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Mauritania : a National Action Plan for Nature and the Environment (PANE)

- International Office for Water - Cooperation - International actions - Institutional reforms and governance -

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In order to co-ordinate the multiple actions initiated by different donors, UNDP proposed to Mauritania a **National Action Plan for Nature and the Environment (PANE)**, a way to clarify initiatives, to describe their benefits and objectives and to emphasise synergies.

Many things were done in the water sector: water resource planning, organisation of rural water supply, first water law, creation of protected natural reserve parks, of irrigated areas, clarification of the different national stakeholders' tasks, support to the farmers and stock breeders, development of small water trades, reform of the national water supply company, membership and participation in the OMVS (Organisation for the Development of the Senegal River), etc.

Nouakchott has also a system for the drainage of domestic wastewater and an operating wastewater treatment plant, the treated water of which is used to irrigate a date grove in the city centre.

However, the water issues are still considered as insufficiently solved, especially in town. Water, even of poor quality, is still scarce and industrial pollution is more and more threatening a fragile ecosystem.

Called for supporting the United Nations Secretariat on Urban Development, an IOWater expert prioritised the following actions:

- Associating and making transparent, rather than channelling and managing, all initiatives for the sector improvement, with, in particular, the taking into account and facilitating of initiatives of the best suited local stakeholders, i.e. the communities;
- On the occasion of the water law review, establishing a jurisdictional control of the relevancy of all sectoral measures taken by the technical, financial, customs administrations (e.g. importation of hazardous substances), etc., concerning the environment and especially water supply. All this while keeping always in mind not to centralise but to capitalise the initiatives of other stakeholders;
- Better communicating over the policy chosen for drinking water supply, improvement of hygiene and living environments, waste collection and disposal;
- Continuing the reinforcement and favouring of such jobs as water carrier and hydrant man;
- Establishing a plan for the disposal of liquid waste;
- Creating and making socially honourable and well-paid the job of refuse collection worker;
- Creating the conditions for a market of building and maintaining shower latrines;
- Making the technical inventory of existing collective sanitation with, in this order: the topographical and technical survey of the network, the systematic check of connections, the assessment of the wastewater treatment plant capacity, for receiving drainage products for instance.

The guideline is to build a lasting economic environment for the companies of the hygiene sector for sustainable services to the public.