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The GLOWA Volta Project: Interdisciplinary analysis of the impact of global change on a river basin in West Africa

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This article gives an overview of the structure of the interdisciplinary GLOWA Volta Project and its main scientific outputs. The article serves to provide the context for a set of articles written by project scientists for this special issue of the Journal of River Basin Management. After a brief introduction, a description is given of the Volta Basin in West Africa. The main issues related to changes in water supply and demand are presented. Climate change and variability, landuse change, and increasing competition for water between sectors are especially relevant. The integrative approach followed within the GLOWA Volta Project is given in detail. The choice was made to focus on conceptual integration early on, rather than at the end of the project. This led to a network structure for communication between disciplinary research modules. Finally, a listing of the individual articles in the special section is given, together with overall conclusions.