



The Nile Environment

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF NTEAP



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Editorial

This is the maiden issue of the Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project (NTEAP) quarterly Newsletter.

The NTEAP is one of the seven projects under the Nile Basin Initiative Shared Vision Program. The objective of this project is to provide a strategic environmental framework for the environmentally sustainable development of the Nile River Basin, to improve the understanding of the relationship between water resources development and environmental conservation in the Basin, and to provide a forum to discuss development paths for the Nile with a wide range of stakeholders. This Newsletter will be one of the instruments the project intends to use as a forum "to discuss development paths for the Nile with a wide range of stakeholders."

Providing a "strategic environmental framework for the environmentally sustainable development of the Nile River Basin" requires understanding of all aspects of the river basin, the countries of the basin, their political systems, development and environmental policies, culture and aspiration of the people, the opportunities and constraints that support or impede cooperative management of the basin and many other factors. Ultimately it requires putting in place an agreed environmental governance/ framework/ regime for the Nile Basin. This endeavor will require the genuine involvement of the citizens of the Nile Basin. We at the PMU are confident of your full support in this worthwhile endeavor.

Welcome and let us promote constructive, positive and forward-looking dialogue on our Nile environment.

Gedion Asfaw, Regional Project Manager

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Project launched by Head of State



President of the Republic of Sudan, L. General Omar El Bashir presiding over the project's launch. Inset: H.E. the Minister of Environment addressing the meeting

The President of the Republic of the Sudan, L. General Omar El-Bashir launched the Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project at the Friendship Hall in Khartoum on 29th May 2004. The launch ceremony begun by a welcome speech of H.E. the Minister of Environment and Physical Development, Major General Al-Tigani Adam Al-Tahir. The president was invited to address the meeting by H.E Engineer Kamal Ali Mohamed who also welcomed the launch participants.

In his speech, the Sudanese President expressed his joy that the launch coincided with the dawning of peace in Sudan which he said was beneficial to all countries of the basin.

The President recalled the 1972 Stockholm Conference and the 1992 Earth Summit in commemoration of the World Environment Day in which he expressed his concern over the reluctance of developed countries to fulfill their financial commitment. "Since environmental hazards are not restricted within

geographical boundaries, local and international efforts are required to overcome the dangers and threats posed by environmental degradation. The NBI is a reflection of the level of awareness of the people of the region of these issues", the President said. The President thanked the Nile COM, development partners and all those who have contributed to the realization of the project.

Hon. Martha Karua, Kenyan Minister of Water Resources Management and Development, who is also the Chairperson of the Nile Basin Council of Ministers (Nile-COM) noted that "Our success depends on our ability to work as a team to overcome the hurdles and exploit the opportunities that exist. This means that co-operation and only cooperation is the key to our future. At all cost, we must maintain our commitment to the process. She also expressed appreciation to the NBI development partners for their support and appealed to them to continue providing assistance to the next generation of projects being

considered by Nile-COM.

In his brief, the Executive Director of the Nile Basin Initiative, Mr. Meraji Msuya commended the Nile Council of Ministers for the support and guidance provided in the NBI process. "Since the inauguration of the Nile Basin Initiative in 1999, there have been a lot of interactions at all levels in this complex, but doable cooperative process. With the proper guidance of the Nile Basin Council of Ministers, this process is beginning to culminate into projects rolling out as we witness today", he said.

Representatives from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) pledged their commitment and continuing support to the NBI process to bring tangible benefits to the peoples of the Basin.

Maushe Kidundo, Environmental Education Lead Specialist

Micro-grants - A tool to advocate for environmental conservation

While some of the environmental threats that plague the Nile Basin are due to natural occurrences such as floods, recurrent droughts and soil erosion, many are caused by practices of the inhabitants of the Basin. These practices do not only damage the eco-system of the basin but also erode the capacity of the communities of the Basin to sustain an adequate level of livelihood. Moreover, the inability of the riparian countries to capitalize meaningfully on the natural resources of the basin has further aggravated the rampant poverty that afflicts the basin. Hence, the basin has witnessed increased degradation of its environment resulting from the reliance of the communities on the fragile natural resources of the basin for livelihoods; and adopting environmentally destructive coping mechanisms to sustain their livelihoods.

The Micro-grants funding facility of the NTEAP aims at introducing innovative, environmentally sound and friendly pilot activities that would allow the riparian communities to conserve the



natural resources and utilize them effectively for their sustained livelihoods. The Program, which is community driven, will build on the experience of the successful Small Grant Program that was introduced by UNDP/GEF over

a decade ago. It will also endeavor to carry out capacity building programs targeting NGOs, NGO networks and Government staff in project implementation and environmental conservation activities. The program will differ from the GEF SGP in that it will focus primarily on trans-boundary based projects that will address trans-boundary related issues affecting the basin. The Program is also gender-sensitive, hence, one of the main target groups of the Program are women, who constitute over 50% of the inhabitants of the basin. Through their grass root institutional structures, women will be able to tap into the micro-grant resources to benefit their communities and advocate for environmental conservation through out the basin.

Amir Baker, Micro grants Lead Specialist

Environmental Awareness - Changing Attitude

Knowledge alone doesn't harm or help the environment. Human attitudes don't harm or help the environment. Human behaviors, on the other hand, have greatly harmed, yet hold a great deal of hope for helping, the environment. In order to maintain the Nile river basins environmental sustainability, change in human behavior, supported by knowledge and attitude must be addressed. In realizing its importance, the Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project has an environmental education and public awareness program. The main objective of the program is to deepen public awareness on Nile environmental issues which affect all its communities. The program has three main areas of focus (i) public information and awareness (ii) environmental education and awareness in education institutions (secondary schools and universities) and (iii) transbound-

ary networking.

Public information and awareness will be achieved through formation of national working groups. The working group will plan and implement through selected NGOs and Government Institution both national and transboundary awareness activities including campaigns, production and distribution of awareness materials, demonstration of good environmental practices, etc.

Environmental education within schools and tertiary institutions will involve (i) networking secondary schools (ii) conducting teachers training (iii) supporting transboundary environmental demonstration within schools (iv) initiate an award scheme (v)

'Changing attitude and behavior of the Nile Basin communities'

support university level student transfers and (vi) facilitate the development of a university level course or module on environmental education specifically on Nile basin environmental issues. The success and sustainability of this program depends on sharing of information among the riparian countries. The program will develop and support existing networks within the basin. On an annual basis the program will hold a regional workshop to facilitate information exchange and develop transboundary action plans. Other networking tools like discussion groups on the internet will be explored, including the use of a newsletter like this one.

Maushe Kidundo, Environmental Education Lead Specialist

Monitoring and Evaluation - Tracking inputs and impacts

As the NTEAP starts its implementation process and as the activities start to take shape on the ground, it is important to set-up a proper monitoring and evaluation mechanism in place. The M&E structure will allow us to monitor the progress of each component ascertaining that the whole program is on track and did not deviate from its original course. In addition, the M&E process will allow us to introduce changes in the implementation strategies or even re-think the design if the results on the ground justify so. M&E has become an important element in implementation exercise as it provides timely and accurate

indicators of progress and ultimately success.

NTEAP will employ a variety of M&E tools to track progress and assess outcomes and impacts. The tools range from simple feedback questionnaires to exhaustive monitoring visits and quantitative and qualitative data analysis derived from the field and compared to baseline data collected in the early stages of implementation. In our M&E efforts in NTEAP, we will also rely on analytical reports received



from national coordinators describing progress and highlighting the main constraints. These inputs will be reviewed and used as guidance instruments when preparing work plans.

Monitoring and Evaluation will provide our development partners with first hand information on progress and will also, support the efforts of deriving and documenting lessons learned as well as compiling best practices for wider dissemination.

Intisar Salih, Monitoring and Evaluation Lead Specialist

Water and Environment - Water Quality Monitoring

Water is a finite and life sustaining resource and covers about 70 % of the physical environment. Fresh water resources on the other hand are scarce and are unevenly distributed. The amount of water available globally is about 1.4 billion cubic kilometers. Of this amount, 97 % is saline, and is in seas and oceans and is a habitat to diverse marine ecosystems. Of the 3 % fresh water, only less than 1 % is found in lakes and rivers, supporting all our developmental activities. Surprisingly 2 % of the available fresh water resources is locked up in glacial ice at the poles. The fresh water in rivers and lakes, thus needs to be managed well for our sustenance and that of future generations.

Globally fresh water is becoming an endangered resource. In the past, there was little or no water pollution and most of the rivers and lakes were in a pristine state. In modern times, water pollution is on the increase and gross quality deterioration is evident in many water bodies.

Some of the major threats facing fresh waters within the Nile basin include; endemic water scarcity, uneven distribution both in time and space, increased pollution from domestic, agricultural and industrial sources, gross water quality deterioration leading to serious health and economic problems, upstream soil erosion leading to increased turbidity and color as well as reservoir sedimentation, gross wetlands and catchments destruction, and eutrophication due to high levels of nutrient contaminants in the water.

The Basin wide Water Quality Monitoring Component is one of the six Components of the Nile Trans boundary Environmental Action Project (NTEAP) and is a trans boundary intervention aimed at enhancing the water quality monitoring capacities of the riparian countries as well as raise the level of awareness on the importance of overall water resources and water quality assessment, as an important management tool.

This Component starts implementing its activities with the initial formation of a Regional Water Quality Working Group and the



establishment of the current status of surface water quality in the Nile and its river and lake systems. This will lay the foundation and ground work for subsequent planned water quality control activities, all aimed at the assessment, conservation, protection and wise management of our common and shared water resources for our own use and for the preservation of aquatic biodiversity and the physical environment as a whole. The environment belongs to all of us, lets all work together to ensure that both water and other environmental resources are sustainably managed.

John Omwenga - Water Quality Monitoring

People and places



JB Collier, WB with H.E Kamal Ali Mohamed Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources of Sudan and D.r Osman Hamad, Nile -TAC member

A World Bank supervision mission composed of JB Collier, Astrid Hillers, Dr. Hasan Hassan visited the PMU between March 28 and April 5 2004. The mission had detailed discussions on the NTEAP work plan and achievements to date with the PMU staff. The mission also met with H.E the Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources, H.E. the Minister of Environment and Physical Development of Sudan and the Nile TAC member of Sudan. An Aid memoire which commended the progress made by the NTEAP was signed by the Execu-

tive Director of Nile SEC and JB Collier of the World Bank at the end of the mission's visit.

Barbra Miller, Nile Team, SVP Cluster Leader, World Bank, was in Khartoum between April 2nd and 7th 2004 with regards to flood control project study.

The Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources was the host for the mission. She met with H.E. the Minister of Environment and Physical Development. She also held discussions with the RPM and the Lead specialists at the PMU

Gedion Asfaw, Regional Project Manager

Readers corner

This corner is devoted to opinions and letters of our readers.

In this first issue we will share with you some excerpts from the speeches delivered at the NTEAP launch.

"A historic regional initiative indeed at a historic moment in the Sudan." Dr. Heba El-Kohly, Ag.UNDP Res.Rep. Sudan.

(Referring to the Sudan peace agreement at the time the NTEAP Launch)

Speech of the President of Sudan began with a quotation from Prophet Mohammed

*"All people are free partners
in three things, water,
vegetation which springs
spontaneously and fire"*

"..the NBI is a unique process that has been conceived and nurtured, and is owned by the riparian states.: Meraji Msuya, ED. Nile SEC

"Our success depends on our ability to work as a team to overcome the hurdles and exploit the opportunities that exist. This means that cooperation and only cooperation is the key to our future". Hon. Martha Karua, Nile COM Chair

"Cooperation is indeed a truly powerful tool and it is a driver for enhancing the potential of Nile Basin countries as you confront the challenges ahead of you.." Nigel Fisher, Exec. Director, UNOPS.

Gedion Asfaw, Regional Project Manager

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NILE BASIN INITIATIVE

Initiative du Bassin du Nil

Putting the
Shared Vision into
Action

Project Implementation Brief - *The NTEAP Project*

The Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project is one of the eight projects under the Nile Basin Initiative shared Vision Program (SVP). This five years program became operational in October 2003. The NTEAP is hosted by Sudan and located in Khartoum. The Project was operationalized in October 2003, and will have a life of five years. It will support the development of a basin-wide framework for actions to address high priority transboundary environmental issues within the context of the Nile Basin initiative's Strategic Action Program

The main objective of the project is to provide a strategic environmental framework for the management of the transboundary waters and environment challenges in the Nile river basin. Specifically, the project will: (i) Improve the understanding of the relationship of water resources development and environment, (ii) Provide forum to discuss development paths for the Nile with a wide range of stakeholders (iii) Enhance basin-wide cooperation and environmental awareness and (iv) Enhance environmental management capacities of the basin-wide institutions and the NBI.

The NTEAP has six components: (i) Institutional Strengthening to Facilitate Regional Cooperation (ii) Community-Level Land, Forest and Water Conservation (iii) Environmental Education & Awareness (iv) Wetlands and Biodiversity Conservation (v) Water Quality Monitoring and Monitoring & Evaluation.

Expected Project Outputs. The expected outputs include (i) Increased regional cooperation in environmental and water management fields (ii) Increased basin-wide community action and cooperation in land and water management (iii) Increased number of basin-wide networks of environmental and water professionals and increased number of experts knowledgeable on the environment (iv) Greater appreciation of river hydrology and more informed discussion of development paths (v) Expanded information, knowledge base and know-how on land and water resources available to professionals and NGOs (vi) Greater awareness of the linkages between macro/sectoral policies and the environment and (vii) Greater awareness and increased capacity on transboundary water quality threats

Project Implementation The project shall be implemented in a manner that upholds the spirit of the Nile Basin Initiative, ensuring that (i) Riparian ownership of the Environment Project is maintained (ii) Cooperation and trust among the Nile countries are enhanced (iv) Capacity is built within the Basin to manage and implement basin-wide projects and (v) The Environment Project is implemented with the highest quality and fiduciary standards

Financial and Technical Support The NTEAP is owned and implemented by the NBI countries through financial and technical assistance of UNDP and the World Bank. CIDA has provided financial support to the Nile Basin Trust Fund. UNOPS provides support services in the implementation of NTEAP. The total budget for the five year period amounts to 43.6 million dollars, including contributions from the riparian countries. *NTEAP Brochure, May 2004*

During the first & second quarter of 2004:

- PMU office was renovated, furnished & equipped
- 4 Lead Specialists, 8 National Project Coordinators 15 local support staff were recruited
- 2004 work plan was completed, steering committee meeting held and approved
- NTEAP was officially launched by H.E Lieutenant General Omar Al Bashir, President of Sudan

Nile information - *The Nile Basin Initiative*

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) is a transitional mechanism that includes the ten Nile riparian countries as equal members in a regional partnership to promote economic development and fight poverty throughout the basin. The vision of the NBI is "to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water

Formally launched in February 1999 by the Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin States, the Initiative includes all Nile countries and provides an agreed basin-wide framework to fight poverty and promote socio-economic development in the region. The Initiative is guided by a Shared Vision "to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile

Basin water resources."

The Initiative provides a unique forum for the countries of the Nile to move forward a cooperative process to realize tangible benefits in the Basin and build a solid foundation of trust and confidence. The Nile-COM serves as the highest decision-making body of the NBI. Chairmanship of the Nile-COM is rotated annually. The Nile-COM is supported by a Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC), which is composed of two senior officials from each member country. The NBI maintains a secretariat, the Nile-SEC, located in Entebbe, Uganda. The Secretariat began operations in June 1999 and was officially launched on September 3, 1999.

The SVP includes eight projects: seven basin-wide thematic projects and one project focused on building the capacity of the Nile-SEC for program execution and coordination.

1. Nile Transboundary Environmental Action
2. Nile Basin Regional Power Trade
3. Efficient Water Use for Agricultural Production
4. Water Resources Planning and Management
5. Confidence-Building and Stakeholder Involvement (Communications)
6. Applied Training
7. Socio-Economic Development and Benefit-Sharing
8. SVP Coordination

The NBI countries include Burundi, D. R. Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. Eritrea currently has an observer status and has expressed its intention to become a full member soon.

NBI documents