

Theme 8: Environment - Monitoring and management

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THE LEADERSHIP AND WATER GOVERNANCE CONUNDRUM:

AFRICA'S PERSPECTIVE

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During the past four decades, the impact of leadership styles on organizational performance has been a topic of interest among academics and practitioners (Cannella and Rowe, 1995; Giambatista, 2004; Rowe *et al.*, 2005). Perhaps the most prominent reason for this interest is the widespread belief that leadership can affect the performance of organizations (Rowe *et al.*, 2005). The style of leadership adopted is considered by some researchers to be particularly important in achieving organizational goals, and in evoking performance among subordinates. (Barling *et al.*, 1996; Berson *et al.*, 2001).

Despite the widespread acknowledgment of the importance of leadership, it is striking that the concept of leadership lacks coherence within Integrated Watershed Management (IWM) in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). A watershed is one of the few natural phenomena that we can accurately map. Water moves from the boundaries to the middle and from the top to the bottom. Anything that is done upstream has implications downstream. In many ways watersheds are logical spatial units and are ideal entities for natural resource management because, it is only when managed well that they can deliver real environmental and economical benefits.

To the contrary, watersheds in Africa are not managed; rather, they are just used. This observation raises water governance challenges. It is not surprising therefore that within this nexus these watersheds in SSA, which are huge drainage basins, have been characterized by a host of problems such as inappropriate farming practices, deforestation, pollution, sanitation, conflicts, which not only impact negatively on the populations of the region but also on the ecosystem. Given the fact that these watersheds are huge and well spread such as Lake Victoria basin, the Nile basin, the Zambezi river basin, the Pangani river basin, the Congo River basin etc; coupled with global concerns over climate change, water governance becomes a global concern which cannot be swept under the carpet.

Furthermore, at the national and regional level there is no coherence in water governance policies which spill water problems in one country to another and hence a multiplier effect. Consequently, the sociopolitical and economical turmoil that has bedeviled the region seems to be inextricably linked with