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# The Nile Basin Sustainability Framework

The Nile Basin Initiative's approach to basin sustainability



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## Abbreviations

CFA	Cooperative Framework Agreement
DSS	Decision Support System
EAPP	Eastern Africa Power Pool
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ENSAP	Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program
ENTRO	Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office
GIS	Geographic Information System
IWRM	Integrated water resources management
KSD	Key Strategic Direction
LVBC	Lake Victoria Basin Commission
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NBSF	Nile Basin Sustainability Framework
NELSAP	Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program
NELSAP-CU	Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program Coordination Unit
Nile-COM	Nile Basin Council of Ministers of Water
Nile-SEC	Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat
Nile-TAC	Nile Technical Advisory Committee
RBO	River Basin Organisation
SAP	Subsidiary Action Program
SVP	Shared Vision Program
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development



## Foreword

The Nile River and its vast basin are a strategic resource of unrivalled importance to the Nile riparian countries. The banks of the Nile have been settled by man for many millennia. The river's refreshing streams to this day sustain diverse ecosystems and provide drinking water to millions of people. The torrential rains and streamflow within the Nile Basin water our fields, allowing us reap bountiful harvests year after year. The numerous scenic lakes and wetlands of the Nile basin abound with fish, providing the basin communities with a rich source of animal protein and income. Its' roaring waters spin turbines that generate electricity to light our homes and power our industries. Above all, it is the thread that binds us together – upstream and downstream countries. The mighty Nile is truly the springboard for peace and integration in our region, and the means for realising the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) Shared Vision.

Being of such immense importance, and yet coming increasingly under threat from man-made and natural factors, it is imperative that we that drink from the waters of the Nile should spare no effort in protecting the river and its watersheds for our benefit and for the benefit of our children and grandchildren. In this regard, I am pleased to introduce to you the Nile Basin Sustainability Framework (NBSF) prepared by the Secretariat of the Nile Basin Initiative. It is under this framework that we will define and prepare the necessary policies, strategies and guidelines to ensure that the activities undertaken by NBI help its member countries to maximise benefits from utilization of the shared water resources of the Nile on a win-win basis while protecting the river from degradation.

The NBSF will serve as a guide to the NBI on matters of sustainable development of the Nile Basin water resources until the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) comes into force. The CFA, which is premised on international principles and best practices of transboundary water management, provides a more comprehensive legal and institutional framework under which the riparian countries will attain sustainable management and development of the Nile Basin water resources.

I commend all those who have worked tirelessly to ensure that this interim framework is in place and urge the Nile Secretariat to speed up the preparation of the constituent policies, strategies and guidelines and oversee their application in the day-to-day work of the NBI. I request that, during the process of developing the policies, strategies and guidelines of the framework, adequate measures are taken to obtain the views and contribution of member countries, national institutions, academic institutions, the business community, concerned citizens, civil society, development partners and other stakeholders.

I look forward to a bright future for the Nile Basin under guidance of the Nile Basin Sustainability Framework.

I wish you all good reading.



Hon. Charity Kaluki Ngilu, E.G.H., MP.  
**MINISTER OF WATER AND IRRIGATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
CHAIRPERSON, NILE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

12th August 2011





## 1. Introduction

The Nile Basin is home to critical environmental assets and an estimated 230 million inhabitants. Despite the remarkable natural endowments and rich cultural history of the Nile Basin, its people face considerable challenges with regard to poverty, degradation of water and environmental resources, low economic development and insecurity. A comprehensive listing of the sustainability issues in the basin can be found in the Technical Annexes (see No. 7, pages 11-12 of the Technical Annexes).

Cooperation amongst the basin countries on management of the common Nile water resources offers an important opportunity for addressing these challenges. Cooperation on water management can further serve as a catalyst for greater regional integration, both economic and political, with potential advantages far exceeding those derived from the river itself.

The desire of the Nile riparian states to jointly develop and manage the common Nile water resources to fight poverty, catalyse economic development and regional integration, build a solid foundation of trust and confidence, and promote stability in the region is proclaimed in their Shared Vision: *“to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources.”* The Nile Basin Sustainability Framework (NBSF) has been developed from this Shared Vision to provide a conceptual structure and organisational mechanism for achieving sustainability. It was prepared under the direction of the Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat (Nile-SEC) and is the result of an extensive participatory process of consultations (the Nile Basin Initiative, NBI, is defined in the glossary section). At the end of the formulation process, the Framework was appraised by the Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) and approved by the Nile Basin Council of Ministers of Water (Nile-COM). The NBSF follows the definition of sustainable development adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED; see glossary section below).

The NBSF is a strategic planning tool that seeks to: (a) ensure that all relevant guiding policies and strategies needed to support the Subsidiary Action Program (SAP) investment projects are available in a timely manner; (b) promote the consideration of the transboundary dimension in riparian states' approaches to water resources management; and (c) provide direction in some aspects of the cooperative management and development of the river basin until a permanent River Basin Organisation (RBO) is established.

The NBSF is not to be confused with the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) - the overarching legal instrument that spells out the scope and terms of the use and cooperative management, development and protection of the Nile water resources and provides for the establishment of the Nile River Basin Commission. The NBSF, which is a suite of policies, strategies and guidelines, only functions as a guide. Despite preceding the entry into force of the CFA, the NBSF will not pre-empt the definition of terms, and preparation of detailed guidelines, policies,

rules and procedures expected under the CFA. The overriding consideration in the formulation of the NBSF has been the desire to meet international best practice in selected areas of transboundary water resources management. As a consequence of the nature of the NBSF (i.e. not being based on a treaty), it is limited in its applicability to NBI programmes and activities.

Using the NBSF to guide the sustainable development and management of the Nile Basin will bring considerable benefits to the NBI member states. It will allow for joint actions that increase mutual trust and promote a deepening of riparian states' cooperation. The NBSF will also create a climate of certainty, minimise risk and improve confidence of investors, thereby increasing the ability of the NBI to mobilise much-needed investment capital for the management and development of the river basin. The NBSF will achieve this by demonstrating to national governments and the international community that the NBI has a systematic approach for dealing with sustainable development issues.



## 2. Structure of the Framework

The NBSF comprises of an overall goal, broad objectives, Key Strategic Directions (KSDs) and desired outcomes. The overall goal of the NBSF is derived from the Shared Vision and will be realised through five broad objectives. For each broad objective, a desired outcome has been defined. The Framework also has KSDs, which are the thematic areas under which interventions relating to the broad objectives are grouped. The KSDs (see Chapter 3) together define the broad boundaries of the NBSF.

Proposed interventions under the KSDs mainly comprise of policies, strategies and guidelines (see Chapter 3 below; and No. 2.1 page 2 of the Technical Annexes). They are selected on a basis of relevance to the key sustainability challenges in the basin, ability to support the SAPs to identify, prepare and implement transboundary investment projects, feasibility (considering the time, human, financial and other constraints faced by the NBI), and likelihood to produce a large positive impact. Time frames have been set for accomplishing proposed interventions (see No. 5 page 9 of the Technical Annexes). The proposed dates should be treated as best estimates that are open to adjustment depending on prevailing circumstances. The policies and strategies are expected to create an enabling environment within which other concrete actions can be taken to achieve sustainable socio-economic development in the riparian countries.

<b>Overall Goal</b>
To enable Nile Basin countries consolidate the achievements of the past years of cooperation and move systematically towards realisation of shared vision through strategic actions derived from mutually agreed policies, strategies and guidelines that focus on identified development priorities for the Nile Basin
<b>Broad Objectives</b>
To facilitate and contribute to socio-economic development, poverty reduction and improvement of livelihoods of riparian communities through equitable utilisation and sustainable development of the common Nile basin water resources.
To facilitate and contribute to efficient management of the Nile water resources drawing on principles of integrated water resources management (IWRM), and good practices in transboundary water resources management.
To facilitate and contribute to wise use of sustainable management of the environment and water-related natural resources of the Nile Basin.
To facilitate the main streaming of climatic change adaption and mitigation measures in the development and management of Nile water resources, and support Nile Basin countries in dealing with issues of climate variability and change.
To augment the efforts at achieving basin sustainability through facilitating selected cross-cutting activities that support the sustainable management and development of water and environmental resources of the Nile Basin.
<b>Desired Outcomes</b>
Enhance social-economic development, reduced poverty and improved livelihoods for riparian communities from equitable utilisation and sustainable development of the common Nile Basin water resources.
Improved efficiency in the management and utilisation of the water resources achieved through the application of principles of integrated water resources management (IWRM) and good practices in transboundary water management.
Sustainable and well-managed watersheds, aquatic ecosystem and water-related natural resources of the Nile Basin.
Reduced impact of climate change and variability on water resources, aquatic ecosystems, water-related infrastructure, livelihoods of riparian communities, and the general social economic development of the basin.
Increased sustainability of NBI activities achieved through more effective communication, greater stakeholder participation, gender mainstreaming, capacity building and improved resource mobilisation.
<b>Key Strategic Directions</b>
Water-related socio-economic development, <b>Water resources planning and management</b> <b>Environmental and water-related natural resources management</b> , Climate change adaption and mitigation



### 3. Key Strategic Directions

The KSDs comprise the core of the NBSF. The following sections introduce each KSD, outline the proposed interventions (for immediate implementation) under each, and provide suggestions for future actions. The proposed interventions are a mix of policy, strategy and guideline developments, as well as other actions that contribute to attainment of the desired outcome of the KSD.

#### 3.1 Key Strategic Direction 1: Water-related socio-economic development

The Nile River is a precious resource with vast potential to serve as an engine for regional socio-economic development and poverty alleviation. Considering the prospects that the river presents for addressing critical development needs of the riparian countries, water resources development has been an important component of the two SAPs of the NBI and will, for the foreseeable future, remain an important pillar of cooperative management and development of the Nile Basin. Water resources development activities under the SAPs have largely focused on hydropower development, irrigated agriculture, flood management and domestic water supply.

##### Policy development and other interventions

- NBI strategy for hydropower development, power interconnections and power trade
- NBI strategy for integrated agricultural irrigation
- NBI sub-basin guidelines for environmental and social assessments
- NBI guidelines for transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- NBI guidelines for benefit sharing
- Developing a regional optimised portfolio for power development options and investment plans
- Signing a Memorandum of Cooperation between the NBI and the Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP)

##### Possible future interventions

- NBI policy for sustainable water-related socio-economic development
- NBI guidelines for environmental and social assessment for power infrastructure projects
- NBI guidelines for small and large scale irrigation

#### 3.2 Key Strategic Direction 2: Water resources planning and management

Water resources development that is not founded on adequate and reliable water resources data cannot lead to optimal use of scarce water resources. The main focus of the proposed policy interventions under KSD 2 is the promotion of good practices in transboundary water resources management, and the development

of a knowledge-based Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) function within the NBI. Knowledge-based IWRM approaches achieve successful development planning and utilisation of water resources by applying state-of-the-art tools (such as Decision Support Systems, DSSs), research and knowledge. They include assessing flow changes that might be brought about by the construction and operation of water-related developments and evaluating a range of potential flow scenarios, including the determination of environmental flows.

### Policy development and other interventions

- NBI strategy for strengthening transboundary water policy component of national water policy frameworks
- NBI strategy for knowledge-based IWRM
- NBI strategy for monitoring of the Nile River Basin
- NBI strategy for sustainability of the DSS
- Completion and operationalisation of the DSS
- NBI guidelines for preparation of State of Basin reports
- Preparation of first State of Basin Report
- Establishment of an NBI unit to operate the Nile Basin long-term monitoring network, databases and DSS.

### Possible future interventions

- NBI policy for transboundary water resources planning and management
- NBI strategy for sub-basin management
- NBI strategy for flood management
- NBI strategy for integrated watershed management
- NBI guidelines for information sharing and exchange
- NBI guidelines for data management
- NBI guidelines for water resources assessments
- NBI water quality guidelines
- Operation of resource monitoring networks

## 3.3 Key Strategic Direction 3: Environmental & water-related natural resources management

Sustainable development requires a dynamic balance between social equity, economic efficiency and environmental sustainability. The planned interventions under the first two KSDs, which seek to address the fundamental social and economic needs of the communities of the Nile Basin, will not have lasting positive impacts without balancing actions to prevent irreversible damage to the natural systems. The third KSD reflects NBI's overriding desire to reconcile water development projects with the carrying and regenerative capacity of the natural ecosystems of the Nile Basin.

### Policy development and other interventions

- NBI Environmental and Social Policy
- NBI strategy for wetlands management
- Prepare and sign Memorandum of Cooperation between the NBI and the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention.



### Possible future interventions

- NBI strategy for management and conservation of unique aquatic ecosystems and water-related biological diversity
- NBI guidelines for aquatic ecosystem assessment
- NBI guidelines for inventory of unique aquatic ecosystems
- Conduct transboundary diagnostic assessment of the Nile Basin
- Carry out inventory of unique aquatic ecosystems
- Prepare first State of Environment Report
- Start regular environmental monitoring for preparation of 3-years State of Environment Reports

### 3.4 Key Strategic Direction 4: Climate change adaptation and mitigation

The NBI recognises the need and urgency for mounting and coordinating basin-wide efforts to adapt to, and mitigate the impacts of, climate change. A purely national response to climate change is inadequate as both the water resources impacts (droughts and floods) and the population responses within the basin (migration and emigration) are of transboundary nature. Major watershed management and infrastructure measures to mitigate the impacts of flooding and droughts will have transboundary impacts and require the establishment of mechanisms for basin-wide planning and joint action.

### Policy development and other interventions

- NBI strategy for climate change adaptation and mitigation
- NBI guidelines for climate change adaptation for water-related investments
- Creating a climate change service function in the NBI
- Analysis of vulnerability of planned NBI water infrastructure to climate variability and change.
- Mainstreaming of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in NBI investment programmes and projects.

### Possible future interventions

- NBI policy for climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Nurturing political will and support for climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Enhance the capacity of NBI centres to address climate change adaptation and mitigation measures
- Promoting clean development mechanisms.
- Promoting information sharing and dissemination on climate change.



Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea(Observer),  
Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda



## 4. Cross-cutting complementary actions

The four KSDs of the NBSF are broadly related to the main technical functions of the NBI, and address priority areas where action is urgently required to ensure sustainable management and development of the common Nile water resources. While they have a fairly comprehensive scope, by themselves, they are unlikely to produce the full range of desired outcomes expected from the Framework. They need to be augmented by selected cross-cutting or complementary actions to have lasting effect. The cross-cutting actions concern communication, participation, gender mainstreaming, capacity building and resource mobilisation. These actions are critical to achieve IWRM, which is at the heart of the NBSF.

Stakeholder participation is a key cross-cutting theme to be pursued under the NBSF. Experience around the world demonstrates that ensuring the participation of stakeholders in the development and management of water yields better results in terms of effectiveness, equity, and social inclusion. As one of the complementary actions to the NBSF KSDs, the NBI will strive to make water policy more transparent through the active participation of key stakeholders in the development of the policies and strategies of the NBSF. Of equal importance will be their participation in implementation of strategic actions required under the Framework. The Technical Annexes (No. 4, page 17) provide further explanations on the stakeholder participation approaches.

Communication is a critical requirement for increasing participation and a sense of ownership of basin management interventions under the NBSF. Through communication, the NBI will seek to keep basin communities informed about basin issues and basin management. Many communication tools and methods are available for communicating clear messages about issues, actions and progress. A strategy will be required to develop an appropriate mix of tools to reach the different stakeholders in the basin.

Gender mainstreaming and pursuing a gender-balanced approach is essential to achieving IWRM. Women's central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water has seldom been reflected in institutional arrangements for the development and management of water resources. In the Nile Basin there are significant gender differences in use, access and management of water. Addressing gender and water together under the NBSF will help to reduce discrimination and ensure that the contributions and needs of men, women and youth are recognised.

Capacity Building is necessary for successful execution of NBSF interventions and for managing the NBSF process. Capacity building will be carried out as part of the implementation of the NBSF to augment knowledge and skills in areas such as natural resource policy development, strategic thinking, cooperative negotiations in a multi-government context, use of decision support tools, and carrying out risk assessment and risk management under uncertainty.

Resource Mobilisation involves establishing robust financing mechanisms by which the NBI will mobilise resources to meet its core costs and finance investment programmes and projects in a manner that is efficient, equitable, transparent and sustainable. This requires a mix of different funding sources and the active participation of riparian countries, the peoples of the basin, and development partners. Resources mobilisation is addressed as a complementary action under the NBSF.

### **Policy development and other interventions in cross-cutting complementary areas**

- NBI policy for gender mainstreaming
- NBI strategy for gender mainstreaming
- NBI long-term strategy for capacity development
- NBI strategy for resource mobilisation
- NBI strategy for stakeholder participation
- Population and operation of the Nile Information System
- Training of NBI staff according to the capacity development strategy

### **Possible future interventions**

- NBI policy for complementary actions that support effective water resources management
- NBI policy for applied research
- NBI communication strategy
- NBI strategy for public consultation
- NBI strategy for transparency and integrity
- NBI guidelines for monitoring and evaluation of the NBSF
- Examine future financing options



## 5. Turning the Framework into Action

The NBSF became effective following a recommendation of the Nile-TAC and upon its approval by the Nile-COM. A similar approval process will be followed during the formulation of policies, strategies and guidelines identified under the NBSF. These processes, and the public consultation that will form a part of the formulation process, are described in detail in the Technical Annexes (see No. 3 & 4, pages 5-8; and No. 6, page 10).

From the approval and application of the Framework, five categories of interventions are expected: (a) development and approval of policies, strategies and guidelines; (b) application of the policies, strategies and guidelines in the routine work of the NBI; (c) creation and operation of new units/departments within the NBI; (d) establishment and operation of data collection and information management systems; and (e) management of documentation related to the NBSF.

### 5.1 Applicability of the Framework

The focus area for application of the Framework and its constituent policies, strategies and guidelines, lies in the activities of the NBI, especially at transboundary level. The NBSF does not apply directly to other organisations within the Nile basin (such as the Lake Victoria Basin Commission). However, the proposed policies, strategies and guidelines of the Framework constitute a de facto ‘code of conduct’, which other institutions and organisations within the basin will be encouraged to apply. By introducing this Framework, the NBI will be setting a high professional standard for the basin. Moreover, the development of NBSF policies, strategies and guidelines will take into consideration, and improve upon, existing similar good practices from other actors within the basin.

### 5.2 Institutional Arrangements and Responsibilities

The institutional Framework for the NBI will remain largely unchanged during the implementation of the NBSF. No special-purpose mechanism will be created to oversee the implementation of the NBSF. The NBI key stakeholders, who are mainly of three kinds - riparian countries and basin communities; NBI organs and centres; and development partners and international organisations – have a role in putting the NBSF into effect as further discussed below.

**Nile-COM** – The Nile Basin Council of Ministers is the governing body and the supreme policy and decision making body of the NBI. Nile-COM will approve the NBSF and any revisions of it. Nile-COM, on the advice of Nile-TAC, will also approve policies and strategies that are to be applied by NBI.

**Nile-TAC** – The Nile Technical Advisory Committee will carry out a technical review of any policy, strategy or guideline developed for the NBI, and advise Nile-COM on their suitability for application. The Nile-TAC will participate actively in the formulation process of policies, strategies and guidelines and ensure that relevant national stakeholders are adequately consulted during formulation processes.

**Nile-SEC** – The NBI Secretariat is the full-time professional body that assists Nile-COM and Nile-TAC in their respective functions and coordinates basin-wide activities of the NBI. Under Nile-TAC oversight, Nile-SEC will be responsible for initiating, coordinating and managing the day-to-day activities related to formulation and review of the NBSF. Nile-SEC will also coordinate the development of policies, strategies and guidelines required for the NBSF, and will be responsible for custody of documents related to the NBSF. Nile-SEC will plan for and oversee the implementation of capacity building measures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the NBI centres in performing NBSF-related tasks.

**SAPs** – The Secretariats of the Subsidiary Action Programs (SAPs) of the Eastern Nile (EN-SAP) and Nile Equatorial Lakes region (NELSAP) will contribute to formulation of basin-wide NBSF policies, strategies and guidelines and ensure their application in the preparation and implementation of NBI investment programmes and projects. Where necessary, and pursuant to the principle of subsidiarity, each SAP will develop guidelines specific to its sub-basin from the basin-wide policies and guidelines. The SAPs, under coordination from Nile-SEC, will be responsible for direct implementation of some of the proposed interventions under the NBSF, such as the establishment and operation of sub-basin water resources monitoring networks; development and operation of sub-basin databases and Geographic Information System (GIS) tools; participation in preparation of State of Basin Reports; mobilising resources for sub-basin development; and mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in NBI investment projects.

**National Line Agencies** – These agencies, together with relevant ministries, will help to identify key national stakeholders to participate in formulation and review of NBSF policies, strategies and guidelines.

**Basin Communities** – The peoples of the Nile Basin, through appropriate civil society organisations, will contribute to the formulation and review of NBSF policies, strategies and guidelines by participation in consultative processes organised by Nile-SEC and the SAPs, sometimes facilitated by independent consultants.

**Development Partners and International Organisations** – Development partners will not participate directly in formulation of NBSF products - this is a responsibility of the NBI institutions and riparian countries - but will lend support to the formulation process through the provision of funds and technical advice.

**Thematic Working Groups** – Working groups – one for each KSD – will be formed to assist Nile-SEC in the development of basin-wide policies, strategies and guidelines. The thematic working group members will consist of experts drawn from the Nile riparian countries and developments partners, whose experience and skills cover the range of knowledge and skills requirements for each KSD. The main function of the thematic working group is to advise the NBI on policy matters and carry out detailed peer review of draft products under preparation.

The process for formulation of NBSF policies, strategies and guidelines may be led by the Nile-SEC, the SAPs or Regional Project Management Units. The choice of leader will depend on a number of factors including the geographical area for application of the product (basin-wide products will be led by Nile-SEC while sub-basin specific products will be led



by the SAPs); the thematic area of the product (policies, strategies and guidelines on water development will mainly be led by the SAPs while products on water resources management will be led by Nile-SEC); the presence of relevant qualified staff within the centres; adequate budgetary provisions to support the formulation process; and previous experience related to the specific policy, strategy or guideline. Further explanations on the formulation process and responsibilities for the development of policies, strategies and guidelines can be found in Technical Annexes No. 3 (pages 5-7) and No. 6 (page 10) respectively. NBSF policies are promulgated through official written documents prepared according to a standard format. Outlines of the proposed standard formats are shown in the Technical Annex No. 2 (pages 2-4).

### 5.3 Monitoring, Reporting and Review

A target completion date has been proposed for each intervention under the NBSF (see Technical Annex No. 5, page 9). For operational purposes, Nile-SEC will develop a detailed action plan that shows start and end dates for each product, the different stages of formulation, key responsible staff, and requirements for formulation (budget, consultants, etc). This action plan will form the basis for monitoring and evaluation of progress in implementation of the Sustainability Framework.

Nile-SEC will receive and consolidate inputs from the NBI centres and projects on NBSF activities and furnish the Nile-TAC and Nile-COM with regular progress reports on the Framework. To harmonise reporting, monitoring and evaluation, indicators will be developed for the NBSF that are linked to the overall NBI results chain. Countries, through the Nile-TACs, will make annual reports on effectiveness of consultation processes and any actions taken in relation to the NBSF and NBI programmes and projects in each country.

The NBSF will not be a rigid framework but will remain flexible to allow for incorporation of emerging needs for policy, strategy and guideline development. A major review of the Framework will be necessary after 5 years of implementation of the present Framework. The review will include, and be based upon, a detailed situation analysis that will identify new areas of need, assess the effectiveness of formulation and implementation arrangements, and provide a critical evaluation of the performance of the policies, strategies and guidelines prepared and applied under this Framework. The review will ensure that policies, strategies and guidelines that are already operational, are suitable, practical, relevant, effective, and proactive. The review will also ensure that they lie within the mandate of the organisation and do not pose an unnecessary burden for NBI institutions or projects, and riparian countries.



## 6. Glossary

### Cooperative Framework Agreement

Before the launch of the Strategic Action Program (SAP) in 1999, a parallel process of negotiations between the countries was set in motion with the aim of reaching a new legal agreement on the Nile and establishing a permanent Nile River Basin Organisation (RBO). This agreement, which will define the purpose, scope and manner of cooperation amongst the riparian states, is commonly referred to as the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA). Negotiations on the CFA have been concluded but ratification may still take a few more years.

### Nile Basin

The Nile Basin is shared by ten countries, namely Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. The term 'Nile Basin' refers to the entire geographical area drained by the Nile and its tributaries, or the area of land from which the Nile gets its water. About 300 million live within the ten countries that share the Nile.

### Nile Basin Initiative

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) is a regional partnership established in 1999 by nine of the ten Nile riparian states. The nine states are the above-named countries with the exception of Eritrea, which currently participates as an observer. The partnership was initiated, and has been led, through the Council of Ministers of Water of the member states (Nile-COM). A Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC), comprising technical representatives from the member states, reports to Nile-COM and is charged with oversight of the NBI. The NBI further includes the Nile Basin Secretariat (Nile-SEC) in Uganda; two programme development offices – the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) in Ethiopia, and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program Coordination Unit (NELSAP-CU) in Rwanda; and national offices in each country.

### Nile River

The Nile, a major north-flowing river in Africa, is the world's longest river. It travels for about 6,650 km, traversing more than 31 degrees of latitude and draining an area of 3.25 million km<sup>2</sup> - about one tenth of Africa's total land area. It is generally agreed that the Nile has several sources with the principal streams being the White Nile, which originates in the Great Lakes region of central Africa; and the Abbay, the Baro-Akobo-Sobat and the Tekeze/Atbara, all flowing from the Ethiopia highlands.

## Shared Vision

The riparian countries adopted as their Shared Vision *“to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources.”*

## Shared Vision Program

To start the journey towards realisation of the NBI vision, the riparian governments of the Nile Basin launched a Strategic Action Program comprising of two components: a basin-wide Shared Vision Program (SVP), complemented by SAPs. The SVP is a multi-country, multi-sectoral, grant-funded programme of collaborative action to exchange experience, and build trust and capacity in order to build a strong foundation for regional cooperation. The Program includes seven thematic projects focusing on water resources management; environmental management; regional power trade; agricultural development; applied training; socio-economic development and benefit sharing; and communications and stakeholder involvement. An eighth project provides for coordination of the SVP and strengthens the capacity of NBI institutions. By December 2009, six of the SVP projects had closed.

## Subsidiary Action Programs

SAPs have been set-up to initiate concrete investments and action on the ground in the sub-basins: one in the Eastern Nile (ENSAP) and the other in the Nile Equatorial Lakes sub-basin (NELSAP). The SAPs aim to identify and implement investment projects that confer mutual benefits at the sub-basin level that riparian countries have agreed to pursue cooperatively. In the Eastern Nile sub-basin, current projects focus mainly in power trade, watershed management, irrigation and drainage, and flood preparedness, while in the Nile Equatorial Lakes sub-basin, the projects focus on natural resources management and power infrastructure development. The two SAPs are being implemented by ENTRO and NELSAP-CU respectively.

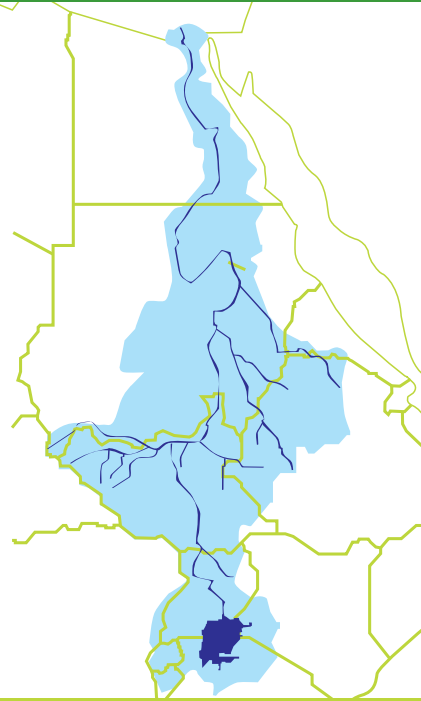
## Sustainable Development

The NBI follows the definition of sustainable development stated in Agenda 21 - an outcome of the June 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Agenda 21, the international plan of action to sustainable development, defines sustainable development as *“a collection of methods to create and sustain development which seeks to relieve poverty, create equitable living standards, satisfy the basic needs of all people, and establish sustainable political practices, all while taking the steps necessary to avoid irreversible damage to the natural capital in the long-term in return for short-term benefits by reconciling development projects with the regenerative capacity of the natural environment.”*









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