For Inclusive and
Sustainable Management
of the Logone River

Achievements and Challenges of the Moundou Protocol

From Diagnosis to Roadmap.
Progress to Date, and the Way
Forward.

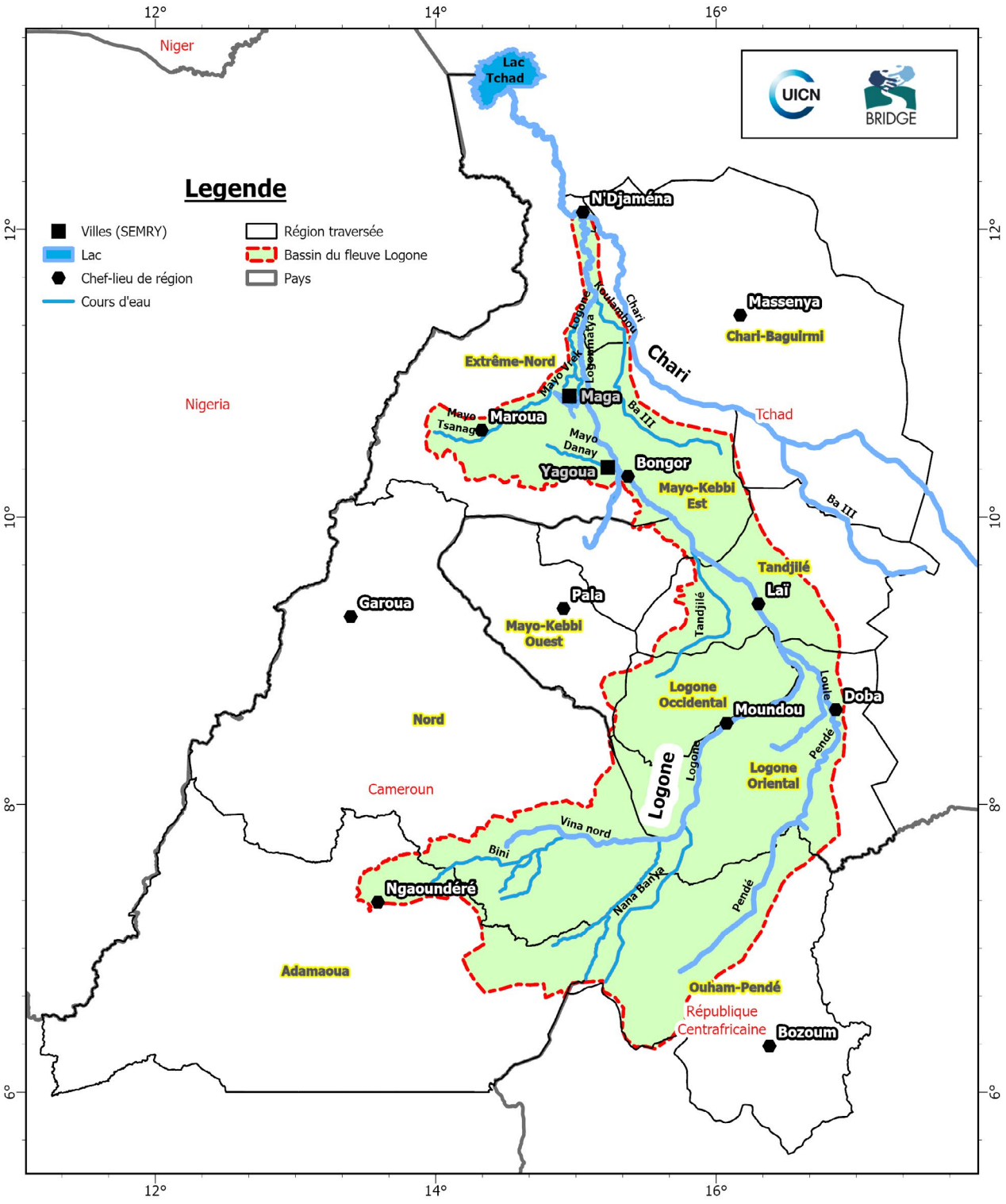


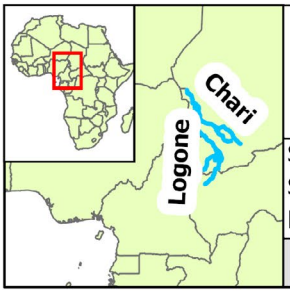
BRIEFING NOTE

UICN
BRIDGE
Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

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FLEUVE LOGONE

Source: OpenStreet map 2022
Systeme de coordonnées: WGS 84
Localisation: Afrique centrale

2025

SUMMARY

More than fifty years after its signing, the Cameroon–Chad Protocol of Agreement on hydraulic developments on the Logone River, known as the Moundou Protocol is under the spotlight.

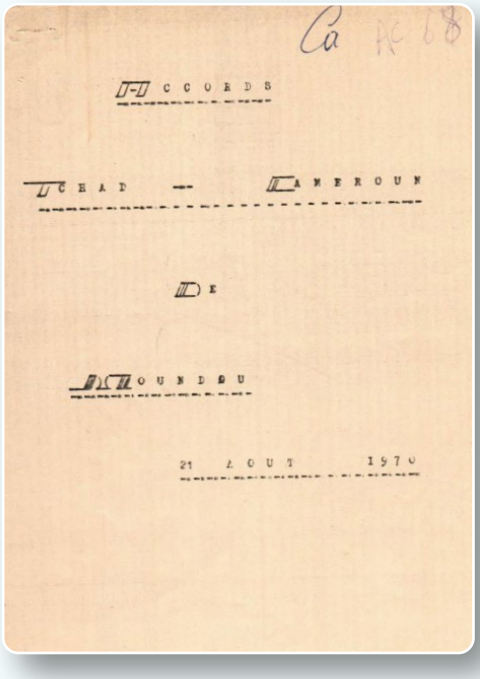
Over the decades, this Protocol has helped structure transboundary dialogue, reduce tensions among water users, and promote practices of technical consultation, anticipating contemporary approaches to hydro-diplomacy in the Logone Basin.

However, changes in the hydrological, environmental, and political context have revealed limitations in both the implementation and the scope of this instrument.

Current challenges, such as increased pressure on water resources, climate change, and emerging new uses, now go beyond the Protocol's original framework, calling for strategic orientations and adaptive pathways aligned with the present and future realities of the Logone basin.

INTRODUCTION

The Cameroon–Chad Protocol of Agreement on hydraulic developments on the Logone River, signed in Moundou on 21 August 1970, constitutes a landmark in transboundary cooperation on water resources management in Central Africa. By establishing common rules for the use of the river and creating a Joint Commission responsible for its oversight, the goal is to ensure equitable sharing of the resource and to preserve an ecological flow essential to the ecosystems and riparian communities.



Based on principles of consultation, notification of hydraulic developments, and joint monitoring of impacts, the Protocol laid the groundwork for integrated water resources management. It aimed to prevent conflicts over water use and to promote development and stability in the Logone Basin, the principal tributary of Lake Chad.

More than half a century after its adoption, hydrological, socio-economic, and institutional contexts have evolved significantly. The intensification of water uses, the impacts of climate change, and the emergence of new challenges underscore the need for a comprehensive assessment of the continued relevance and effectiveness of the Moundou Protocol

It is within this context that the present synthesis report has been prepared, based on an extensive documentary review, including reports of the Multisectoral Working Group (MWG), national and regional dialogue, concept notes, and the diagnostic study dedicated to the Moundou Agreement. These consultation processes have been led by IUCN since 2021 under the BRIDGE project, involving institutional and technical stakeholders from Cameroon and Chad. This approach makes it possible to coherently reflect the exchanges, consensus, and lessons learned from the consultation processes, and to lay the foundations for a shared roadmap addressing both longstanding and emerging challenges in the Logone Basin.

Purpose of This Document

1. Report on the multi-stakeholder dialogue processes undertaken to assess the Moundou Agreement Protocol;
2. Present the shared recommendations and joint roadmap that emerged from these consultations;
3. Provide a consolidated presentation of the key arguments justifying the need to modernize the Moundou Agreement Protocol;
4. Identify the critical next steps required to effectively advance advocacy for the agreement update process.

The Moundou Protocol of Agreement : From Diagnosis to the Roadmap

1970: What's Next?
Signing of the Chad–Cameroon Protocol of Agreement

2021-2024
Consultation, Information, and Awareness-Raising.

2024
Establishment of a Multisectoral Working Group (MWG) in Chad

2025
Roadmap Development for the Revision of the Moundou Protocol

Moundou Protocol of Agreement

Objectives of Information Sharing and Awareness-Raising Actions

- Inform: key stakeholders about the limitations of the existing Protocol;
- Bring together: stakeholders around a common vision for its revision;
- Develop: an operational roadmap to modernize the framework for cooperation.

Stakeholders Involved

- National institutions: Line ministries in charge of Water, Foreign Affairs, Environment, Agriculture, among others (Cameroon and Chad);
- Regional organizations: Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC);
- Technical and financial partners: International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Global Water Partnership – Central Africa (GWP-CAF);
- Civil society and universities: CSOs, researchers, and technical experts.

Key Actions Implemented

- Diagnostic Study
- Reflection Workshops and Regional Consultations
- Establishment of a Multisectoral Working Group (MWG)

Next Steps

- Finalize the terms of reference for a joint field mission;
- Strengthen the joint consultation framework between the two countries to guide the revision process of the Agreement;
- Prepare a draft revised protocol.

Outcomes Achieved

- Consensus on the need to revise the Protocol to integrate current climate-related challenges and issues related to the governance of shared water resources;
- Adoption of a roadmap with priority actions either completed (2023–2024) or planned;
- Strengthened cooperation between Cameroon and Chad;
- Effective awareness-raising among political and technical decision-makers.

PART I

SITUATION ANALYSIS (1970-2025)

The Logone River is one of the main tributaries of Lake Chad. It rises on the Adamawa Plateau in Cameroon and flows toward Chad from the point known as the 'Duck's Beak' ('Bec de canard') until its confluence with the Chari River. A source of life, agriculture, and trade, the Logone river has long brought together populations that share a common history, the same needs, and the same challenges.

Aware of their interdependence with regard to the Logone, Cameroon and Chad signed the Protocol of Agreement on hydraulic developments on the river in Moundou on 20 August 1970, with the aim of jointly managing this vital resource and making it a lever for agricultural, livestock, and fisheries development.

1. A Landmark Agreement

The Moundou Protocol of Agreement was intended to provide a framework for hydraulic developments on the Logone River (Article 1). It sets water withdrawal quotas for agricultural irrigation particularly rice farming and specifies the periods during which water abstraction is permitted (Preamble, Article 1).

> **"The Chad–Cameroon Joint Commission referred to in Article 9 above is entrusted with the implementation of this Agreement and shall convene at least once per year for any possible revisions." (Article 10 du Protocole de Moundou)**

Shortly after independence, Cameroon and Chad sought through this Agreement to jointly harness the resources of the Logone River in order to develop rice farming, agriculture, and transport, while preventing conflicts over water use related to the sharing of this resource. To this end, the Protocol establishes rules governing water abstraction and use of the Logone River (Articles 3 and 7, Preamble).

Several decades later, significant progress has been achieved.

1.1. First official cooperation framework between Cameroon and Chad

The Moundou Protocol provided the **first bilateral legal basis** allowing both States to engage in dialogue on the use of the Logone River, formally establishing the sharing of this transboundary resource for the first time.

1.2. Improved shared understanding of hydrological issues

Through the Protocol, the two countries established the basis for data and information sharing on the :

- Logone River's flow;
- flood and low-flow patterns;
- the impacts of water abstraction.

This helped reduce misunderstandings and ensured that technical discussions were informed by a common data base.

1.3. Regulation of Cameroon's water abstractions for irrigation (SEMRY)

The Protocol enabled :

- the definition of abstraction volumes,
- the regulation of withdrawal schedules,
- and the protection of downstream uses, particularly in Chad.

This facilitated the development of irrigated rice cultivation while reducing transboundary tensions.

1.4. Preservation of the ecological flow of the Logone River

Although monitoring has not always been optimal, the Protocol's core principle (preserving a minimum flow for downstream communities) has guided hydraulic practices and remained a reference point for several decades.

1.5. Mitigation of local tensions over water use

The establishment of a bilateral framework has :

- reduced mistrust among border communities;
- limited conflicts between fishers , farmers, and herders;
- improved understanding of the causes of variations in the river's flow.

1.6. Progressive strengthening of transboundary dialogue

The Protocol laid the foundations for current approaches to hydro-diplomacy. It paved the way for :

- regular bilateral meetings;
- the involvement of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC);
- the gradual establishment of consultation mechanisms among technical administrations.

1.8. Alignment with Modern Integrated Management Approaches

The Moundou Protocol is now regarded as a pioneering text in the region with respect to modern approaches to integrated water resources management. Well before the formal emergence of IWRM (Integrated Water Resources Management), the Protocol already introduced :

- the principle of equitable sharing;
- technical cooperation;
- the adaptation of water uses in response to hydrological conditions.

In summary

The Moundou Protocol of Agreement has made it possible to :

- regulate water withdrawals;
- maintain ecological and socio-economic balances;
- reduce tensions;
- structure dialogue between the two States;
- lay the foundations for modern hydro-diplomacy in the Logone Basin.

Initially valid for a period of ten years, the Moundou Protocol was tacitly renewed for forty years without any major revision, despite the fact that climate change, demographic pressure, and transformations within the basin underscore the need to update this historic agreement.

2. Gaps in the Current Protocol and Its Implementation

2.1. Insufficient Adaptation to Environmental Change

- Hydrological variability: the Protocol relies on hydrological data from the 1960s, an unusually wet period. Since then, the Logone River regime has changed radically, including the severe droughts of the 1970s–1980s and sustained reductions in flow levels.
- Absence of climate change considerations: the Protocol does not address climate risks, drought and flood management, or the environmental flow requirements necessary for ecosystem conservation.

2.2. Legal and Institutional Weaknesses

- Non-functioning Joint Commission: the Chad–Cameroon Joint Commission, mandated to meet on an annual basis, has never become operational.
- Incomplete framework: the Protocol needs to take into account or be aligned with more recent international instruments (e.g. the Lake Chad Basin Water Charter, 2012). While the Charter does not supersede the Moundou Agreement, it encourages such cooperative initiatives among its States Parties;
- Lack of monitoring mechanisms: no system is provided for monitoring water withdrawals, real-time data exchange, or early warning.

2.3. Unanticipated Socio-Economic Challenges

- Demographic growth: the population living along the river has grown substantially since 1970, increasing pressure on water resources and exacerbating conflicts over water use.
- Conflicts over resources: the Protocol does not, or only very weakly, address conflicts arising from competition over resource use, particularly fisheries resources, pastoral activities, and tensions between communities.

2.4. Déficits de gouvernance et de participation

- Insufficient inclusion of local actors: riparian populations, CSOs, universities, and several key sectoral ministries (environment and agriculture) were excluded from the initial process.
- Opacity and limited awareness: the Protocol remains poorly known among local stakeholders and some technical administrations, thereby limiting its ownership and effective implementation.

2.5. Ignored environmental issues

- Pollution and ecosystem degradation: the Protocol contains no provisions addressing agricultural pollution (pesticides) or the protection of aquatic biodiversity.

- Groundwater management: the Protocol focuses exclusively on surface waters, disregarding transboundary aquifers that are nonetheless of critical importance.

3. Current and Future Challenges

3.1. Transboundary Cooperation Challenges

- Regional stability: revising the Protocol is imperative to ease recurring transboundary tensions and strengthen bilateral cooperation.
- Alignment with international IWRM instruments: there is an urgent need to align the Protocol with the Lake Chad Basin Water Charter and the United Nations Water Convention (which has already been ratified by both countries)

3.2. Economic Challenges

- Food security: a modernized water management framework is vital for rice cultivation (SEMRY in Cameroon and agricultural projects in Chad) and fisheries, two key sectors that generate employment and strengthen food security.
- Investment optimization: new development projects (dams, irrigated perimeters) require a clear and jointly agreed framework to avoid inefficient use of resources and water-use conflicts.

3.3. Social and Environmental Challenges

- Inclusion and equity: the revision must integrate local communities, women, and youth to ensure participatory and equitable management.
- Climate resilience: the revised Protocol should incorporate adaptive mechanisms (early warning systems, flood and low-flow management) to address climate uncertainty.
- Biodiversity conservation: protecting the Logone River ecosystems is essential, as they are a source of life for millions of people.

In summary :

An urgent and necessary revision

The 1970 Moundou Protocol is now inadequate to addressing certain contemporary challenges. Its revision is not an option, but an urgent necessity in order to :

- Prevent conflicts and strengthen transboundary peace;
- Ensure sustainable, equitable, and resilient management of water resources;
- Adapt to current climatic, demographic, and economic realities;
- Honor the international commitments of both countries and comply with regional frameworks such as the Lake Chad Basin Water Charter.

Modernizing this Protocol constitutes an essential foundation for peaceful and prosperous cooperation between Cameroon and Chad around the Logone River.

Keyword: Hydraulic Developments

Hydraulic developments refer to all structures and facilities built to capture, store, convey, or use water in an organized manner (e.g. dams, irrigation canals, pumping stations, dikes, drainage works, etc.).

They are designed to meet population needs, protect against floods or droughts, and promote economic development (agriculture, energy, drinking water supply, etc.).

PART II

OBJECTIVES OF THE IUCN DIALOGUES ON THE MOUNDOU PROTOCOL

Four national and regional dialogues were organized by IUCN. These dialogues enabled around one hundred participants including administrative and local authorities, representatives of rice production projects, traders, and NGOs to engage in direct exchanges, strengthen their knowledge and capacities, and commit to sustainable practices.

These awareness-raising actions targeting key stakeholders pursued a set of strategic, specific, and complementary objectives designed to create the conditions necessary for a successful and legitimate revision of the Protocol.

1. Inform and Clarify the Context

Targeted objective: to close the knowledge gap related to the Protocol itself Many stakeholders, including within public administrations, were unaware of its existence, its exact content, or its historical background.

Concrete actions : Detailed presentations were delivered during national and regional dialogues on the Protocol's history, key articles, and the rights and obligations of each party, along with an explanation of the context of its signing in the 1970s compared to the current context.

2. Develop a shared understanding of the limitations

Targeted objective: to bring all stakeholders to a shared diagnosis regarding the obsolescence and inadequacies of the 1970 Protocol, moving beyond individual perceptions to objectively assess its weaknesses.

Concrete actions : Group work sessions was carried out through a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). Findings from technical studies (e.g. the decline in the Logone River's flow) were presented to substantiate the assessment of the Protocol's

3. Participants' Proposals

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
- Existence of the Agreement and of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) convention; - Political commitment to cooperation between the two States; - Shared membership in the same economic and monetary community; - Regulation of abstraction flows during high- and low-water periods; - Existence of a Joint Commission; - Concerted and rational management of the Logone River's waters	- Absence, in the Preamble, of the rationale that led to the adoption of the Moundou Agreement (Convention and Statutes of the LCBC (1964), and the Algiers Convention of 1968); - Lack of a forward-looking vision regarding future hydraulic developments; - Non-operationalization of the Joint Commission; - Absence of notification and information requirements regarding planned infrastructure works (Article 5); - Absence of provisions addressing pollution; - Absence of provisions on climate change, including monitoring of the status of water resources; - Inconsistency with Article 60 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969) concerning denunciation, as referenced in Article 8 of the Agreement; - Failure to implement Article 4 relating to studies; - Lack of definitions and standardized terminology; - Absence of specific provisions relating to groundwater resources; - Absence of provisions on the conservation of biological diversity; - Absence of specific provisions on fisheries management; - Absence of a defined response timeframe following notification; - Lack of involvement of the ministry responsible for water resources in the implementation of the Moundou Agreement.

4. Build Consensus on The Actions to Be Taken

Targeted objective : to transform the shared assessment into a collective political and technical commitment. It was not sufficient to agree that the Protocol was outdated; it was necessary to secure unanimous agreement on the need to initiate a revision process.

Concrete actions : plenary exchanges and formal validation (through voting or oral approval) of recommendations. Joint resolutions were adopted during the workshops. IUCN engaged in a process of raising awareness among stakeholders of the Chad–Cameroon Joint Commission, with the aim of building consensus around the need to revise the Moundou Agreement.

5. Collect Technical and Thematic Contributions

Targeted objective : Identify priority issues and the substantive elements to be incorporated into the new Protocol. The objective was to build on the diverse expertise of the participants.

Concrete actions :

- Thematic group work was conducted to identify the 'elements to be strengthened' (e.g. integration of climate change, data management, monitoring mechanisms).
- Targeted workshops (e.g. on sustainable fisheries) were organized to capture sector-specific concerns.
- Discussions were held on emerging issues absent from the original text (groundwater, biodiversity, integrated management principles).

These actions were undertaken within the framework of national and regional dialogues organized by IUCN.

6. Engage and Legitimize All Stakeholders

Targeted objective : Prevent the revision process from being purely intergovernmental and technical. Ensure the representation of all relevant sectors to guarantee ownership and relevance of the future Agreement.

Concrete actions :

- Systematic inclusion of a broad stakeholder panel, including multiple line ministries (Water, Foreign Affairs, Environment, Agriculture, Livestock), parliamentarians, universities, civil society organizations (CSOs), and representatives of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC);
- Ensuring equal voice for all parties during discussions.

7. Develop a Shared and Operational Roadmap

Targeted objective : Translate the commitment to revision into a concrete, chronological, and clearly assigned action plan, in order to prevent the process from losing momentum.

Concrete actions : Joint development and collective validation of monitoring dashboards detailing actions, deadlines, responsible actors, and implementation arrangements (e.g. 'Request data from the Lake Chad Basin Commission by mid-September'; 'Draft the terms of reference for a field mission').

8. Prepare High-Level Political Advocacy

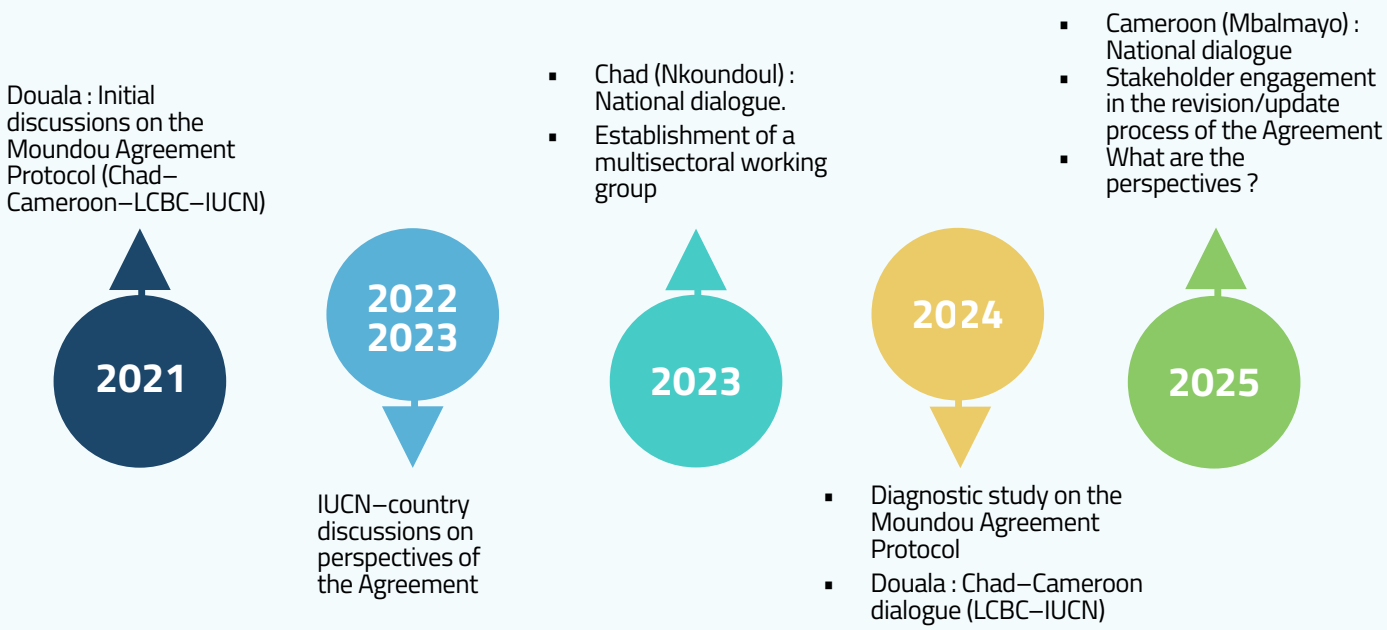
Targeted objective : générer les éléments de langage et les arguments techniques solides nécessaires pour convaincre les décideurs politiques (ministres, chefs de gouvernement) de l›urgence et de la pertinence de lancer formellement le processus de révision.

Concrete actions : Develop clear messaging and sound technical arguments to persuade political decision-makers (ministers and heads of government) of the urgency and relevance of formally launching the revision process.

Number and profile of participants sensitized and trained as part of regional and national dialogues between 2021 and 2025 :

Event and Location	Number of Participants	Participants
Regional Dialogue between Chad and Cameroon (2021, Douala) : Reflection on mechanisms to strengthen transboundary cooperation instruments for managing conflicts related to the exploitation of natural resources in the Logone sub-basin	50	The event brought together representatives from : - Regional organizations (Lake Chad Basin Commission – LCBC; Economic Commission for Livestock, Meat and Fishery Resources – CEBEVIRHA) - United Nations Water Convention - Yagoua Rice Expansion and Modernization Company (SEMRY) - Local communities
National Dialogue in Chad (2023) :	25	Representatives from : Sectoral ministries responsible for planning, water, environment, agriculture, and foreign affairs
Regional Dialogue (Douala, 2024) : Workshop on strengthening transboundary cooperation between Cameroon and Chad in the integrated management of the Logone river.	20	Representatives of : - Universities - Lake Chad Basin Commission - Yagoua Rice Expansion and Modernization Company (SEMRY) - Sectoral ministries responsible for planning, water, environment, agriculture, and foreign affairs.
National Dialogue in Cameroon (Mbankomo, 2025) : Awareness-raising and consultation for the review/update of the Moundou Agreement Protocol signed in 1970 between Cameroon and Chad on hydraulic developments on the Logone river.	25	Representatives from : Sectoral ministries responsible for planning, water, environment, agriculture, land affairs, territorial administration, and foreign affairs.

History of National and Regional Dialogues Conducted since 2021



In summary :

The objectives of these awareness-raising actions were progressive and interconnected. The aim was to move from awareness ('there is a problem'), to collective commitment ('we must act'), and then to structured action ('this is how we will proceed'), while ensuring that all key stakeholders were aligned and moving in the same direction.

PART III

TYPOLOGY OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS FOR THE REVISION OF THE MOUNDOU PROTOCOL

The success of the Moundou Protocol revision process hinges on the coordinated engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders, each fulfilling a distinct and complementary role. Their relative importance depends on their decision-making power, technical expertise, field-level legitimacy, and capacity to influence the process.

1. Institutional and Government Stakeholders

1.1. Chad–Cameroon Joint High Commission

Role : This body is responsible for preparing dossiers for validation and signature by the two Heads of State. It plays a decisive role in :

- organizing political and technical dialogue;
- managing shared resources, including the Logone River;
- preventing and resolving conflicts;
- harmonizing sectoral policies;
- driving cooperation that benefits populations on both riverbanks.

Importance : It is the principal diplomatic mechanism structuring cooperation between the two countries (see Article 9 of the Agreement)

1.2. Sectoral Ministries (Cameroon & Chad)

Role : They serve as the technical drivers of the process. Their expertise is essential for drafting the technical provisions of the new Agreement (hydrology, irrigation, environment).

Importance : Their commitment and technical leadership are non-negotiable to ensure the feasibility and scientific robustness of the future Protocol.

Examples : Ministries responsible for water, environment, agriculture, and livestock.

1.3. Ministries of Planning

Role : The Moundou Protocol explicitly assigns overall supervision of the implementation of the Agreement to the Ministries of Planning of Cameroon and Chad. They are considered the governmental focal points for all matters relating to :

- the planning of hydraulic developments;
- the negotiation of bilateral projects;
- coordination with other technical ministries (water, agriculture, environment, infrastructure, women's affairs, land affairs, and livestock).

Importance : The Ministries of Planning are the guarantors of coherence between national development policies and the transboundary commitments set out in the Protocol.

1.4. Ministries of Foreign Affairs / External Relations

Role : They are the guarantors of diplomacy and national sovereignty. They oversee the process from the perspective of international law and bilateral relations.

Importance : They facilitate diplomatic dialogue, coordinate the national position, and are essential for the formal signature and ratification of the new Agreement.

Examples : Ministry of External Relations (Cameroon); Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Chad).

Other Sectoral Ministries *(Ministries of Agriculture, Water, Fisheries, Women's Affairs, etc.):*

1.5. Technical and Scientific Stakeholders

a. Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)

Role : It acts as a regional expert body and a neutral facilitator. It holds data, promotes the Water Charter (which prevails over bilateral agreements), and provides a platform for dialogue. The LCBC constitutes the reference framework for existing regional hydrological cooperation between the two signatory States, although it is not a party to the Agreement.

Importance : It ensures that the new Protocol is aligned with the higher-level legal framework of the basin and helps prevent inconsistencies with other regional initiatives.

b. Universities and Research Centers

Role : They are holders of scientific expertise and independent data. They provide the technical analyses (hydrological, environmental, and social) required to inform and support negotiations.

Importance : Their contribution lends scientific credibility to the process and helps identify technical solutions to the challenges identified.

Examples : University of N'Djamena; University of Maroua.

1.6. Civil Society and Local Communities

a. National and Local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Role : They act as an interface with communities. They relay local concerns, inform populations, and carry out advocacy for a transparent and equitable revision process.

Importance : They ensure that the Agreement is not merely "technocratic," but rather responds to the real needs of populations and serves the public interest.

b. Community and Traditional Leaders

Role : They are a source of legitimacy and authority at the local level. They represent direct users of the resource (fishers, farmers, pastoralists) and can either facilitate or hinder the implementation of rules.

Importance : Their buy-in is critical for local ownership of the future Protocol and for the resolution of micro-level conflicts. They also serve as essential channels for information dissemination.

2. User Representatives (Cooperatives, Fishers' Associations, SEMRY, Viva Logone Project)

Role : They represent the voice of practitioners directly affected by the Protocol. Their day-to-day experience constitutes an invaluable source of information on practical challenges and workable solutions.

Importance : Integrating their practical knowledge ensures that the new Agreement is realistic and implementable. They are the primary beneficiaries or, the first to be affected by the rules that are established.

3. Overview of Stakeholder Interdependence

Level of Action	Key Actors	Primary Role	Importance in the Process
Political / Strategic	Ministries of FA, TFPs	Decision-making, financing, diplomacy	Provide high-level legitimacy and necessary resources
Technical / Normative	Technical ministries, LCBC, universities	Expertise, drafting, compliance	Ensure technical and legal quality
Operational / Field-Level	Local authorities, CSOs, community leaders, State-owned enterprises and government projects*	Ensure ownership and application	Implementation, outreach, monitoring
Final Beneficiaries	Associations, users, communities	User experience, feedback	Give meaning and relevance to the Agreement

** On the Cameroonian side, for example, SEMRY (rice cultivation and regulation of water flows), VIVA Logone (river basin development and sustainable, concerted management), and PULSI (drought and flood risk reduction) are large-scale projects actively involved in the management of the Logone River.*

In summary :

The revision process cannot succeed if it remains confined to ministries alone. It requires a multi-level, multi-stakeholder approach in which everyone from fishers to ministers has a role to play and sees their interests taken into account. The strength of the process undertaken lies in its effort to include this diversity of actors from the very outset, starting with the awareness-raising and advocacy phases..

PART IV

ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The awareness-raising and preparation process for the revision of the Moundou Protocol relied on a series of national and regional dialogues, each with distinct yet complementary objectives.

1. Four National and Regional Reflection and Diagnostic Dialogues

These dialogues aimed to establish a shared situation analysis, identify the limitations of the existing Protocol, and outline potential avenues for solutions.

1.1. Koundoul Dialogue (Chad, 30–31 August 2023)

Objective : to conduct a critical analysis of the 1970 Protocol and develop a preliminary roadmap for its revision.

- **Number of participants :** approximately twenty

- **Key themes addressed :**

  - History and assessment of the Moundou Protocol after 50 years;
  - SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of the Agreement;
  - Relationship between the Protocol and the LCBC Water Charter;
  - Challenges of revising the Protocol in the context of climate change.

Key Recommendations :

- Establish a Multisectoral Working Group (MWG) to steer the process;
- Request the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) to make data on water abstractions available;
- Conduct a joint field mission (Chad–Cameroon);
- Revise the duration of the Agreement and integrate provisions on climate change.

Concrete output : A detailed roadmap (actions, responsible entities, timelines).

1.2. Regional Dialogue on Cooperation Mechanisms (Douala, Cameroon, 24–26 November 2021)

Objective : To strengthen transboundary cooperation instruments for the management of conflicts related to natural resources.

Number of participants : Approximately forty participants from six countries.

Key themes addressed :

- Mapping of conflicts and stakeholders in the Logone sub-basin;
- Analysis of existing cooperation instruments (including the Moundou Protocol);
- Information-sharing mechanisms and joint management approaches.

Key Recommendations :

- Conduct an assessment of the implementation of the Moundou Protocol;
- Revise the Protocol to align it with recent international agreements;
- Disseminate the LCBC Water Charter among local communities;
- Accelerate the process of formalizing/delimitating the border.

2. Coordination and Steering Meetings

These workshops aimed to translate discussions into concrete actions and to establish effective governance for the revision process.

2.1. First Meeting of the Multisectoral Working Group - MWG (N'Djamena, Chad, 24 January 2024)

Objective : Official launch of the MWG, presentation of its mandate, and planning of the first operational actions.

Nombre de participants : Nine members representing technical ministries and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC).

Key themes addressed :

- Review and adoption of the decree establishing the MWG;
- Presentation of the background and key issues related to the revision process;
- Exchanges on bottlenecks and the expectations of each institution;
- Planning of priority actions outlined in the roadmap;

Decisions and conclusions :

- Designation of members responsible for drafting the Terms of Reference (ToR) for a diagnostic mission;
- Commitment to hold a second meeting within two weeks to validate the ToR;
- Acknowledgement of the need to secure funding for the MWG's activities.

3. Specialized consultative meetings

These consultations targeted specific sectoral issues to be integrated into the future Agreement.

3.1. Consultations on Sustainable Fisheries Practices (Bongor, Chad, 3–5 August 2021)

Objective : To facilitate transboundary cooperation for the sustainable management of fisheries in the Logone River.

Nombre de participants : Approximately thirty participants (local stakeholders, fishers, and authorities).

Key themes addressed :

- Status of fisheries governance;
- Analysis of regulatory frameworks and fishing practices (prohibited gear, closed seasons/ biological rest periods);
- Conflict resolution mechanisms among fishers.

Key Recommendations :

- Harmonize regulatory texts between Cameroon and Chad;
- Support dissemination of regulations and capacity building for fishers;
- Promote local initiatives for co-management of resources.

Production concrète : Diagnostic report on fishing practices.

3.2. Awareness-Raising and Consultations (Mbankomo, Cameroon, 15–16 May 2025)

Objectif : To broaden consultations to new sectors and adapt the Agreement to the current regional context.

Planned Themes :

- Consideration of agro-pastoral dispute management;
- Integration of water user organizations;
- Proposals for alternative energy sources.

Expected outcome : Collection of additional inputs to enrich the future Protocol.

4. Summary of Outputs and Progress Made

Event	Date	Main Contribution	Process Evolution
Regional Dialogue in Douala (Cameroon)	Nov. 2021	Regional awareness of the shortcomings of the Agreement	Emergence of advocacy for revision
Regional Dialogue in Bongor (Chad)	Aug. 2021	Sectoral diagnostic (fisheries) and collection of field data	Strengthening the process through concrete data
National Dialogue in Koundoul (Chad)	Aug. 2023	Roadmap development and technical framing of the revision	Transition from assessment to planned action

MWG Meeting in Chad	Janv. 2024	Operationalization and institutional ownership of the process	Establishment of the official steering body
Regional Workshop in Douala	Nov. 2024	Expansion of consultations to new issues	Continued enrichment of technical content
National Dialogue in Mbankomo (Cameroon)	May 2025	Expansion of consultations to new issues	Continued enrichment of technical content

In summary :

The awareness-raising strategy followed a logical progression :

1. Diagnosis (Douala, Bongor) to establish a shared assessment;
2. Framing (Koundoul) to propose solutions and a roadmap;
3. Institutionalization (MWG meeting) to anchor the process within state structures;
4. Deepening (Mbankomo) to refine the technical content.

This methodical approach made it possible to transform an idea (the revision of the Protocol) into a concrete, structured, and guided process involving a broad range of stakeholders.

PART V

RESULTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIONS

The awareness-raising activities carried out in support of the revision of the Moundou Protocol produced tangible and structuring outcomes, moving beyond information-sharing to foster a robust collective dynamic.

1. Strong political and technical commitment and consensus

Unanimity on the assessment : The main result was the establishment of a clear and uncontested consensus among all stakeholders regarding the outdated nature of the 1970 Protocol and the urgent need for its revision. The debate shifted from "whether" to revise the Protocol to *how* and "what" to revise.

Process legitimization : The participation and engagement of representatives from key ministries (Planning, Foreign Affairs, Water, Environment, and Agriculture), as well as the LCBC, provided both political and technical legitimacy to the process, conferring upon it an authority that extends beyond the scope of a one-off project.

2. Effective Institutional Engagement : Establishment of a Multisectoral Working Group (MWG) in Chad

Moving from words to action : The recommendation emerging from the Koundoul workshop (August 2023) was formalized through the adoption of Ministerial Decree/ Order No. 048/PT/PM/MEA/MAETECHI/SG/2023 of 20 December 2023, officially establishing the Multisectoral Working Group (MWG).

Operational Steering Structure : The convening of the first MWG meeting in January 2024, along with the appointment of focal points and the adoption of an immediate action plan (drafting of Terms of Reference for a field mission), illustrates tangible institutional commitment and strong ownership of the process by the Chadian administration, and by extension, the Cameroonian administration.

3. Development of a Shared and Operational Roadmap

Clear and well-defined vision : The workshops resulted in a detailed, time-bound roadmap outlining activity timeline, which defines specific actions, responsible actors, and clear deadlines (e.g. 'request data from the LCBC by mid-September 2023').

Accountability tool : This document serves as a reference and working framework for the States Parties, allowing progress to be tracked and sustained momentum. It prevents the process from becoming bogged down in discussions without operational follow-up.

4. Emergence of Concrete and Innovative Technical Proposals

The discussions made it possible to identify a substantial set of proposals for the future Agreement, going well beyond simple technical adjustments :

Integration of emerging issues :

- Climate change : Integration of environmental flow requirements, establishment of early warning systems for floods and droughts, and enhanced climate resilience.
- Inclusive governance : Formal inclusion of user organizations (fishers and farmers), women, and civil society within decision-making bodies.
- Environmental sustainability : Provisions addres-

sing pollution control, protection of aquatic biodiversity, and integrated management of groundwater resources.

Strengthening existing mechanisms :

- Effective operationalization of the Joint Commission, supported by sustainable financing and a clear mandate;
- Establishment of a transparent and mandatory system for real-time exchange of hydrological and water abstraction data;
- Harmonization with the LCBC Water Charter to ensure coherence with the regional legal framework.

5. Stakeholder Mobilization and Capacity Building

Expansion of the coalition : The process brought together an increasingly broad community of actors: from grassroots technical staff to senior officials, including researchers and CSOs. Each workshop further strengthened this network.

Ownership by local stakeholders : The thematic workshops (e.g. the Bongor workshop on fisheries) enabled direct feedback from the field, ensuring that the revision process is not a purely legal exercise disconnected from on-the-ground realities..

Active role of the LCBC : The Commission transitioned from an observer role to that of a technical partner and key facilitator, committing to contribute data and legal expertise.

6. Dynamic and Peaceful Dialogue

Establishment of a dialogue platform : The workshops offered a neutral and constructive framework for Cameroonian and Chadian stakeholders to express grievances and perceptions (e.g. SEMRY's water abstractions) in a calm and respectful setting, contributing to the de-escalation of potential tensions.

Strengthened trust : Continued collaboration around a common objective has contributed to rebuilding trust between experts and institutions in both countries, a fundamental prerequisite for the success of future negotiations.

7. Summary of Outcomes

Before the Awareness-Raising Actions	After the Awareness-Raising Actions
Limited awareness of the Protocol	Broad consensus on the need for its revision
Process perceived as technical and distant	Ownership by a wide range of stakeholders
Theoretical discussions of problems	Operational roadmap and concrete proposals on the table
Bilateral tensions and mistrust	Established dialogue space and trust under reconstruction
Poor functioning of the steering structure	Establishment of a MWG in Chad

Summary Table of Key Results by Category of Stakeholders

Stakeholder Categories	Key Results of the BRIDGE Project
1. Key Sectoral Ministries (Environment, Water, Agriculture, Fisheries, etc.)	▪ Improved understanding of issues related to the Moundou Protocol and transboundary management of the Logone River ▪ Strengthened technical capacities in hydro-diplomacy, negotiation, and water-related conflict management ▪ Enhanced understanding of the need to revise the Moundou Agreement ▪ Improved technical capacities regarding the importance of preserving environmental flow requirements ▪ Better understanding of how the Agreement is implemented by Chad and Cameroon
2. Companies and Major Operators on the Logone river (SEMRY[1], VIVA Logone[2], PULSI[3], etc.)	▪ Strengthened technical capacities on the need to preserve environmental flows ▪ Enhanced dialogue with authorities and downstream communities ▪ Commitment to more responsible water abstraction practices
3. Local Authorities (Divisional Officer, Sub-Divisional Officer, Mayors, Traditional Leaders)	▪ Strengthened technical capacities in mediating water-related conflicts ▪ Active participation in national and regional dialogues ▪ Improved dissemination of information to local communities

<u>En résumé :</u>

Les actions de sensibilisation ont réussi à transformer un besoin technique et politique en un mouvement collectif structuré. Elles ont produit les preuves de la nécessité d'agir, construit les alliances nécessaires pour le faire et défini les outils et le chemin à suivre. Le résultat le plus significatif est la création d'un momentum irréversible en faveur de la révision, désormais portée par les institutions elles-mêmes.

[1] SEMRY : Yagoua Rice Expansion and Modernization Company
[2] VIVA Logone : Project for the Development and Valorization of Investments in the Logone Valley
[3] PULSI : Emergency Control Project against Flooding

PART VI

ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED: DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Despite the undeniable successes of the awareness-raising process, a number of significant challenges were encountered. Identifying these challenges and the lessons drawn from them is essential to effectively inform the critical negotiation and revision phase ahead.

1. Challenges Faced

1.1. Institutional and Governance Challenges

- Administrative burden : coordination between multiple line ministries (Foreign Affairs, Water, Environment, Agriculture) across two countries faced bureaucratic delays, competing priorities, and challenges in obtaining timely, clear, and coordinated mandates;
- Institutional instability: frequent ministerial reshuffles or turnover within key administrations resulted in breaks in institutional continuity, necessitating ongoing advocacy and renewed awareness-raising efforts.

1.2. Technical and Information Challenges

Insufficient reliable data: the absence of recent, harmonized, and easily accessible hydrological data represented a major obstacle to effectively supporting discussions on abstraction quotas and the impacts of existing infrastructure.

Technical complexity of the issues: the need to integrate advanced technical concepts (environmental flows, hydro-diplomacy, early warning systems) required significant efforts in simplification and outreach to ensure they were understood and embraced by all stakeholders, particularly community leaders.

1.3. Socio-political challenges and resistance to change

Established interests and concerns: certain stakeholders, accustomed to the status quo or benefiting from the lack of transparency in the current Agreement (such as some intermediaries and economic operators), exhibited passive resistance or feared that new regulations could erode their vested interests.

Historical mistrust : addressing entrenched prejudices and long-standing mistrust between communities and public administrations in both countries required sustained, careful efforts in mediation and confidence-building.

1.4. Inclusive Participation Challenges

Difficulty in engaging certain stakeholders: ensuring balanced and sustained representation of all sectors (particularly women, youth, and small-scale fishers) beyond the usual workshop participants proved challenging, due to limited resources and the lack of adapted consultation mechanisms.

2. Key Lessons Learned

The challenges encountered provided valuable lessons for the next phase of the process.

1.1. Lesson on governance: institutionalize and ensure sustainability

Need for a formal framework: the establishment of the MWG in Chad is a direct response to administrative complexity. This approach could also be formally adopted on the Cameroonian side to ensure full effectiveness.

Anticipating change: establish a system of defined roles and institutional memory mechanisms within the MWG to ensure continuity despite staff turnover.

1.2. Lesson on data: investing in knowledge

Diagnostic mission as a priority: the next step must be the joint field mission outlined in the roadmap. This mission will help address data gaps and ensure that negotiations are grounded in a solid and indisputable evidence base.

Data-sharing platform: support the LCBC in operationalizing a real-time hydrometric data-sharing platform between Cameroon and Chad, as a key technical pillar of the future Agreement.

Why Is It Necessary to Revise the Agreement?

The 1970 Moundou Protocol is now outdated, inequitable, and ill-suited to the challenges of the 21st century. Its revision is not an option, but an urgent necessity in order to :

- Prevent conflicts and strengthen transboundary peace;
- Ensure sustainable, equitable, and climate-resilient management of water resources;
- Adapt to current climatic, demographic, and economic realities;
- Regulate fishing practices and the management of fisheries resources along the river;
- Honour the international commitments of both countries and comply with regional and global frameworks for transboundary water management.

Why Is It Necessary to Align the Protocol with Regional (Water Charter) and Global Instruments (UN Water Convention) ?

This alignment is essential given the obsolescence of the Moundou Agreement Protocol, more than 50 years after its adoption, which presents limitations that have already been addressed in more recent regional and international instruments, notably with regard to :

- **Equitable and reasonable use of shared water resources :** The Lake Chad Basin Water Charter requires that water abstractions take into account minimum environmental flows, unlike the Moundou Protocol, which although it provides for seasonal abstraction caps does not adequately address the emergence of climate-related crises;
- **The systematic integration of a mechanism for managing transboundary conflicts** between States Parties;
- **Recognition of the rights and interests of local and riparian communities**, which are the primary beneficiaries of, and dependents on the resource;
- **Strengthening the binding nature of the agreement**, particularly with regard to the regular functioning of the Joint Commission (biannual meetings with the possibility of extraordinary sessions).

Which Key Sectors/Domains Should Be Addressed in the Revised Agreement? ?

The revised agreement should give particular attention to the following key sectors :

- **Diplomacy** (strengthening bilateral cooperation through integrated management of the river) ;
- **Environmental protection and international water law** (taking hydrological variability into account and promoting sustainable water management) ;
- **Inclusion of local communities and conflict management** (involving riparian populations and establishing mechanisms for resolving conflicts among users of shared water resources) ;
- **L'agriculture** (modernization of agricultural practices).

What Role Should the "Cameroon–Chad Joint Commission" Play in Implementing the Agreement ?

In accordance with Article 2 of the Protocol, the Joint Commission serves as the central and permanent body responsible for steering, financing, and implementing major joint development projects between Cameroon and Chad. Its responsibilities include :

- **Supervising studies** on the hydraulic regime of the Logone river ;
- **Facilitating industrial and agricultural exchanges** ;
- **Monitoring investments** while taking into account the evolving dynamics of the river.

PART VII

NEXT STEPS AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

he awareness-raising actions produced a clear consensus and a structured roadmap. The subsequent phase should focus on consolidating these achievements and steering the process toward formal negotiations and the adoption of a revised Protocol. The recommendations below are organized into concrete implementation steps.

1. Recommendations Emerging from the Awareness-Raising Actions

The workshops and meetings formulated specific recommendations that serve as a working basis:

1.1. ***Operationalize the Joint Commission:*** reactivate and equip the Chad–Cameroon Joint Commission with adequate human, technical, and financial resources, so that it can serve as the permanent monitoring entity for the future Agreement.

1.2. ***Harmonize with the higher-level framework:*** align the new Protocol with the principles of the Lake Chad Basin Water Charter and relevant international conventions (climate change, biodiversity).

1.3. ***Integrate emerging issues:*** include binding provisions on :

- Climate change (flood and drought management, environmental flows);
- Inclusive governance (participation of CSOs, women, and resource users);
- Environmental protection (pollution control, biodiversity conservation, groundwater management)..

1.4. ***Establish a data management system:*** put in place a transparent and mandatory mechanism for real-time exchange of hydrological data under the auspices of the LCBC.

1.5. ***Strengthen capacities :*** implement training programs for local stakeholders, technical staff, and administrators on the principles of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and water diplomacy.

2. Scenario for the Next Steps in a Potential Revision Process

For an active negotiation phase, the following is a potential strategic timeline:

Phase 1: Finalization of the Preparatory Framework (3–6 months)

Concrete Action	Lead Responsibility	Expected Result
Hold the second MWG meeting to adopt the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the diagnostic mission and plan its financing	MWG – Chad / Technical ministries – Cameroon	MWG fully operational and legitimate on both sides
Secure financing for the joint mission (consortium approach involving TFP : IUCN, AfDB, EU)	Ministries of Finance / Foreign Affairs, with support from TFPs	Financing agreement signed
Establish an informal consultation framework between both parties and conduct advocacy to formalize the creation of the MWG on the Cameroonian side through a ministerial order	Government of Cameroon	MWG fully operational and legitimate on both sides

Phase 2: Development of the Technical and Legal Foundations (6–12 months)

Concrete Action	Lead Responsibility	Expected Result
Drafting of the draft Protocol incorporating all recommendations and diagnostic findings	Drafting Committee (legal experts and technical specialists from both countries)	Consolidated draft text of the Protocol
Public consultations on the draft Protocol in border provinces	MWG + local CSOs	Feedback integrated into the final version of the draft

Phase 3: Formal Negotiation and Adoption (12–18 months)

Concrete Action	Lead Responsibility	Expected Result
Formal intergovernmental negotiations based on the draft Protocol	Ministries of Foreign Affairs + Technical Ministries	Agreement in principle on the final text
Final technical and legal validation of the text	MWG + Legal units of both governments	Text ready to be submitted to the Joint Commission
Inclusion of the termination of the existing Agreement and the proposal of the revised Agreement on the agenda of the Joint Commission's preparatory meetings	Ministries of Foreign Affairs + Technical Ministries	Text ready for signature by political authorities
Signature ceremony of the new Protocol by the Heads of State or competent Ministers	Presidencies / Prime Ministers' Offices	New Moundou Protocol formally signed

3. Key Cross-Cutting Recommendations

3.1. ***Sustaining the engagement of TFPs :*** IUCN and other partners should continue to play a neutral facilitation role and act as guarantors of good practices throughout the negotiation phases.

3.2. ***Continuous communication strategy:*** establish a communication plan to regularly inform all stakeholders (from local communities to decision-makers) don the progress of the process, in order to sustain engagement and ensure transparency.

3.3. ***Strong linkage with the LCBC:*** the Lake Chad Basin Commission should be closely associated with all stages of the process, acting as a guarantor of regional coherence and a technical facilitator.

CONCLUSION

The process has now reached a critical juncture. The awareness-raising phase has fulfilled its objectives, and the focus must now shift to technical, legal, and diplomatic action. While a roadmap exists, it must be supported by sustained political and financial commitment to translate consensus into a renewed legal instrument capable of securing peace and prosperity around the waters of the Logone River for the next five decades.



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Drawing on more than a decade of experience in implementing the *Building River Dialogues and Governance (BRIDGE)* programme across more than twenty transboundary river basins worldwide, IUCN has developed a water diplomacy approach grounded in strengthening water governance capacities, with the aim of achieving effective water management, security, and peace. BRIDGE seeks to catalyse the sustainable management and development of water resources, ensure water supply and sanitation, preserve biodiversity, and strengthen transboundary cooperation.

Now in its fifth phase, the programme consolidates the knowledge and expertise acquired during previous phases in order to support ongoing key negotiation processes, in which IUCN plays a facilitative and mediating role to promote transboundary agreements at multiple scales and strengthen institutions. IUCN will strive to maximise the impact of BRIDGE Phase V by aligning programme outcomes with a set of strategic priorities and linking them to specific regions and river basins. This approach aims to ensure solutions tailored to the diverse needs of BRIDGE sites. These efforts are complemented by a range of global and regional interventions in response to the United Nations' call to accelerate the implementation of SDG 6.5. BRIDGE delivers solutions adapted to specific geographic priorities while responding globally to the urgent need to accelerate cooperation over transboundary waters.

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