

# Integrated River Basin Management Study: The Case of the Gwebi River

Joint study initiative between

The Environmental Management Agency (EMA)



and

The Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe (IDBZ)



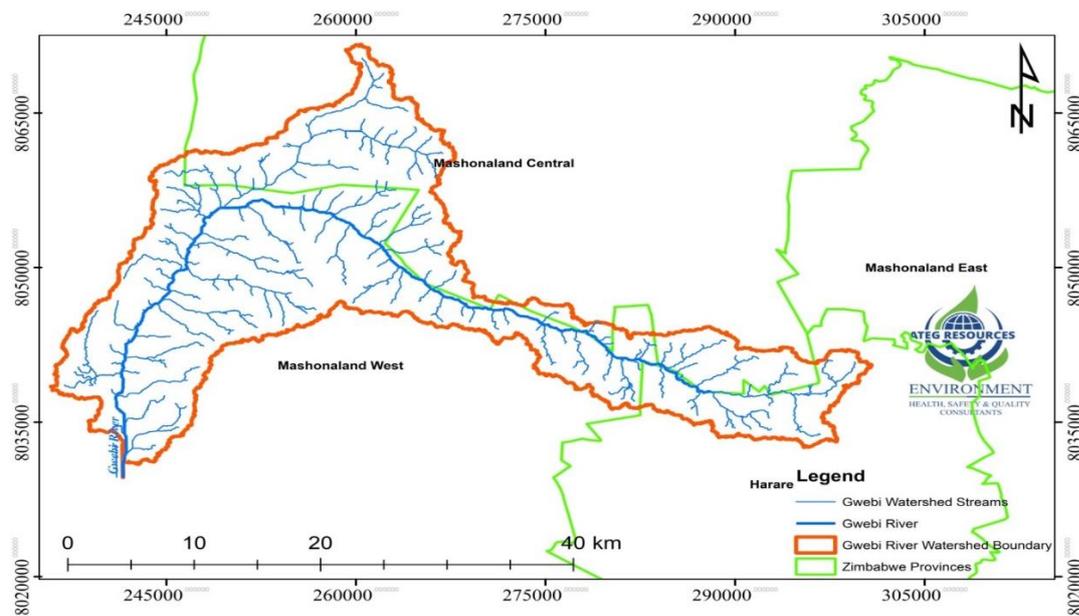
June to November 2021

## **Overview**

River basins in Zimbabwe are undergoing tremendous changes arising from various land uses that are competing for space and are often conflicting. Basins that host the major urban settlements are particularly at risk from a wide range of land uses such as urban agriculture, residential, industrial and road construction that exist, while other developments are being proposed. If these land use activities are not well co-ordinated, they have the potential to compromise the long-term conservation status and ecosystem regulatory functions of these river basins. Therefore, there is need for an integrated approach to river basin management for the purpose of both avoiding potential land use conflicts and enhancing the conservation status of the basins.

In view of the foregoing, the Environmental Management Agency (“EMA”) and the Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe (“IDBZ”) are jointly working on an Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) study focusing on national river basins vis-à-vis socio-economic development initiatives within these basins. IRBM entails coordinating natural resources conservation, management and development of water, land and related resources within a given river basin with the objective of optimising use of these resources for economic growth while conserving the catchment’s environment. The Gwebi River catchment has been selected as the pilot case given that part of the capital city, Harare, falls within this catchment area. Following a competitive tender process which commenced in October 2020 and concluded with the appointment Ateg Resources (Private) Limited as the Consultant, the study is scheduled for completion by end of November 2021.

## Gwebi River Catchment



## Study objectives

The following are the key objectives of the Study:

- To identify and map all proposed national and local socio-economic activities within the catchment area and model their impact on the catchment's conservation status.
- To establish the statutory land uses within the catchment and prepare an up-to-date land use map.
- To establish the strategic fit for catchment management in the national and local economic development agenda in line with the National Development Strategy 1 & 2 and ultimately Vision 2030.
- To conduct (10/20/50/100-year return flood) hydrological impact studies for proposed developments in the catchment in the face of projected climate change scenarios.
- To formulate an integrated Gwebi River Management Plan that, among other things, outlines how land use can be optimized for economic growth while conserving the environment and its functions within the catchment.
- To generate knowledge which is expected to inform land uses and infrastructural development processes not only within the Gwebi River basin but in other similar circumstanced river basins countrywide.
- To develop a prioritised list of catchments across the country where the study will be replicated.

- To amplify environmental and social safeguards in programming and ensure environmental integrity.

### **Stakeholder Consultations and Feedback**

Stakeholders and interested parties are invited to share their informed/evidence-based comments and inputs through this platform towards promoting sustainable development and improving the quality of life for all Zimbabweans.