



INTER COLLECTIVITE DU SOUROU
*Actions intégrées pour le développement durable
 de la vallée du Sourou au Mali*

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Integrated and Sustainable Development Programme for the Sourou in Mali and its Strategic Environmental Assessment (PDIDS/EES) - Summary

The Sourou area in the Mopti region in Mali (Figure 1), the most northern part of the Volta Basin has a considerable potential in terms of water resources, food production, and biodiversity (Ramsar site). The main challenges in the dry and humid parts of the area are security, water and other related natural resources management, poverty and unemployment, food and nutrition insecurity, climate change, population growth, land cover degradation and loss of biodiversity. To a lesser extent, ground and surface water pollution, pollution by various types of waste, and water-borne diseases. In addition, impoverishment of soil fertility is continuing in the dry zone.

The need for equitable sharing of the natural resources of the Sourou River basin, responding to the numerous challenges mentioned above, and valorising sustainably the enormous potential of the area were the reasons for the creation of the Inter Community of the Sourou (ICS). The ICS consists of 26 communes and the Prefectures (“Cercles”) of Bankass, Koro, and Douentza, as formalized by a decree of Mopti’s Governor as part of the decentralization process in Mali.

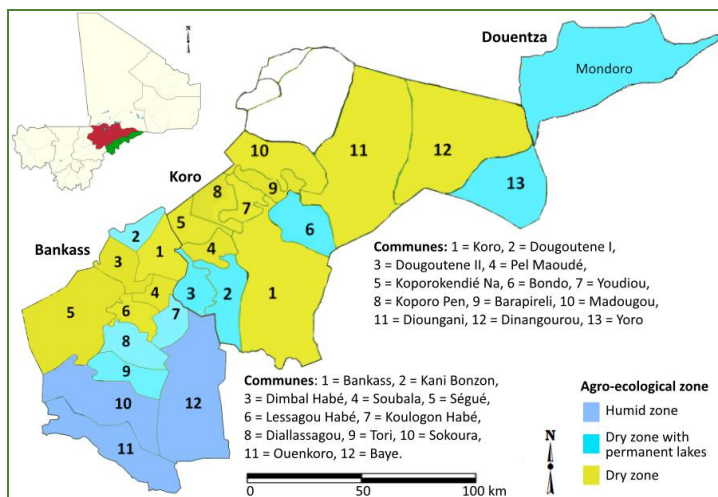


Figure 1. The three prefectures with the 26 communes being the Inter Community of the Sourou, and their agroecological zones. Inlay: location of the Mopti Region in Mali (in red) and the Sourou zone in the Mopti Region (in green).

The ICS decided to prepare a people-owned integrated and sustainable development program for the Sourou through a participatory approach of Integrated Water Resource Management / Natural Resource Management and to ensure its political guidance and implementation. The result is the **Integrated and Sustainable Development Programme for the Sourou with its Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**, abbreviated from its French name to **PDIDS/EES**.



In this way, all sustainable development goals (SDGs) including those promoted by the Malian SEA Decree, are already integrated into the planning process right from the beginning. A unifying program such as PDIDS/EES, where the ICS provides guidance and leadership coupled with the effective participation of the population, and the continued search for synergy and alignment of existing and future projects, are the way forward to overcome the major challenges of the Sourou area. The participatory and transparent planning process meets the requirements of the SEA, as accounted for in Volume 2 of the PDIDS/EES. The validation of a SEA and obtaining the environmental authorization from MEADD (Ministry of Environment) are required before the implementation any program.

The PDIDS/EES is aligned with achieving the objectives and implementation of the signed and ratified international agreements and conventions by Mali, the major strategic documents of West Africa, and the bilateral strategic documents between Mali and the Burkina Faso (concerning the Sourou). The PDIDS/EES also considers the CREDD (that operationalises the SDGs in Mali) and other laws, decrees and strategic documents of Mali (e.g. SRAT and SDAGE). Considering transboundary aspects provides additional opportunities to gain and exchange experiences in the elaboration of an integrated and sustainable development program dovetailed with its SEA.



The **vision of the PDIDS/EES** for 2029 for the Sourou area is: *"Contribute to the well-being of the population and the maintenance of the ecological integrity of Sourou aligned with the goals of the Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development (CREDD) and the Sustainable Development Goals in general"*.

The **main objective of the PDIDS/EES** is: *"By 2029, the 29 territories of the Sourou Basin have improved their livelihoods through the development of socio-economic and environmental activities in order to strengthen their resilience to climate change"*.

By its PDIDS, the ICS has decided, in dialogue with its population, to invest in a modern and peaceful future for the Sourou area, making the most efficient use of existing natural resources, and taking climate change into consideration. Traditional production systems will gradually be innovated and contribute to value chains at the scale of Mopti region, West Africa, and beyond.

For the duration of the PDIDS (2019-2029), several initial strategic axes have been validated by all stakeholders including those of Burkina Faso, and they address all the sectors of socio-economic and environmental development. According to social, economic and environmental criteria, 9 strategic axes were prioritized for the period 2019-2024, with 6 key transversal axes allowing for cross-cutting actions to improve the quality of the other 9. To consider spatial variability in the Sourou, two agro-ecological zones (wetlands and the dry zone) with and without permanent lakes (figure 1) were distinguished.

The strategic axes are: Peace and security, Improved access, Agriculture, Livestock, Fishing and aquaculture, Environment-NRM & biodiversity, Health, Drinking water, hygiene & sanitation (WASH), and Energy. The cross-cutting axes are: Climate Change, (Transboundary) Water Resources, Gender, Land tenure, and Governance and M&E. Each strategic axe is presented by *a*) its medium-term (2025-2029) and short-term (2019-2024) objectives, *b*) the justification for the choice of actions, based on

the SEA, and c) specific actions in time to achieve its objectives in relation to the outcomes required to achieve the objectives.

For the SEA, the pivotal stages in the evaluation of the potential effects of the actions of the PDIDS were: *a)* considering two agroecological zones (wetlands and dry zone), *b)* the effective participation of the population, the direct beneficiaries of the PDIDS, at all stages and in particular the validation of the selection criteria for the actions per constraint and strategic axis, *c)* the inventory of several actions as a solution to the constraints predefined by the ICS's technical Regional Planning and Evaluation Team (EPER), *d)* the decision-making in selecting the proposed actions, and *e)* the SEA analysis on those actions coupled with their required mitigation measures, if any (volume 2, Chapter 4).

It emerged from the analyses that the **development scenario without the PDIDS** will lead to *i)* the continued overexploitation of resources, *ii)* the deterioration of basic social indicators, and *iii)* the proliferation of inter and intra-community conflicts. The consequence soon will be the collapse of the ecosystem. Failure to implement such a unifying program would impede the achievement of the objectives of the SDGs, the CREDD and other existing development strategies in the Mopti region. Moreover, the creation of the inter-community of 26 communes and 3 Prefectures would become useless, because the mechanism to direct and guide them will not exist. Finally, without the PDIDS, the synergy and alignment necessary for the sustainable development of the area will be difficult to achieve without significant losses of time and financial resources.

The analysis of the **development scenario with the PDIDS**, for which the ICS is the authority and guidance provider, allowed the choice of promising alternative solutions (actions) by sector and strategic axis, integrating as much as possible the innovations for sustainability. Subsequently, the impacts of the actions on the seven environmental components were established, and their positive and negative impacts with the mitigation measures were deduced. Finally, the risks were identified for each strategic axis.



The various analyses of the different strategic axes revealed that the implementation of the selected actions will contribute in achieving the objectives of the PDIDS, CREDD and SDGs through the respect of the sustainable and integrated development standards. This includes, among others, reaching food and nutritional self-sufficiency, job creation for women and youth, income generation, protection and conservation of biodiversity, reduction of inter and intra community conflicts, and the return of peace and security.

The organization of the implementation of the PDIDS/EES will be under the guidance and responsibility of the ICS with a political directorate and a directorate to daily supervise the implementation of the activities. The latter will be the support mechanism (manager-operator type, funded by the Dutch Embassy) that manages the funds, the technical aspects of the activities, and train the ICS in various disciplines. For the monitoring and evaluation of the PDIDS/EES, the ICS will rely on the existing monitoring and evaluation units of the regional offices of the various ministries. These units will report to the ICS on the progress of the projects, the difficulties encountered and the corrective measures to be taken through periodic activity reports, and field visits. Mid-term (5 years) and final (10 years) evaluations of the PDIDS with its EES will be carried out by independent organisations.

The PDIDS / EES requires an investment of about M € 292.3 (equivalent to 190 milliards F CFA). The population is ready to contribute to this investment. In addition to the contribution from existing and planned development projects, private investments are being planned.

The main expected impacts (outcomes) are: *a)* an increased number of jobs (28.000 permanent jobs and around 179,850 temporary), *b)* capacity building in different professional sectors to obtain jobs and to produce more efficiently, sustainably and of higher quality, and *c)* to consider and respect the various laws and regulations to better own and live the basic principles of environmental protection (biodiversity) and sustainability.

In conclusion: Implementing the PDIDS/EES will equally benefit current and future generations of all communities of the basin without drastically overturning traditional ways of life. Ecological and cultural values will be preserved as economic assets and for their own sake.

The ICS firmly believes that, with the support of the international water management authorities, the national government, and technical and financial partners (TFP), it will be able to create a platform to direct the activities and accelerate the operationalisation of its vision while reducing causes of social tension and conflict in the short term. The ICS invites investors (state, TFP and private) who recognizes themselves in the PDIDS, to use the PDIDS as a framework to endorse their investment proposals. To that end, the ICS will update the PDIDS together with an update of the SEA as circumstances require and will ask for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) at project level that are now part and parcel of the planning process in Mali.

The ICS with their permanent office in Bankass has taken its authority and leading role to manage this process. It will remain in permanent contact with all stakeholders for a better and more secure future of the people in the Sourou.

The PDIDS/EES is published in four parts

1. Volume 1 (PDIDS) presents the program as such with the following content: *a)* the challenges of the area (baseline), *b)* the justifications of the program (the decisions taken and the "why" of the Strategic Axes), *c)* preliminary actions for the second phase (2025-2029) and *d)* detailed actions for the first phase (2019-2024). The latter were defined in close collaboration with the population and civil organizations under guidance and leadership of the Inter community of the Sourou (ICS) while using the results of the SEA (Volume 2). This will allow the ICS to make its first decisions through the PDIDS version 1.0 including 'no-regrets actions' that has also been formulated;
2. Volume 2 (SEA) presents the explanations and justifications of the actions proposed in the PDIDS based on the environmental assessment process, the validation of the actions with the populations, and their finetuning through describing the mitigation measures to avoid the adverse effects of the proposed actions. This volume represents the environmental impact report required by the SEA-decree issued by the Malian government.
3. Volume 3 (Diagnosis) presents the data (mainly based on own field surveys among the population and historic statistical data), the detailed analyses for determining the required actions for the different agroecological zones, and the detailed budget and planning by EPER. The presented data are results of updates after the validation workshops held with the population and civil societies.
4. Volume 4 (Synergy & Alignment) presents an overview of four types of development programmes and projects of third parties in relation to the strategic axes of the PDIDS: *a)* in the Malian part of the Sourou, *b)* in the part of Burkina Faso, *c)* as cross-border project, and *d)* outside the Sourou area, with the potential that their results can contribute to the implementation of the PDIDS. This progress report provides preliminary options for a better collaboration between programs and projects to boost their collective impact. Projects not yet included in this volume are invited to send their project information sheet (available via the website www.souroumali.org) to ICS.

