



OBSERVATOIRE DU SAHARA ET DU SAHEL
SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY

PRESS RELEASE

The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) holds the 24th session of its Executive Board (EB) on April 25th and 26th, 2019, in Bouznika – Morocco.

The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), of which Dr. Abdeladim LHAFI, High Commissioner for Water, Forests and Fight against Desertification of Morocco, is the Chairman for the 2016-2020 period, will hold the 24th session of its Executive Board in Bouznika on April 25th and 26th, 2019.

The Executive Board (EB) of the OSS is a decision-making entity whose functioning and mission are governed by the statutes of the organization. It brings together senior managers from member countries as well as representatives of sub-regional, regional and international organizations. It has a triple function of implementing General Assembly resolutions, validating OSS programs and activities, mobilizing the scientific community and identifying new development partners.

This 24th session will be held at a crucial moment marked by the initiation of the evaluation process of the 2020 Strategy and the development of the 2030 Strategy of the OSS. It will focus mainly on reviewing the achievements registered in 2018, adopting the work program and the budget for 2019 and amending the regulatory texts governing the Executive Board, the General Assembly and the Strategic Orientation Committee.

The mobilization of new development partners remains a priority for the EB, which is expected to support the achievements of the OSS, to consolidate its action in North-South-South cooperation, so that it continues to appear and act in the region as an initiator of efforts for a sustainable management of the natural resources. This 24th session will also aim at examining the administrative and technical modalities for the recruitment, in 2020, of a new Executive Secretary of the OSS.

It is worth reminding that the OSS 2020 Strategy was developed on the basis of the organization's achievements, the needs expressed by its members and the role it has to fulfill in a constantly changing regional and international context. Therefore, it takes into account the major universal objectives, in particular the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Climate Change Agreement adopted in 2015 at the COP21 and the initiatives launched at the COP22 held in Marrakech in 2016, in particular the roadmap of the Heads of African State and Government Summit chaired by HIS MAJESTY KING MOHAMMED VI and the selected initiatives (Sustainability, Stability, and Security (3S), the African Adaptation Initiative (AAI) as well as the initiatives relating to the Great Green Wall and Lake Chad).

Since its election in 2016, the Moroccan presidency of the OSS has considerably supported the implementation of the programs led by the OSS and its influence at the international level. During the Ouagadougou Executive Board in 2018, Morocco worked for the inclusion of the OSS strategy within the framework of the global and universal vision of sustainable development and for launching new projects, in addition to the support to the projects that started before 2016.

The main achievements and accomplishments of the OSS

The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) is an international organization with an African vocation, created in 1992 and established in Tunis in 2000. It operates in the arid, semi-arid, sub-humid and dry areas of the Sahara-Sahel region. The OSS membership includes 25 African countries, 7 non-African countries, 13 organizations (representative organizations from West, East and North Africa, UN organizations) and 3 non-governmental organizations.

OSS mission is to support its African member countries in the sustainable management of their natural resources in a context of particularly critical climate change. For this to happen, the organization invests in:

- **The implementation of Multilateral Agreements** on Desertification, Biodiversity and Climate Change
- The promotion of **regional and international initiatives** related to **Africa's** environmental challenges
- The definition of **concepts** and harmonization of **approaches and methodologies** related to sustainable management of land and water resources and climate change

This mission is based on knowledge generation and transfer, capacity building and awareness raising among all stakeholders.

Its activities and projects are funded respectively by voluntary contributions from member countries and grants and donations from development partners.

The OSS has promoted and supported numerous initiatives contributing to the development of coordinated actions around transboundary natural resource management issues and has worked since its creation to develop solidarity and cooperation around water resources in its area of action, which brings together, around the Sahara, the countries of North Africa, West Africa and East Africa (IGAD).

Initiator and facilitator of scientific and technical partnerships between countries sharing a common resource, the OSS has allowed the development of knowledge, the creation of common management tools, the shared identification of risks and possibilities for development of uses. Thus, in 2012, the awarding of the "Hassan II for water" world prize came as a gratefulness of the OSS efforts in the management of shared water resources.

All these achievements have enabled OSS to become a recognized organization in the fields of protection, management and monitoring of natural resources as well as dealing with transboundary groundwater issues in Africa.

With over 25 years of experience in the management of these resources, OSS has gained the confidence of many development partners such as the African Development Bank, the World Bank, the Global Fund for the Environment, the French Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, BMZ from Germany and the Swiss SDC, etc.

These successful results led OSS to be accredited in July 2013 as the Regional Implementation Institution for the Adaptation Fund and in October 2017 as the 4th African Regional Implementing Agency by the Green Climate Fund (GCF)

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