

CONCEPT NOTES



INMACOM

THE 8th INTERNATIONAL
REMCO CONFERENCE
Maputo, 03-07 November
2025



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The River and Environmental Management Cooperation (REMCO) initiative is a collaborative framework between water management institutions in three countries: South Africa, Eswatini, and Mozambique, with a primary focus on the Incomati and Usuthu River Basins. REMCO was initiated and developed to endorse the resolutions of the Transboundary Water Resources Management Conference held in Germany in 2009. The aim is to enhance the management of the Incomati (South Africa, Mozambique, and Eswatini) and the Vecht (Germany and the Netherlands) transboundary river basins. REMCO seeks to strengthen the capacity of the existing governance structures for the Incomati-Maputo Basins through the established Incomati and Maputo Water Course Commission.

The REMCO initiative serves as a dialogue enabler to harmonise management actions in the Incomati and Maputo River Basins. This dialogue will facilitate the implementation of the Inco-Maputo Agreement, enhancing cooperation in the management of the river systems. It aims to acknowledge the shared resource and the need for institutions operating locally, while acknowledging the national interests and sovereignty of the riparian countries.

The main objective of REMCO is to create an effective platform for river basin institutions to exchange knowledge about operational methods and practices. REMCO aims to foster co-learning and enhance cooperation between river basin institutions and other water management institutions. Stakeholder consensus is driven through informed participation and consensus, taking cognisance of the points listed below.

- a. Cooperation on the operational management of the Incomati and Maputo River Basins.
- b. Coordinate and align the implementation of the products and projects developed through the Progressive Realisation of the Inco-Maputo Agreement (PRIMA) programme.
- c. Develop an approach that seeks decision, discussion, or consensus.
- d. Coordinate pertinent operational activities to manage transboundary water resources.
- e. Identify and develop projects that benefit the basins or aim to enhance existing projects.
- f. Facilitate stakeholder involvement of vulnerable groups, water user associations, farmers and other interested and affected parties.

THE 8th INTERNATIONAL REMCO CONFERENCE, 2025

The 2025 REMCO Conference will take place in Maputo City, Mozambique, from November 3rd to 7th, 2025, hosting approximately 150 delegates from at least five countries: Mozambique, Eswatini, South Africa, the Netherlands, and Germany.

It will commence with dedicated sessions for “Women and Youth in Water”, who are often marginalised and under-represented in water-related discussions and operations. This aims to ensure that they are afforded a substantial opportunity to share their perspectives, experiences, and innovative ideas.

The inclusion of women acknowledges their crucial roles as water managers, caretakers, and decision-makers in households, communities, and organisations. Elevating women in water-related sectors promotes gender equality, enhances water governance, and leads to more sustainable solutions. Similarly, involving youth recognises their potential as change agents and future leaders who can bring fresh insights, creativity, and technological advancements to effectively address water challenges. Fostering the active participation of women and youth in water conferences and operations can promote inclusivity, diversity, and intergenerational collaboration, ultimately leading to a brighter and more equitable water future.

The theme of the 2025 REMCO Conference is: **“Enhancing Resilience and Water Governance in Transboundary River Basins.”**

There will be six sub-themes under the main theme, which are:

- a) Strengthening Community-led Approaches in Transboundary Water Governance;
- b) Strengthening Digital Cooperation Among Riparian States;
- c) Sustainable Financing for Transboundary Water Security;
- d) Real-time data sharing for Transboundary Early Warning Systems for Extreme Events
- e) Transboundary Water Resources Protection; and
- f) Encourage the integration of scientific knowledge produced by academia into political decision-making and water management policies.

The conference will include a working session on the role of REMCO within the Inco-Maputo Basins. It will feature presentations, technical sessions, group discussions, and interpretation services to facilitate effective communication and engagement. The main objectives of the technical sessions and group discussions are as follows:

- a. Identify common challenges and recommend solutions.
- b. Strengthen cooperation amongst countries with the shared basins.
- c. Build stronger linkages through networking and sharing of experiences.
- d. Enhance understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the REMCO and inform stakeholders about the current cooperative actions with the supporting countries.

The critical role of REMCO

Over the past decade, the Southern African region has been significantly impacted by several droughts and floods, leading to decreased water availability in the major rivers of the basin. This has resulted in shortages of the domestic water supply, as well as in agriculture and other sectors where water is a key production factor. Furthermore, there are reports of cattle losses and pockets of hunger in some communities.

During this period, flash floods were also recorded in the Incomati River Basin in February 2023, highlighting the need for open discussion about reviewing the Forecasting and Early Warning System for Floods, including hydrological models, as we remain unprepared to handle flash floods, given that the basin has never experienced such a situation before. The role of REMCO in this instance was critical for ensuring better management practices in the Incomati River Basin and facilitating the decision-making process, as the REMCO platform operates within an initiative and collaborative framework supported by operational entities from the countries (ARA-Sul IP, JRBA, and IUCMA).

The 2025 8th International REMCO Conference

The expectation of the 8th REMCO International conference, whose theme is "Enhancing Resilience and Water Governance in Transboundary River Basin," is to consolidate the participatory management of water resources and bring the platform closer to the stakeholders. It will explore how collaborative strategies, and innovative technologies can improve the management of shared water resources in the face of increasing environmental pressures, fostering stronger collaborative relationships between countries that share river basins, promoting joint management, sustainable practices, and facilitating networking opportunities that allow delegates to exchange knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned in transboundary water management.

There is no registration fee; however, speakers and delegates are responsible for their own travel and accommodation. For your convenience, a list of accommodation options will be provided".

Delegates are encouraged to complete the attached registration form to secure their place. Participation from water users in the Maputo and Incomati basins, as well as academics, NGOs, and other institutions with an interest in the water sector, is welcome.