

STATEMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BIO-PLATEAUX PROJECT



Conclusions of the BIO-PLATEAUX Conference

The water resources and associated aquatic biodiversity within both transboundary basins of the Oyapock River (shared between French Guiana and Brazil) and the Maroni River (shared between French Guiana and Suriname) constitute an essential natural capital. In order to promote the sustainable development and the conservation of such a wealthy ecosystem, cooperation between bordering countries is an asset for facilitating dialogue and develop mutual knowledge.

As part of the Interreg Amazon Cooperation Program 2014-2020, the BIO-PLATEAUX Conference for the Transboundary Articulation of Water Management and Biodiversity, held on November 26, 2019, discussed the transboundary issues about water and biodiversity associated to aquatic environments in the Maroni and Oyapock rivers.

More specifically, the following three topics were highlighted during the exchanges at the Conference:

- Improving knowledge and information sharing, for a better cross-border cooperation for management of water and aquatic biodiversity;
- The stakes of knowledge about pollution, their consequences and their control;
- The prevention of natural risks.

This statement is a conclusion to these debates, aiming to propose guidelines for future work on these topics within the framework of the BIO-PLATEAUX project.

Considering

- The challenges related to water resources management and exceptional biodiversity in both transboundary basins of the Maroni River (Guyana/Suriname) and the Oyapock River (Guyana/ Amapa), including tributaries located on each sides of the borders;
- The similar and often shared challenges related to economic, social and environmental development in the three transboundary countries, which require better anticipation, risk management and raise awareness on the importance of preserving biodiversity;
- The importance of enhanced cross-border cooperation to better understand these territories and their abundant but fragile natural resources, in particular to share information, protect the water resources and aquatic biodiversity, prevent and control pollution as well as the risks of floods;
- Demographics evolution, anthropic pressure, the development of activities which impact water resources management and, more generally, aquatic biodiversity, which are, by nature, issues shared by transboundary countries;

- The need to adapt quickly to the effects of climate change in the region and its consequences on natural resources of the area;
- The methodological interest of the processes and tools developed in the European Union for the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and other directives related to water and biodiversity;
- The role of transboundary coordination authorities, including the Transboundary Commission with Brazil (CMT) and the Maroni and Oyapock River Councils;
- The relative complexity of the institutional landscape in each countries, the multiplicity of actors producing data, the heterogeneity and dispersion of the information, the absence of a global decision support tool, which are all challenges for sustainable management ;
- That a correct quantitative and qualitative knowledge of water resources and the aquatic biodiversity, as well as the monitoring of their evolution over time, is a necessary condition to their sustainable management and durability.

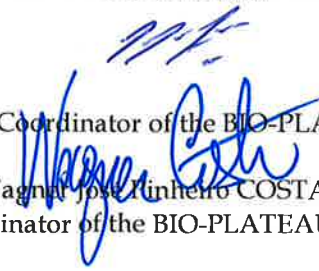
The partners support the following orientations

1. A better characterization of water resources and aquatic biodiversity is recommended in both river basin, by the strengthening of environmental monitoring, knowledge on quantity and quality, including by using advanced technologies such as space hydrology;
2. The sharing of available information, experiences and knowledge is essential to support the decision-making. It can be implemented through common produced data valuation tools (online platform, metadata catalogs, etc.). It can also be promoted through regular meetings between technical actors and data producers on transboundary basins;
3. Implementation of the BIO-PLATEAUX project should be progressive in order to ensure ownership for the actors and strengthen common trust. Therefore, pilot actions should be implemented on data production and homogenization, training, information and knowledge sharing.
4. In a long term perspective, the existence of a cross-border Observatory on water resources, conceived as a place for knowledge and experiences sharing, would facilitate the development of a sustainable exchange framework adapted to stakeholders needs;
5. The partners emphasize on the pertinence of a wide publicity for promoting the conference conclusions, both to inform the populations and actors and to support the adhesion to the project.

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Mrs. Myriane INIMOD
Director of the French Guiana Water Office (OEG)


Mr. Riad NURMOHAMED
Coordinator of the BIO-PLATEAUX project, Anton de Kom University of Suriname (AdeKUS)


Mr. Wagner José Figueira COSTA
Coordinator of the BIO-PLATEAUX project, Amapa Development Agency (Agencia Amapa)

Mr. Eric TARDIEU
General Director of the International Office for Water (IOWater)

