KnoWat
Knowing water better
Towards a more equitable and sustainable access to natural resources to achieve food security

All around the world, countries are struggling to adapt their agriculture and food systems to conditions of water scarcity, climate change and increased competition between users. Moreover, the projections of water scarcity trends are expected to increase.

Competition for water resources between users will also increase. Smallholder farmers are particularly vulnerable to changes in water access and availability. Therefore, a strengthened focus on water accounting and water governance for agriculture and food security is crucial to address water scarcity in a changing climate.

Project objectives

- Strengthen water governance and management processes to address water scarcity and increased competition for water resources.
- Strengthen capacities of national water experts and farmers in Rwanda, Senegal and Sri Lanka on water resources assessment.
- Inform the conceptual discussion on water tenure with country perspectives and experiences.

Expected project outcomes

- Develop and test a methodology to assess water resources, taking into account biophysical, socio-economic, political, legal and cultural aspects of water use, including water tenure.
- Raise awareness about the concept of water tenure with a broader audience through outreach activities.
The approach

The KnoWat project adopts an integrated approach to assess water resources that includes water accounting, water governance and water tenure assessment.

Water accounting refers to a systematic study of the current status and future trends in both water supply and demand in a given spatial domain. Water governance assessment looks at the broader framework of institutions, finance and the overall political economy.

To support water accounting, the project builds capacities in the countries to apply the Water Productivity Open-access portal (WaPOR) tool developed by FAO to assess water use in agriculture and water productivity for agricultural production by using remote sensing.

To better understand water governance processes, the project develops and tests a new methodology to assess water tenure. Water tenure refers to the formal and informal arrangements to access water. Its assessment aims at analyzing the different relationships between people and water resources.

The focus of the water resources assessment will be different in each project country. In Rwanda, several scenarios of water allocation will be explored in the context of increasing competition among water users in the Yanze, Muvumba and lower Akagera catchments. In Sri Lanka the assessment will analyze the different strategies to manage water in a more sustainable manner in the Malwathu river basin. In Senegal the project will seek to better understand the interlinkages between water and land tenure in the delta of the Senegal river basin.

For more information

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