

Press release

ReNOKA to be launched by the Lesotho government in partnership with the European Union (EU) and Germany to improve water and land security within Orange-Senqu River Basin

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MASERU - The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho will launch **ReNOKA** (“We Are a River”), a new national programme and active citizen movement to advance integrated catchment management in Lesotho and the Orange-Senqu basin. A launch event for ReNOKA will take place on 14 May 2021 at Ha Koporale, Mophale. As a build up to the launch event, a panel discussion will be held on 13 May 2021 at Avani Lesotho which will be live-streamed via Lesotho TV at 14:00 PM, as well as on the ReNOKA website: www.renoka.org.

His Majesty King Letsie III will deliver a keynote address at the launch event and the Kingdom’s Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Dr. Moeketsi Majoro, will deliver remarks. The Ministers of the Government Ministries involved in the project will also be in attendance along with EU Head of Delegation Christian Manahl.

The Government Secretary will serve as Master of Ceremonies.

“The goal of ReNOKA is to use the tools of Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) to facilitate stronger economic growth and climate resilience for Lesotho. Lesotho, like most nations, is facing severe environmental degradation from overgrazing and erosion”, says Minister of Water Nkaku Kabi. *“ReNOKA will take practical steps towards its reduction, reversing erosion and restoring watersheds in Lesotho”,* he adds.

“ReNOKA is an active citizenry movement that aims to engage, unify and inspire all communities living and working within the Orange-Senqu River Basin to act together to protect and restore land and water for the shared prosperity of the basin and its people”, says EU Ambassador Christian Manahl. *“As the Orange-Senqu River has its source in the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho, ReNOKA, takes its name from the local Sesotho language and means ‘We are a river’”,* he adds.

ReNOKA ke lekhotla le ikemiselitseng ho khothalletsa kopano le ts’ebeliso ‘moho har’a batho ba phelang tikolohong a noka ea Senqu-Orange ka sepheo sa ho sireletsa le ho ntlafatsa mobu le metsi molemong oa katleho ea bohle ba phelang tikolohong ena.

Combatting land degradation and the depletion of water catchments

ReNOKA is being driven by the Government of Lesotho with support from the European Union (EU) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, implemented by the ICM Coordination Unit in Lesotho in partnership with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. Together with local and regional partners that include technical experts, civil society, private sector and communities, ReNOKA will build a capable framework to restore, protect and manage the Orange-Senqu River Basin, starting in Lesotho.

Six priority sub-catchments in Lesotho have been identified that are degraded and in need of urgent rehabilitation. These hotspots will become demonstration sites for local communities to see the benefit of better water and land management. The sub-catchments include Khubelu, Likhethla, Hlotse, Makhalaneng, Maletsunyane and Senqunyane.

ReNOKA will work with local communities to extract Indigenous Knowledge that holds unique wisdom about Lesotho's plants and animals and how our ancestors managed a changing climate.

The Orange-Senqu River is such an important natural resource and economic enabler for Southern Africa that it is one of the most studied in the region. ReNOKA's Action Plan is therefore guided by years of research and considers many lessons learned from other regional river basins.

The ReNOKA Action Plan consists of five interconnected steps that will bring about better policies and laws, capacitate government departments to regulate, and highly trained people to implement the plan. Local communities will also benefit from training and practical conservation work to restore and manage degraded land. In order for ReNOKA to succeed in building a resilient river basin capable of serving future generations, multiple steps must be taken to address social, political, economic and environmental challenges together.

Together, these steps provide a holistic approach to strengthening the Orange-Senqu River Basin that will deliver improved economic opportunities for the Basotho people and a more resilient river basin that can cope with climate change.

For more information

Visit the ReNOKA website at www.renoka.org

Engage with us on social media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/renokamovement/>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/renoka_movement/

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/renoka_movement/

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/renokamovement/>

Press contacts

Makomoreng Fanana
fananaml@gmail.com

Stephan Huppertz
stephan.huppertz@giz.de

Mphonyane Mohlomi
ICM Public Relations Officer
+266 63102000
mohlomimphonyane@gmail.com