



The Nile Environment

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF NTEAP



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Editorial

This issue of the Nile Environment has focused on the Nile day celebrations because of its historical importance and its significance in raising awareness in a concerted manner on the challenges of achieving the vision of NBI. The fact that many countries had environmentally related activities as part of the celebrations is a manifestation of the need to put environment in the forefront as we trek the path of sustainable development. We in the NTEAP salute the Executive Director of NBI and Nile Secretariat at large for translating the decision of the NBDF into action, and we take this opportunity to congratulate the riparians for a successful Nile Day celebrations.

A remarkable achievement for NTEAP during the quarter was the launch of the wetland and biodiversity working group. This marks the starting point for rolling out activities of the wetlands component. The group will promote regional cooperation to share experiences in transboundary management of wetlands and biodiversity resources in the Nile Basin and identify and prioritize common problems and solutions.

NTEAP also successfully conducted its 4th Project Steering Committee meeting, which culminated into the approval of the 2007 NTEAP work plan and budget. NTEAP intends to consolidate its activities/achievements during 2007 and at the same time attempt to integrate them into the national plans.

We will as much as possible solicit cooperation from stakeholders in implementing the activities.

Gedion Asfaw, RPM

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Nile Basin Initiative Celebrates the Nile Day



H.E Kagame (center), H.E Odette Kayitesi (to his left), David Grey (extreme right) and Nile Council of Ministers in a group photograph.

Enhanced Cooperation on the Nile for Peace and Prosperity, was the message flagged in all Nile basin countries on the 22nd of February 2007, on the occasion of the Nile Day. In November 2006, the Nile Basin Development Forum (NBDF), held in Addis Ababa, agreed that the 22nd February of every year be dedicated to commemorate the day the agreed minutes that established the Nile Basin Initiative was signed in Tanzania in 1999. The proposal was endorsed by the Nile Basin secretariat and the maiden celebrations took place on 22nd February 2007. The regional celebration, officiated by H.E Paul Kagame, the president of the republic of Rwanda, took place in Kigali, Rwanda, coinciding with the extra ordinary meeting of the Nile Council of Ministers. The regional event characterized by speeches, displays by NBI projects and NGOs, cultural performances and sports, was attended by the Nile Council of Ministers, representatives of Development Partners, government officials and the general public. A Key note address was given by H.E Paul Kagame, and others who gave speeches include the Nile Council of Minister Chairperson H.E Odette Kayitesi, Mr. David Grey on behalf of the Development Partners and Hon. Bikoro Munyanganizi, the Minister of State for Water and Energy of the Republic of Rwanda.

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 NBI is led by a Council of Ministers responsible for water affairs in Nile basin countries (Nile-COM) and the vision of NBI is "to achieve socio-economic development through equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile basin water resources". (PTO for national celebrations)

Joel Arumadri– KMS

Highlights of the Regional Nile Day Celebrations in Kigali



H.E Kagame addressing the audience



The audience at the Nile Day celebrations



NTEAP exhibition stall.



Nile COM Chair giving a speech



Rwandese Cultural dancers



Basket ball team

NTEAP used the occasion to expand visibility of NBI

- Over 200 copies of the French version of NRAK CD ROM were distributed.
- Over 400 NTEAP calendars were given out.
- Over 400 NTEAP brochures distributed

This was the inaugural celebration of the Nile Day and it will now be an annual event.

Nile Day Celebrations in Tanzania



1- Dr. Msekala giving a speech, 2- Audience, 3- Tree planting

In Tanzania the celebrations were held in Nyashimo village, Magu District in Mwanza Region, and were presided over by Hon. Dr. Alex Msekela, the Mwanza Regional Commissioner on behalf of Hon. Dr. Shukuru. J. Kawambwa, the Minister for Water. Hundreds of local residents and leaders of Magu district, local NGOs, Nile Development Forum and NBI projects gathered at Nyashimo village to com-

memorate the Nile Day. Activities included cultural dances, speeches by Hon. Dr. Alex Msekela, the Regional Commissioner for Mwanza, on behalf of Minister for Water, Hon. Dr. Shukuru J. Kawambwa and the Regional Project Manager Power Trade (RPT) Project, Mr. Kamu Karekaho on behalf of the Executive Director. There was also a public lecture on “Enhanced Cooperation Over the Nile for Peace and Prosperity – the benefits and

challenges”, at St. Augustine University of Tanzania in Mwanza, and tree planting. The guest of honour launched the “Promotion of community involvement in protecting the environment of the surrounding areas and the waters of Lake Victoria project”, to be financed through the NTEAP’s microgrants program. A contribution of Tshs. 30,083,000/= (Equivalent to US \$ 23,158.58) will be made available by NTEAP to the project. NTEAP addresses high priority transboundary environmental issues within the context of the NBI’s Strategic Action Program.

Abdallah Shah- NPC Tanzania

Nile Day Celebrations in Burundi



Hon. Kayitesi (centre) addressing press conference



Tree planting exercise

tree planting at the catchment area of the southern most source of the Nile River, organized by the National Project Coordinator Capacity Building and Stakeholder Involvement (CBSI) in Burundi and the local government of the Commune of RUTOVU, the District administration of BURURI and the Nile Basin Discourse Forum (NBDF).

The ceremonies were attended by the Chief of Cabinet of the Ministry for Land Management, Tourism and Environment, Mr. Fabien SINANKWAKURE, the Administrator Adviser of the Governor of BURURI, Mr Jean Claude NSENGIYUMVA as well as the Administrator of the Commune of RUTOVU.

Salvatore Ruzima- NPC

Burundi marked the day starting with a press conference organized by the Minister of Environment, Hon. Odette KAYITESI, who talked about the history of the Nile Day, the main NBI achievements so far, advantages that Burundi draws from its member-

ship of the Nile Basin Initiative family, status of the co-operation between the Nile basin countries and the challenges, singling the cooperative framework between the Nile basin countries as the biggest challenge. Other activities were delivery of speeches to Secondary Schools and the general public,

Nile Day Celebrations in DR Congo



Resource persons at the Nile Day

Celebrations in the Democratic Republic of Congo took place in both the capital city of Kinshasa and in Goma (within the Nile basin area). In Kinshasa the Nile Day was celebrated in the conference room at the Grand Hotel Kinshasa, attended by more than 200 people, including His Excellency the Minister of Scientific Research, representatives of the Ambassadors of Kenya and Egypt, Representatives of the UNOPS projects, representatives from various Ministries, University Professors, Journalists, members of Media houses, NGOs and CBOs, NBI staff and members of Nile Basin Discourse. The speech from the NBI Executive Director was read by the NTEAP NPC and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment read the speech from His Excellency the Minister of Environment, Forest

and Water Resources. This was followed by a discussion session where the Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment (NTEAP PSC Member) and the National Project Coordinators of NTEAP, CBSI, ATP, EWUAP, WRPM, FAO Nile basin project and the Nile Basin Discourse provided answers to the questions asked by the participants. Most of the questions asked were related to NBI objectives, its programs, its policy and interventions in Democratic Republic of Congo, followed by refreshments. Leaflets carrying awareness messages, T-shirts and caps were distributed to participants. The National Project Coordinators of CBSI and NTEAP participated in an interview on NBI activities on two TV Stations.

In Goma, the Nile Day was celebrated at Ihusi Hotel, attended by over 500 people. Activities carried out included tree planting by the students from the Great Lakes University (Universite des Grands Lacs), sports, poems, demonstration by women on the use of improved stoves to save charcoal, in addition to delivering the NBI Executive Director's message in 15 schools.

Joseph Afata- NPC



Energy saving stoves



Football team



Tree planting

Nile Day Celebrations in Ethiopia



VIPs at the Nile day

In Ethiopia Nile day was celebrated at the premises of the Water Resources Project Management Unit (WRPM PMU) and was presided over by H. E. Mr. Adugna Jebesa, State Minister of Water resources. Present at the celebration were H.E. Mr. Tarekegn Emagnu, member of parliament and chairperson of the Natural Resources and Environment Standing Committee in the House of Peoples Representatives of the Federal Democratic Re-

public of Ethiopia, Hon. H.E. Mr. Augustin Nsanze, Ambassador of Burundi, Mr. Edyathumanga Jagannathn, World Bank representative, Mrs. Catherine Beardard, representative of the Embassy of Canada, representatives of CBOs, NGOs, NTEAP environmental journalists, Environmental Education & Awareness working group members, NBI staff, officials from MoWR and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and invited guests from the five administrative regions. Over 200 guests attended the 2007 Nile Day National celebration characterized by speeches and songs by students. NBI posters, T-shirts and caps were distributed to the five Regions prior to the Nile Day.

Wobua Mekonen- NPC



Invited guests at the pavilion



Students singing songs

Nile Day Celebrations in Egypt

In Egypt, a reception to mark the Nile Day was organized by CBSI on the 24th February 2007, attended by the Minister of Irrigation & water Resources, Dr Mahmoud Abou-Zeid, experts, NGO representatives and the Minister for Environment, Magued Georges, who made some remarks on the on-going environmentally related projects «We are building at this moment a station for waste collection and treatment emanating from cruise ships in the region of 'Al-Aaqab, east of Aswan, at the cost of 5 million Egyptian pounds», he explained. He also said up to 900 cubic

meters per day of liquid waste produced by cruise ships can be treated by the plant. « The treated water will be used to irrigate 69 feddans (29 hectares) », confirmed Georges. The Minister also informed participants that his ministry stopped the discharge of industrial waste water into the Nile in 2006.

The reception was preceded by a meeting organized by Dr Emadeddine Adli, the president of the Nile Basin Discourse (NBD) and the National Coordinator for National Forum for Nile basin development

(NDF), attended by NGOs « We have organized this meeting to discuss the local activities of local forums in the 16 wards in Egypt», the Coordinator said.

Certainly, this first Nile celebration has reached a tiny minority of stakeholders. However, it represents an important step forward. In the coming years more concrete actions are expected from the governments and other partners.

Dalia- NTEAP Environmental Journalists Network

Nile Day Celebrations in Sudan

Sudan celebrated the Nile Day with series of events over a period of 4 days starting from 19 - 22nd February 2007. The Delegation from Sudan to the regional celebration in Kigali, comprising of H.E the Minister of water, the Undersecretary, and the TAC member gave Media interviews and

the civil society organized a cleaning and tree planting exercise at White Nile state at Kosti, in White Nile State. Canals discharging rain waters into the river were cleaned and signs for keeping the place clean installed within the area. Trees were planted along the river bank

by students and the Nile day message from the Executive Director delivered to the students.

The climax of the celebrations was on the 22nd of February at the Ministry (.....continued to first column page 5)

Nile Day Celebrations in Sudan (.....from page 4)

of Irrigation & Water Resources attended by H. E State Minister for Irrigation and Water Resources, and H.E State Minister of Environment & Physical Development, who addressed the gathering. The NTEAP Regional Project Manager, Mr.Gedion Asfaw and Dr. Idris M. Idris, the acting undersecretary of Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources also addressed the gathering at the opening session.

The program included a Workshop, exhibitions and a presentation on cooperation before NBI delivered by Eng. Ibrahim Salih, overview of NBI by CBSI NPC, Shared Vision Program by NTEAP NPC, Subsidiary Action Program by ENPM NPC and Cooperation between Nile Basin Dis-

course & NBI by Prof. Asim Moghrabi.

In Juba, Southern Sudan, students of Comboni and Superi secondary schools cleaned the school compound and the speech from the Executive Director of NBI was delivered to them by the NTEAP Local Micro-grants Coordinator. An appeal was made by the schools to NTEAP to continue supporting the school program. The event ended with planting of trees at the UNOPS offices in collaboration with the Acting Director of UNOPS Mr. Grey Wilson.

Abdelslaam (NPC) & Alex Jubek (LMGC)



Tree planting at UNOPS offices in Juba



Cleaning drainage canal at Kosti

Nile Day Celebrations in Kenya

In Kenya celebrations to mark the Nile day took place in Busia town, bordering Uganda, in an event that lasted for 2 days starting from 21st - 22nd February 2007. Exhibitions were organized by Nile Basin Initiative, displaying NBI activities to the public and invited guests which included the District Commissioner, Mr. Ole Kepas, Her Worship the Mayor of Busia Ms Imelda Obwana, His Excellency the High Commissioner of Tanzania represented by Minister Counselor Mr Mboi, several dignitaries, students and members of the community . The NTEAP Schools' project displayed very impressive work.

Other activities were tree planting, launched by the District Commissioner Mr. Ole Kepas, a clean up exercise carried out by students, government officers, civil society groups and a 'Nile Day Football Match' played between St. Mathias Boys' High School soccer team and Busia Youth Polytechnic team. St. Mathias Boys won the trophy which will be competed for annually during Nile day celebrations.

The climax of the celebrations was on

22/2/07, characterized by speeches, poems and songs encouraging the audience to preserve and protect the resources of river Nile, its tributaries and the environment for the future. The Guest of Honor presented certificates of participation to the various groups and the trophy to the winning football team. Speeches were given by Mr. Vincent Kabalisa who read the Nile Basin Initiative Executive Directors speech, the Civil Society representative - Chairperson Kenya Nile Development Forum – Dr. Raburu, Her Worship the Mayor of Busia – Ms Imelda Obwana, the representative of HE the High Commissioner of Tanzania – Mr Mboi and the Guest of honor, the Provincial Commissioner Western, represented by the District Commissioner Busia - Mr. Ole Kepas.

The Theme of the speeches was **Enhanced Cooperation on Our Nile** to help in curbing environmental degradation, poverty eradication and ways of improving economic growth in our individual countries.

Lily Kisaka- NPC



DC Busia (Right in tie); Mayor (His right).



Tree planting



NTEAP stall

NTEAP Project Steering Committee Approves 2007 Work plan and Budget



Participants at the 4th NTEAP PSC meeting

The work plan and budget for 2007 for the Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project (NTEAP) was approved, subject to the project management unit presenting a suitable implementation mechanism for the National Eligible Projects (NEPs) and raising the budgetary allocation for NEPs, among other issues. The budget approval was done during the 4th NTEAP steering committee meeting held during 12-14th February 2007, in Khartoum, Sudan. The meeting was officially opened by the State Minister of Environment and Physical Development for Sudan, H.E.

Ms Theresa Siricio Iro and attended by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) members/representatives from NBI countries, the PSC Chair, Dr. Saadeldin Ibrahim, Mr. Ian Myles of CIDA, the Executive secretary of Lake Victoria Basin Commission, Dr Tom Okurut, the Country Director of UNDP Sudan, Mr. Jerzy Skuratowicz, the Country Representative of World Bank, a representative of the Ministry of foreign affairs of Sudan, NTEAP staff and Mr. Audace Ndayizeye, the Executive Director of Nile Basin Initiative. During the meeting a number of recommendations and decisions were made by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) to guide project implementation during 2007, and the recommendation of the NTEAP Mid Term Review to extend the project up to September 2009 was endorsed.

High on the agenda were the GEF second tranche funding uncertainty, as a result of the inclusion of NTEAP among projects struck from the list of projects receiving funding from GEF in 2007, and the NEPs. However Ms.

Mirey Attalla, the GEF Regional Focal point for International Waters, allayed the fears of participants when she presented short term solutions to the problem and key scenarios. She proposed an action plan up to July 2007, for securing NTEAP GEF funding, highlighting the roles of the different partners/donors (Nile Sec, CIDA, UNDP, World Bank, and UNOPS) in an effort to ensure approval of financing of NTEAP during the July 2007 GEF meeting.

The NEPs are an initiative of the NTEAP PSC to provide financial support to national projects which are not micro grants eligible and address issues of environmental significance. PSC meeting is an annual event to approve NTEAP budget and work plan and at the same time discuss project implementation challenges.

The NTEAP project is supported through the World Bank GEF and the multi-donor Nile Basin Trust Fund (NBTF) established for financing NBI activities.

Joel Arumadri-KMS

Sunt Wetland Forest in Khartoum Recommended to Become a Ramsar Site.



Sunt wetland in Khartoum city

At the heart of Khartoum is a unique feature, the Sunt Wetland Forest, surprisingly found in moderately arid climate. It is a beautiful forest with a canopy of *Acacia niloticus*, the Sunt trees. It has everything required for biodiversity including the humans who frequent it for leisure. It is the pride of Khartoum and can be a center for environmental education and ecotourism. It is a seasonal wetland which gets wet for

which gets wet for about six months in the year while the other six months are dry.

The members of the Wetlands and Biodiversity regional working group made an excursion to the wetland. The current managers who are the forest department in Khartoum were encouraged to manage the garbage and keep the place clean in order to give more value and attract visitors to the area. They proposed the introduction of a small fee payable by visitors as a token of appreciation of nature, to assist in the conservation of the area. The area is also used by riparian communities for river edge gardening and it produces a lot of organically grown vegetables. There is need for more information on its socio economic and biodiversity value since it is recognized as site for migratory route of the birds. The wetlands and biodiversity working

group recommended that the site be elevated to international protection status and declared a Ramsar site.

The Ramsar Convention is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable utilization of wetlands, recognizing the fundamental ecological functions and their economic, cultural, scientific, and recreational value. Declaring a wetland a Ramsar site prevents the progressive encroachment on and loss of the wetland.

The wetlands and biodiversity working group promotes regional cooperation to share experience in transboundary management of wetlands and biodiversity resources in the Nile Basin.

Henry Busulwa- Wetlands & Biodiversity Lead Specialist

Nile Basin Regional Wetland and Biodiversity Programme Launched.



Participants at Wetlands Workshop

On 5th March 2007 H.E Minister of Water and Irrigation H. E Kamal Ali Mohamed launched the long awaited Nile Wetlands and Biodiversity working group. This was at a regional workshop held in Khartoum, Sudan, aimed at providing a platform for discussion, sharing experiences and prioritizing wetland management activities.

The Wetlands and biodiversity working group will promote regional cooperation and capabilities that will enable countries to share experience in transboundary management of wetlands and biodiversity resources in the Nile Basin, by identifying and

prioritizing common problems and solutions. The group will not only link activities but experts and institutions where they operate at national level, and a directory will be developed for easy follow up.

During the workshop, the members discussed the mechanisms that identify the working group as a Nile wetlands and biodiversity working group, with its own mission and working modality, ensuring a sustained link into the Nile

Commission.

Other envisaged component outputs include the development of wetlands education and awareness materials, carrying out trans boundary ecological and socio economic studies to generate information for guiding investment and managing transboundary sites and the development of transboundary management plans.

In his key note address, the Chairman of the Ramsar Standing Committee for the Ramsar Secretariat, Mr. Paul Mafabi, gave an overview of the issues of wetland management in the Nile region, citing the main challenges includ-

ing enhancing national institutions capacity to manage wetlands and biodiversity in the Nile basin. He proposed various options for the institutionalization and policy development and suggested solutions for consideration by the working group to strengthen the capabilities in the management of the Nile Wetlands.

The Regional Project Manager of NTEAP Mr. Gedion Asfaw informed the participants that a lot is expected from them to operationalize the working group and it is their activities at the national level that will enable the Nile Basin initiative to realize the outputs and sustainable utilization of the Nile Basin resources. He said the Group should transform itself into the "Nile Wet" so that it is the main Ramsar Convention group that will follow up wetlands and biodiversity issues within the Nile basin.

The workshop was closed by the Minister of State for Environment H.E Ms Theresa Siricio who said she had a lot of hopes in the group which she expects to provide technical assistance in the management of the Sudd, in Sudan, the biggest wetlands in Africa.

Henry Busulwa- Wetlands & Biodiversity Lead Specialist

World Water Day – 22 March 2007

Coping with Water Scarcity was the Theme of this year's World Water Day Celebrations. It highlighted the increasing scarcity of fresh water resources World wide and the need for increased integration and cooperation to ensure sufficient sustainable and equitable management of the scarce water resources both at the national and international levels.

Speaking at the WWD celebrations at the FAO HQs in Rome Italy the Director of FAO Dr. Jacques Diouf said that "Water Scarcity was the Greatest Global Challenge of the 21st Century". The main challenges lie in finding out ways to conserve and use and protect the world's water resources. Global population is tar-

geted to hit 8.1 Billion in 2030. To keep pace with the growing demand for food, 14% more fresh water will have to be withdrawn for agricultural purposes for the next 30 years.

The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his message mark-

Emphasis of future WWD celebrations should shift from awareness-raising to action.

ing World Water Day (WWD), "With some 700 million around the world currently suffering from water scarcity, a figure that could increase to more 3 billion by 2025, integrated cross-border management of this vital resource is

crucial"

The main WWD ceremony took place in Rome, Italy, at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Speaking at the ceremony, His Royal Highness Willem-Alexander, Prince of Orange urged that the emphasis of future celebrations should shift from awareness-raising to action under the new name "World Water Action Day".

As population grows development needs call for increased water demand for cities, agriculture and industries. The pressure on fresh water supplies will intensify and lead to tensions and conflicts among users and lead to a strain on the environment. **John Omwenga-WQM LS, NTEAP**

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NEPAD-Action Plan and IGAD Strategy on Environment and Natural Resources Adopted



Participants at the meeting

The NEPAD-Action Plan and IGAD strategy on environment and natural resources has been adopted. This was at the ministerial meeting for the adoption of the NEPAD sub-regional environment action plan (SREAP), IGAD environment outlook and IGAD environment and natural resources strategy (ENRS) that took place in Nairobi, Kenya during March 28-30 2007.

The meeting was attended by Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania. It was also attended by experts from NEPAD Secretariat, AMCEN Secretariat, Lake Victoria Basin Commission, IGAD Secretariat, UNEP, the Nile Basin Initiative and WWF. The ministerial session was preceded by the experts meeting which reviewed NEPAD's SREAP and IGAD's ENRS. The ministerial meeting was presided over by Hon. Bazivamo Christophe, Minister for Lands, Environment, Forestry, Water & Mines of Rwanda and Vice President of AMCEN.

The RPM discussed enhancing NBI-IGAD collaboration with the IGAD representative.

Gedion Asfaw, RPM, NTEAP

Hydro Informatics Training Organized

March 11-24 2007 Khartoum



Left to right: Dr Bashar and Prof. Abdalla, of UNESCO Chair, Dr Saleh, V/Chancellor of Islamic University of Omdruman and Gedion Asfaw of NTEAP at certificate award ceremony

The Applied Training Project (ATP) of NBI and UNESCO Chair in Water Resources of Sudan jointly organized a

two weeks training in hydro informatics for participants from the Nile Basin countries. The NTEAP facilitated the conduct of the training and the RPM of NTEAP, made an opening remark at the start of the training and participated at the award of certificates to participants. Dr William KudoJa of ATP made a close follow up ensuring the success of the training. Twenty eight participants from the nine NBI countries took part in the training.

The collaboration of UNESCO Chair in Water Resources and NBI has been exemplary in capacity building of water & environment professionals of the Nile basin.

Gedion Asfaw, RPM, NTEAP

Upcoming events

2-10th April 2007- WRPMP Meeting

18th April 2007- World Heritage Day

7-10 May 2007- NTEAP Regional Best Practices Workshop, Kigali, Rwanda.

23-28 May 2007- WRPMP-NB data sharing Protocol, Phase I Review Workshop, Addis, Ethiopia.

May 2007, Nile COM Meeting, Entebbe, Uganda.

28-30th May 2007- Regional Nile Net Workshop, Nairobi, Kenya.

5th June 2007- World Environment Day

4-14th June 2007- EWUAP Regional Training on Water Harvest and Irrigation and Study Tour in the ENSAP Region.

July-August- GEF-IW biannual conference, Cape Town, S. Africa