



## **WORKSHOP ON ESTABLISHING BASIN LEVEL MULTI-SECTOR TASKFORCE OF OMO-GIBE BASIN**

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The Omo-Gibe River Basin is about 79 000 km<sup>2</sup> in area and is situated in the south-west of Ethiopia. It is approximately 550 km long and encompasses parts of two National Regional States (NRSs) -- Oromia (which occupies the north-eastern part of the Basin), and the Southern People's NRS (which makes up the rest). The Basin includes all or parts of 80 weredas, and has a population of just 6½ million. Currently, it is supplying 45% of hydro- electric power in the country from three (GIL Gibe I, II & III) hydro-electric plants.

As part of the effort to establish integrated and sustainable basin management mechanisms for Omo-Gibe Basins that will be showcase to others was jointly organized by Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, Jimma University, Jimma Zone Administration and PHE Ethiopia Consortium (PHE EC). The purpose of the

workshop was to bring about collaboration between different stakeholders exerting their efforts within the basin so that the desired outcome could be achieved.

Based on the plan set forth, representatives from Federal Ministries and Oromia regional state, the local implementing institutions of the government from eight woredas of Jimma zone (Oromia) and Keffa zone (SNNPRS), research centers in Jimma, Wolkite University, Jimma University, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders from zonal level sectors were participated in this event.

The workshop was officially opened by Ato Abdulhakim Mulu, chief Administrator of Jimma zone and subsequent discussion was held chaired by the two officials, Ato Abdulhakim Mulu & Dr Hasen Yusuf, General Director, Oromia Environment, Forest and Climate Change Authority and closing remarks made by Ato Kora Tushune, Vice president, Jimma University.



A holistic report on Omo-Gibe Basin presented by Jimma zone Environment, Forest and Climate Change Authority assessed overall environmental and social problems within the basin, evaluated the effectiveness of Previous efforts made by different actors and identified the challenges faced in the course of actions.

The report showed evidence and detail facts on the ground related to deforestation, forest fire and degradation of forests; sever soil erosion, gully formation, population pressure, expansion of farm land, landslide, overgrazing, mismanagement of wet land, pollution of water body etc. attributed to both

natural & human activities. The report also considered the efforts made by different actors, GO's, NGO's including funding agencies as well as community mobilization activities.

An outcome of these different approaches were discussed thoroughly and expressed in terms of Rehabilitation of degraded hills and mountains into closures; Biodiversity-regeneration of trees & shrubs; plantation for woodlots Increased bee floras and non-timber products; terracing reduced soil erosion; Small scale stoves & biomass energy saving stoves reduced pressure on forests; Improved crop variety development shift in ecology of crop adaptations; Improved surface water storage and soil moisture storage enhanced; establishment of CBO's enhanced community involvement with benefit sharing approach.

By focusing on most important point of issues another three papers were presented in order to raise awareness about different approaches to be implemented. One is the 'Eco-hydrology' which is new concept presented by Ato Yohanes Negussie from Ministry of Water, irrigation and electricity which gives emphasis on maintenance of **sustainability, biodiversity, water quality and quantity. Eco-hydrology is a trans-disciplinary science for integrated water resources management and sustainable development.** The second presentation delivered by Ato dereje Bekele from Jimma University focused on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the third presentation was made by Ato Endashaw Mogessie from PHE Ethiopia Consortium concerning the importance and benefits of multi-stakeholder integrated approach.

Finally, the workshop ended up by establishing the basin level multi-sectoral taskforce and forwarding additional ideas of incorporating more stakeholders into the forum so as to make it more comprehensive. This multi-sectoral, taskforce as presented explained during discussion, will be platform for involving higher level officials and decision makers of key government and non-government sectors from Oromia and SNNPRS with Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity assuming the leadership position.