resonance** is a monthly newsletter issued by the Sahara and Sahel Observatory. OSS

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