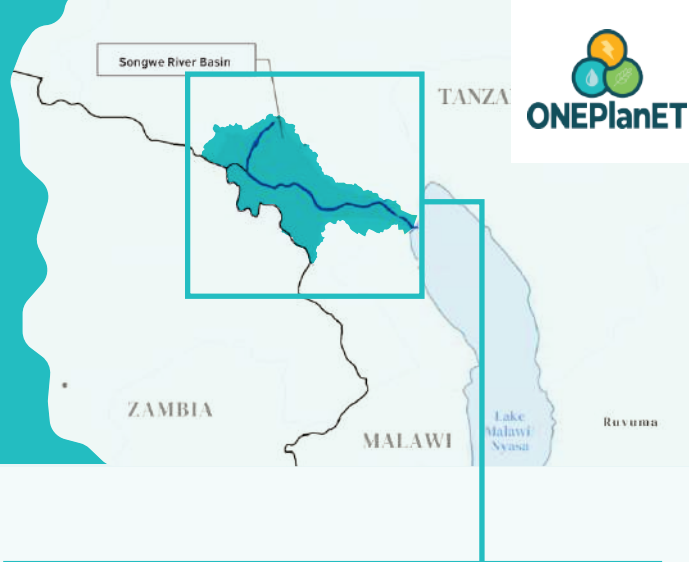


Songwe River Basin



Socio-economic and sustainability challenges

The population of the Songwe River Basin consists mainly of fishers and small-scale farmers. The annual population growth is estimated at 2.88% which intensifies the strain on land use and natural resources. Deforestation is the major environmental issue in the Songwe region, exacerbating climate change shocks like flooding, which cause land shifts between Tanzania and Malawi.

In addition to droughts, financial insecurity is threatening food security in the area, as the basin's population faces substantial rates of poverty. Increased energy access is locally being prioritised to improve the living standards and reduce water risks for vital agricultural activities. To tackle the challenges of this cross-border region, political collaboration and the involvement of the local population in adopting green energy solutions are needed.

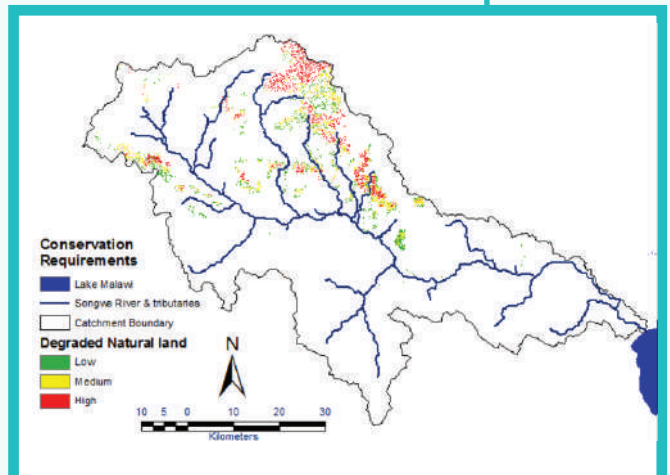
Water management

- **Flooding and Soil Erosion:** Floods wash away soil nutrients, leading to **erosion, land degradation** and **potential desertification**.
- **Cross-border Challenges:** As the basin lies at the Malawi-Tanzania border, planning and management are complicated by differing national policies and seasonal water flows.

Agriculture and land use

Rainfed Agriculture:

- 90% of local agriculture relies on rainfall
- Changing rainfall patterns and increasing floods negatively affect crop yields, like maize, rice and cassava.
- **Changes in Land Use:** Increased rice cultivation in wetlands and more slash-and-burn practices due to soil erosion and declining fertility



The **Songwe River Basin** lies at the border between southwest Tanzania and north Malawi. The basin covers 15,000 hectares and its 350,000 people rely on farming, fishing and mining for their livelihoods. 90% of local agriculture is rainfed and severely affected by climate change-related shifts in rainfall patterns and increased flooding.

Energy

Energy Sources:

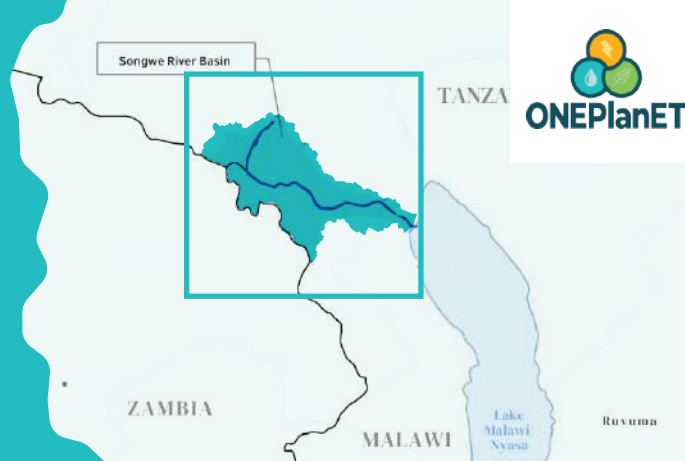
- Local households primarily use charcoal, firewood, and cow dung.
- Traditional energy sources contribute to indoor pollution, deforestation, and CO₂ emissions.

Renewable Energy Potential:

- **Decentralized renewables**, like hydropower, biomass, solar and wind energy, could provide reliable energy for rural areas, but require **investment** and **political support**.
- Hydropower expansion to address food insecurity and low electricity access.



Songwe River Basin



Stakeholder map

