

# NileNews

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## Member States declare 2019 'Year of the Nile Basin'



Dr Abdulkarim Seid (L) and Hon Dr Déo - Guide Rurema (R)

**O**n January 27, 2018, Hon Dr Deo-Guide Rurema, the Chairman of the Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM) and Burundi's Minister of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock, proclaimed 2019 **The Year of the Nile Basin**. The proclamation followed a decision taken by the Nile-COM members during their 26<sup>th</sup> annual meeting held in August 2018 in Bujumbura, which recognised that the Nile waters are key to achieving the regional development agenda and enabling regional integration.

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**DID**  
you know?

More than 70% of rural populations in many parts of the Basin are dependent on groundwater and there is increasing use of groundwater for other economic activities including in irrigation, fisheries, mining, industries, etc.

Find out more:  
Nile Basin Water Resources Atlas: <http://atlas.nilebasin.org/treatise/groundwater-in-the-nile-basin/>  
State of the River Nile Basin Report: [http://sob.nilebasin.org/pdf/Chapter\\_2\\_Water%20resources.pdf](http://sob.nilebasin.org/pdf/Chapter_2_Water%20resources.pdf)

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**I**t has been an exciting start to 2019 for the Nile Basin Initiative. We kicked off the year with the official launch of 2019 as ‘The Year of the Nile Basin’ under the motto: Putting Water at the Heart of Regional Transformation. The launch ceremony took place on January 27 – 28, 2019 in Bujumbura, Burundi and was officiated by the Chairman of the Nile Council of Ministers, who is also Burundi’s Minister of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock, Hon Dr Déo - Guide Rurema.

Throughout the year 2019, NBI and Member States will take every opportunity to highlight the role that water does and must play in the conversations Nile Basin countries are having about the present and future plans for the Nile Basin region, with emphasis on the importance of constructive water cooperation. The latter is key in ensuring equitable utilisation and win-win benefits for society and the environment alike, while at the same time essential in helping to maintain peace and security among nations, communities and stakeholders.

The official launch was followed by yet another exciting event, the celebration of NBI’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary on February 22, 2019. The anniversary coincided with the annual Nile Day celebrations, and both were organised within the framework of The Year of the Nile Basin. The successful event attracted more than 400 stakeholders and friends of the Nile and was hosted by the government of Rwanda in Kigali.

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations held under the theme NBI@20: Stronger Together offered an excellent opportunity for both reflection on the successes and challenges of the last 20 years of transboundary cooperation on the Nile waters as well as consolidation of Member States’ commitment to the Basin cooperation agenda, as laid out in NBI’s 10-Year Strategy.



Before the end of the 2018/2019 financial year, we have yet a number of key activities among them the preparation of the work plan and budget for 2019/2020, the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Nile Council of Ministers meeting and the launch of the State of the River Nile Basin Report 2018. In addition, the study on strategic options for addressing the growing water demand in the Nile Basin will be concluded while work at at more than 50 hydrological monitoring stations will commence under the Regional Hydromet Project. This project will support collaborative monitoring of the Nile Basin for adaptive water resources management.

Emphasis will also be put on operationalising the Resource Mobilisation Action Plan, to mobilise funds for the NBI work programme.

This being my last time to share with you as Executive Director, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all stakeholders for the fruitful interactions that I have had with you during my tenure.

I wish my successor, Prof. Seifeldin Hamad Abdalla all the best and I have no doubt that you will give him all your support.

Long live Nile Cooperation!

**Eng. Innocent Ntabana**





Dignitaries and community members gather at the most distant source of the River Nile in Rutovu

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The Year of the Nile Basin under the motto: Putting Water at the Heart of Regional Transformation, is an opportunity to highlight the role that transboundary water must play in the conversations Nile Basin countries have about the present and future regional development. “The emphasis is on ensuring equitable utilisation and win-win benefits for society and the environment alike. Ultimately, it will also contribute to maintain regional peace and security,” explained Hon Dr Rurema during the launch ceremony.

By declaring 2019 ‘The Year of the Nile Basin’, the Nile Basin community recognises that the River Nile plays an integral part in achieving not only water security but also food and energy security as well as eradicating poverty for the people of the Nile Basin region.

Hon Dr Rurema said the Government of Burundi has put in place a law prohibiting the planting of tree species that use a lot of water in marshes and around water sources, in order to preserve water. He added that his government was on the right track in protecting the common heritage, which is the River Nile. “The decree

prohibiting the use of plastic bags is being implemented. This will help ensure quality of water and reduce microplastics in lakes and rivers, which will protect the biodiversity of these ecosystems,” he said.

Also present at the launch was the Deputy Executive Director of the Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat, Dr Abdulkarim Seid, who called on Nile Basin countries to work together to overcome the ever growing challenges of increasing water variability, ever-growing water demand and multiple impacts of climate change.

The official launch was crowned off with a tree planting ceremony on January 28, 2019 in Rutovu, where delegates planted trees meant to rejuvenate the soils and protect the biodiversity around the most distant source of the River Nile.

The launch ceremony was organised by Burundi’s Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock in collaboration with the Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat and with support from the European Union and the Federal German government.



Throughout the year, the Nile Basin Initiative and Member States will play host to various key events both at regional and national level. Those at regional level include the recently concluded NBI 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary annual Nile Day celebrations on February 22, 2019 in Rwanda. As part of the celebrations, NBI launched a special publication, outlining the evolution and development of the organisation in the last 20 years (February 1999 – February 2019) and what lessons can be drawn to feed into future cooperation.

Other planned activities include the launch of the State of River Nile Basin Report 2018. The report provides a monitoring report card and suggestions towards achieving basin management objectives and development goals.

Join the conversation on facebook (Nile Basin Initiative) and twitter (@nbiweb) #YearofNileBasin

Find out more about The Year of the Nile Basin: <http://nbi20.nilebasin.org/>



Community members plant trees at the most distant source of the River Nile

**Jane K. Baitwa**

**Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe**

## Share your personal story - 20 years NBI



On February 22, 2019, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. These are 20 years of weaving the histories of the Nile Basin together, 20 years of working to bring the potentials of the whole region to life, and 20 years of pushing to preserve our regional treasures. To mark this momentous occasion, the Nile Council of Ministers, NBI's highest political decision making body, declared 2019 'The Year of the Nile Basin'. As part of the celebrations, we are running an online campaign dubbed: #MyNileStory and you are invited to share your personal most memorable or favourite NBI, Nile or Nile Basin moment with your fellow Nile Basin citizens as well as your aspirations for the region. Please send either a photo, in text (150 words maximum), or video (2 minutes maximum) to: [nbianniversary@nilebasin.org](mailto:nbianniversary@nilebasin.org)

May I also request that you attach your passport size photo, which, together with your story, will be published on the website dedicated to the NBI 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary: <http://nbi20.nilebasin.org/>

We look forward to receiving your story!

# NBI Member States celebrate 20 years of Cooperation & Partnership



Nile-COM Members (L-R): Hon Eng Khidir Gasmelseed - The Sudan (until February 22, 2019); Hon Dr Vincent Biruta - Rwanda; Hon Dr Seleshi Bekele - Ethiopia; Hon Simon Kiprono Chelugui - Kenya and Hon Sam Cheptoris - Uganda together cut the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary cake

A popular African belief is that rains are a sign of blessing from the heavens above. It is with this kind of blessing that the NBI 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Regional Nile Day celebrations opened on February 22, 2019 in Kigali, Rwanda.

The celebrations were planned to kick off with a brass band-led procession through Kigali city and into the meeting venue. This time round, however, delegates were confined to the conference hall at Serena Kigali Hotel, where the band played, weaving its way between tables as they trumpeted their way to the front and back of the hall.

On that day, representatives of the 10 NBI Member States gathered in Kigali to mark Regional Nile Day 2019 and celebrate 20 years of cooperation and partnership

through the NBI - an intergovernmental partnership of Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

Themed 'NBI@20: Stronger Together', the event was an opportunity for Member States and friends of the Nile to reflect on the progress made over the last two decades to advance sustainable management and development of the shared Nile Basin water resources so as to achieve sustainable socio-economic development. Since the NBI was established on February 22, 1999, investments worth US \$6.5 billion have been prepared and facilitated thanks to collaborative efforts between Member States, development partners and private enterprise. The water resources knowledge gap among Member States has been closed by building capacity of individuals and institutions to jointly manage the Basin. To this end, more than 30,000 people have benefitted



from both formal and informal training while 10,000 knowledge products have been generated. This work has been underpinned by the development of at least 16 policies and strategies that guide the cooperative and sustainable management of the shared Nile Basin water resources and provide policy directions to the Member States.

Speaking at the event, Rwanda's Minister of Environment and Guest of Honour, Dr Vincent Biruta, commended countries for their efforts to collaborate across borders.

"The success of the Nile Basin Initiative over the last two decades is, thanks to the investments we have made as Member States, and the contributions of many others we are proud to call partners. I encourage Member States and the Nile Basin Initiative to adopt an integrated water resources management approach that prioritises both water management and landscape restoration. By taking a holistic approach to catchment management, we can improve both the health of our waterways and the land we rely upon so heavily," he said.

In his last official engagement as Executive Director of the NBI Secretariat, Eng. Innocent Ntabana thanked

Member States for their contribution to the success of the initiative.

"The Nile Basin Initiative has helped to build a culture of dialogue, mutual trust and confidence within the Nile Basin. I express my sincere gratitude to the Member States for the continued commitment to Nile Cooperation, and to development partners for their unwavering support, both financial and technical," he said.

The European Union's Head of Delegation in Rwanda, H.E. Nicola Bellomo, pledged continued support: "The fact that we are all gathered in Kigali today shows that there is hope to overcome any present challenges. The European Union has been and will remain a partner on this journey."

Speakers at the 2019 Nile Day celebration also discussed the growing challenge of climate change. World Bank Representative, Ms. Ayat Soliman, noted that climate risks will be critical to the future of the Basin and called for adaptation to be strengthened. This was complemented by Kenya's Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Hon. Simon K. Chelugui who



Graceful dancers entertain guests



High level dignitaries take a group photo during the celebrations

**« The success of the Nile Basin Initiative over the last two decades is, thanks to the investments we have made as Member States, and the contributions of many others we are proud to call partners. »**

**Hon Dr Biruta**

stressed the need for collaboration among Member States in responding to climate change.

Participants also engaged in a robust discussion about the potential for the NBI to transition to a permanent cooperation mechanism, and pledged to continue discussions to ensure all Basin countries reach an agreement that suits their development agendas.

The event also featured the release of a special NBI anniversary publication titled 'A Long River Journey', which outlines the evolution and development of the organisation in the last 20 years and what lessons can be drawn to feed into future cooperation.

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and annual Nile Day celebrations concluded with a panel discussion featuring Dr Osman Eltom Hamad, Technical Advisor in The Sudan Ministry of Water Resources, Meraji Msuya, first NBI Executive

Director (1999-2004), Patrick Osbert Kahangire, former NBI Executive Director (2004-2006), Dr Barbara Miller, who facilitated support to the NBI as World Bank Lead Water Specialist, and Dr David Grey, who initiated and led the World Bank's support to Nile Cooperation from 1997 to 2009. A second panel closed the day with contributions from Members of the Nile Council of Ministers, NBI's highest political body represented at the event.

As part of the event, a dynamic and interactive exhibition was organised to showcase knowledge products and scientific tools developed by NBI, over the last 20 years, which empower Member States and Nile Basin citizens to manage shared water resources effectively. The exhibition was joined by other relevant organisations.

The NBI 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and annual Nile Day celebrations was jointly organised with Rwanda's Ministry of Environment, with support from the European Union, German Federal government and the World Bank, through Cooperation in International Waters in Africa (CIWA) programme.

**Elizabeth Agiro**  
**Media Relations Expert**  
**Nile-SEC, Entebbe**





Members of the Nile - COM, during the Ministerial panel



H.E. Nicola Bellomo, EU Head of Delegation to Rwanda



Some of the Development Partners representatives who attended the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations



Ms. Ayat Soliman, World Bank Water Global Practice Director



Interesting! A pupil reads the special edition of *The Niles* newspaper - 'NBI 20', jointly produced by 28 journalists from the 10 NBI Member States



The NBI exhibition booth showcased the different knowledge and communication products



Ethiopia's Minister of Water, Irrigation and Electricity, Hon. Dr. Seleshi Bekele, points at the on-the-scene painting, depicting the goals and activities that Member States share in common and how they affect the River Nile itself and the livelihoods of people around the Basin.



The youth were part of the celebrations



# 2019 - Year of the Nile Basin: Putting Water at the Heart of Regional Transformation



**W**orld Water Day, on March 22 every year, is about focusing attention on the importance of water. The 2019 celebration coincided with **The Year of the Nile Basin**, as declared by the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) Member States on January 27, 2019. The declaration was in recognition of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NBI, which was established on February 22, 1999. The motto for the year is ‘Putting Water at the Heart of Regional Transformation’.

The NBI started off as a partnership of nine countries - Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. In 2012 this included a tenth country as South Sudan joined the group after voting for independence in 2010. All countries believed the partnership would provide a platform to discuss ways in which to utilise water resources of the River Nile more efficiently and effectively.

Along the way, the journey of cooperation has been peppered with victories and challenges, as well as opportunities, both those seized and those missed. Lessons have been learnt and some challenges addressed and tackled. Where previously, countries operated independently, as though seeing each other through glass doors, today, they sit together and discuss ideas and solutions to challenges in the Basin – doors and windows are both wide open. It hasn't been a smooth journey, though. Of course there have been highs and lows and in-betweens. But, the countries have increasingly recognised that there is an urgent need to

pool resources and work together for their own good – and for the good of the Basin environment. They realise that water is at the heart of transformations taking place in both societies and economies and want to ensure future sustainable and equitable development pathways.

An example of such cooperation has been witnessed in the Regional Rusumo Falls Hydroelectric Project, involving Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania. Each of these countries stand to benefit from 27MW of hydropower when the project is completed. This will be part of a broader programme to support sustainable management of the Kagera River Basin and promote growth and poverty reduction in these countries.

Based on the powerful logic of cooperation, the President of Uganda, H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, called for a Heads of State Summit on June 22, 2017. At the Summit, Nile Basin Heads of State agreed to deal with strategic issues of regional development and reversing environmental degradation, an implicit and unprecedented endorsement of the work the NBI undertakes.

By declaring 2019 ‘The Year of the Nile Basin’, the Nile Basin community recognises that the River Nile plays an integral part in achieving not only water security but also food and energy security as well as eradicating poverty for the people of the Nile Basin region.

The year provides the opportunity to highlight the role that cooperation on the Nile waters does and must play in the conversations Nile Basin countries have about the present and future development of the region.

It is with such insight that the Nile Basin countries realise that managing the Nile collectively as one system is crucial to preserving water resources, protecting the environment and ensuring positive futures for all the Nile's peoples. This ties in well with the 2019 World Water Day theme ‘Leaving No One Behind.’

**Hon Dr Déo - Guide Rurema**

**Chairman of the Nile Council of Ministers and also Burundi Minister of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock**

# Meet the new Executive Director of the Secretariat



**P**rofessor Seifeldin Hamad Abdalla is the new Executive Director of the NBI Secretariat, effective April 8, 2019. He brings to the organisation decades of deep experience and proven record of success as an engineer, a manager and a researcher. A Sudanese national, Prof. Seifeldin was most recently the Chairman of the Water Resources Technical Organ in The Sudan, a position he assumed in July 2012. He was responsible for transboundary water issues of Sudan including the Nile and its tributaries, among other things. Prior to that, he served as the Minister of Water Resources from December 2011 to July 2012. This is in addition to serving in various other capacities since 1979 when he attained his B. Sc. (Hons.) in Civil Engineering from the University of Khartoum and joined the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources at the time..

Prof. Seifeldin, fondly known as Prof. Seif, made major contributions to initiating and preparing agreements that have enhanced cooperation among the Nile (and IGAD) countries, preventing conflicts and/or reducing tension and hence improving the future economic and political collaboration between millions of people in the region. His greatest successes were “The Declaration

of Principles on Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)” between Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, signed by the respective Heads of State in Khartoum on March 23, 2015. Second is the “November 5, 2012, Addis Agreement” signed between the same three countries, which led to the unfreezing of Sudan activities and resumption of full participation in the Nile Basin Initiative. Third is the “IGAD Water Resources Policy of 2015” signed by the eight countries of IGAD, which paved the way for future cooperation and enhanced peace and security in the IGAD region; and last but not least his role in negotiating “The Transboundary Arab Water Agreement”, among other initiatives. This is in addition to the preparation of policies, strategies and planning for the Nile and other water resources in The Sudan.

He joins the Secretariat during ‘The Year of the Nile Basin’ declared so by the Nile Council of Ministers. His many years of experience in the water sector coupled with his association with NBI as a member of the governance body, will no doubt contribute to achieving the objectives of The Year of the Nile Basin with the motto: ‘Putting Water at the heart of Regional Transformation.’



A man of many hats, Prof. Seifeldin, who attained higher education in Holland, Italy and a doctorate degree from Utah State University, USA in 1997, has also taught and supervised many BSc, MSc and PhD programmes at different universities and strategic academic institutions both within and outside The Sudan. This is in addition to authoring more than 100 publications about water resources.

He is a very active member in the NGO arena: Chair of the Sudan “International Hydrological Program (IHP)”, and “Global Water Partnership (GWP)”, member of the Board of the Sudan Engineers Union, Sudan Engineering Council Board and Chair of the Arab Water Committee.

He has also received a number of Honour Awards, notable among them: Decoration Honour and Medal of

El-Nilain (First Order), received in recognition of the great noble service and achievements for the country, by the President of the Republic in 2017; Distinguished Alumni Award of 2016 from UNESCO-IHE Delft in recognition of outstanding and significant achievements in water development; Medal and Certificate for Honour and Excellence in Education (1996) provided by Utah State University and the Honour Society Phi Kappa Phi, USA.

Please join the NBI management and staff in welcoming Prof. Seif to the Secretariat, an organisation he will lead for the next two years.

**Jane K. Baitwa**

**Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe**

## Nile-TAC meeting reviews progress of NBI work plan implementation



**T**he 51<sup>st</sup> Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) meeting held on February 21, 2019 in Kigali, Rwanda reviewed progress in implementing the NBI annual work plan at mid-term. A physical progress towards achieving planned targets of 43% was realised and expenditure of about 37% made.

The meeting considered approval of the revised work plan in light of the new developments.

The Secretariat also took the opportunity to brief the governance members on preparations for the NBI 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

The meeting was attended by Nile-TAC members from DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda

**Tom Waako**

**Programme Officer  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe**

# NBI receives 400,000 Euro grant from AFD



Eng Innocent Ntabana (L), and Mr Christian Yoka (R), exchange the signed grant agreement



Teams from both the NBI Secretariat and Agence Française de Développement (AFD) at the grant signing

**O**n March 11, 2019, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), represented by the Secretariat Executive Director, Eng. Innocent Ntabana and The Agence Française de Développement (AFD), represented by Mr. Christian Yoka, Regional Director for Eastern Africa, signed a grant agreement of 400,000 Euros aimed at capacity development of NBI's activities.

The grant is provided through a River Basin organisation in France, The Rhone Mediterranean Corsica Agency (AERMC), which has taken the initiative to support other like-minded river basin organisations technically and financially and share their knowledge through this platform. AERMC is a public establishment with the Ministry for Environment in France, dedicated to water protection.

Speaking during the signing at the NBI Secretariat in Entebbe, Mr. Yoka emphasised the need for cooperation and technical know-how in water resource management.

“The Nile waters are a powerful lever for the socio-economic development of more than 300 million people today and the risk of climate change and population growth continues to present challenges to the sustainable use and management of these waters. In order to respond to rising challenges and demands, there is a need for greater cooperation and enhanced capacities in the field of water resource management,” he said.

Mr Yoka added: “This additional financing bears witness that France is committed to support a sustainable management of water resources of the Nile Basin Initiative and its Member States, especially within the Nile Equatorial Lakes Region.”

On his part, Eng. Ntabana said: “Strengthening the structures of the NBI and their sustainability is crucial for the maintenance of this framework of concerted dialogue. The continuation of this cooperation is critical in a context where the pressure on natural resources may generate tensions between communities of the Nile neighbouring countries.”

The 400,000 Euros grant is in addition to an initial one million Euro grant in May 2015, which provided technical assistance for capacity building for both the Secretariat and its investment arm, the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme (NELSAP). Through this grant, NELSAP has been able to develop its Strategic Plan for 2017-2022 focusing on organisation development, investment finance mobilisation and financial autonomy, water resource management and dam safety regulation.

**Elizabeth Agiro**  
Media Relations Expert  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe



# NBI Governance and Development Partners explore solutions to key NBI challenges



Eng Francois Tetero, host Nile-TAC addresses the meeting during the opening ceremony

Organised since 2006, the Strategic Dialogue is an annual forum in which the Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) members and NBI's Development Partners meet to review progress in implementation of NBI programmes, reflect on advancement of the Nile cooperation agenda and explore ways for addressing challenges the cooperation is facing.

The 2019 forum was held on February 23, 2019 in Kigali, Rwanda, immediately after the NBI 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary/annual Regional Nile Day celebrations. Participants discussed and proposed actions to tackle the different key challenges faced by NBI. These include ways for enhancing financial sustainability of the organisation and low national visibility due to significant cut back of national level activities. This is in addition to discussing solutions for protecting the gains of the Nile Cooperation from uncertainties as a result of differences in the political track among Member States, on one hand, and how to harness the opportunities created by the new political climate, on the other.

Speaking about the progress in implementing the 10-year Strategy, the Deputy Executive Director and Head of the Basin-Wide Programme, Dr Abdulkarim Seid

highlighted the implementation of the regional hydro-meteorological network; ongoing construction of the Regional Rusumo Falls Hydro-Electric project; and the more than 930 km of new power transmission lines currently under construction.

This is in addition to two roadmaps developed, one for coordinating operation of cascade of dams in the Eastern Nile and the second for the Nile Equatorial Lakes Investment Programme.

Given the growing demand for water, food and energy in the Nile Basin, NBI, at the request of the Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM) is implementing the second phase of the collaborative water supply and demand assessment in which the first set of options for addressing the growing water demand is expected to be presented to the Nile-COM during their annual meeting of 2019.

The informal meeting was attended by Nile-TAC members, Development Partners and NBI senior management.



Nile-TAC members together with development partners engage in group discussions during the meeting

**Jane K. Baitwa**  
Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe

# Media workshop in Kigali focuses on food security in the Nile Basin



Eng Ntabana talks about 'Why a Food Security agenda for NBI?' Journalists during an outdoor exercise

Over the years, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) has realised the importance of engaging the media and informing them about what happens in the Nile Basin, to enable factual and timely reports.

More recently, with support from the German Federal Foreign Office, through GIZ, NBI has involved media – print, radio, television and online platforms – from the Nile Basin region in workshops to build their knowledge and ability in reporting about issues affecting the Nile Basin, which will in turn inform public opinion and stimulate as well as amplify voices from non-governmental actors to provide impetus to the on-going political and technical process among Nile Basin states to achieve the peaceful and fair sharing of the shared Nile Basin water resources.

The latest regional workshop - the 4<sup>th</sup> since 2016, took place in Kigali, Rwanda from February 19-22, 2019 ahead of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Regional Nile Day celebrations. The specific purpose of this workshop was to engage and inform journalists from the Basin on current debates and challenges surrounding food and food security issues in the Nile Basin in general, and strengthen their multi-media reporting capacities. The workshop also dealt with the linkages between food security and water, that is the planned expansion of irrigation schemes across the Nile Basin.

The presentation on 'Why a Food Security agenda for NBI?' by Eng. Innocent Ntabana, outgoing NBI Secretariat Executive Director provided a broad overview of the state of food security in the Nile

Basin. The second one, 'Benchmarking Irrigation Performance and Protection of Irrigation Water Demand in the Nile Basin' by Dr Abdulkarim Seid, Deputy Executive Director and Head of NBI Basin-wide programme, highlighted the most pressing challenges as well as actions required by Member States to boost food security effectively and sustainably.

The media workshop also served to provide participatory feedback and reflections on 'The Niles Conservation' issue published earlier.

Participants also provided feedback and reflected on The Niles special edition 'NBI 20', jointly produced by 28 journalists from 10 NBI Member States on the occasion of NBI's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as well as a film titled, 'The Nile – A Shared Destiny', produced by 10 video journalists from eight Member States.

Read the special edition:

[https://nbi20.org/?fbclid=IwAR2MUvvrUr1QMozfAuTjB1tXL\\_lhI\\_XM2TnrWzPv4Qw5zCGU2jXbB\\_dVUU](https://nbi20.org/?fbclid=IwAR2MUvvrUr1QMozfAuTjB1tXL_lhI_XM2TnrWzPv4Qw5zCGU2jXbB_dVUU)

Watch the film: <http://nbi20.nilebasin.org/videos/>

The training was conducted by Media in Cooperation and Transition (MiCT), a German non-profit organisation that has, since 2010, implemented the transboundary journalism capacity building programme "THE NILES" in East Africa with a focus on Sudan and South Sudan.

**Elizabeth Agiro**  
Media Relations Expert  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe



# Joint implementation setup for the Hydromet Project

The NBI Secretariat and its two investment programmes met in Kigali Rwanda on February 18, 2019 to discuss how to jointly implement the 5-million Euros Hydromet Project. Staff from the Secretariat, the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme Coordination Unit, agreed on the implementation arrangement, institutional setup and coordination mechanism.

In 2015, NBI, with USD 740,000 from the World Bank, developed detailed design specifications, cost estimate, tendering documents and an implementation plan for the Nile Basin Regional Hydromet System; based on transboundary water and related resources issues and basin-wide needs. With the 5 million Euros from the European Union and Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, NBI will update the design and implement the Nile Basin Regional Hydrological Monitoring System.

The project will develop an implementation setup, update the database of existing stations, update the design specifications, costing and implementation approach as well as tendering documents. It will also complete the procurement of equipment, build institutional capacities, establish data management systems and prepare for the implementation of the hydrometric system. This is in addition to installing, upgrading, or rehabilitating in the first phase at least 50 ground stations and data transmission systems, and therefore operationalising the system.

Furthermore, information centres and data management systems (both national and regional) will be established, for data acquisition, transmission and accessibility basin-wide. Capacity development programmes, standard operational procedures and knowledge products are key elements of the project.

« With the 5 million Euros from the European Union and Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, NBI will update the design and implement the Nile Basin Regional Hydrological Monitoring System. »

The Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) will provide overall guidance to the project. National teams including officials, experts and technicians from the national hydrological services will receive intensive capacity building and take a significant part of the system establishment and operation after hand over. The Regional Hydromet Expert Working Group and a Hydromet Forum will be used as platforms for consultations, experience sharing, consensus building and for reviewing and validating the system design as well as the specifications, technologies and the design of information products.

The three-year project, 2019 – 2021, comprises two main phases. Phase one focuses on updating the design of the hydrological monitoring system based on site visits and regional consultations that involve NBI, Member States, and regional entities such as Lake Victoria Basin Commission. Phase two will focus on installation and operationalisation of the Nile Basin Regional Hydrological Monitoring Network.

**Mohsen Alarabawy (PhD)**

**Regional Hydromet Systems Coordinator**

**Nile-SEC, Entebbe**

# Meeting current and future water demand

As water becomes an increasingly scarce resource in the Nile Basin region, Member States need to manage the resource more prudently.



**T**he close link between water and economic growth as well as demand for food, water and energy cannot be over emphasised, and this is no exception in the Nile Basin countries.

As the population and economies of these countries grow, so is the demand for water, food and energy and all the countries consider the Nile waters in particular to play a central role. To address this challenge, each Nile Basin country has its national development plans, which unfortunately could be unrealistic since they don't have information on how the water resources will be affected by developments upstream. In addition, because the plans are prepared without incorporating basin-wide coordination opportunities, they could be sub-optimal.

Recognising this challenge and bearing in mind that in a transboundary river basin, no single country holds the answer to the key question – how much water is available and is it sufficient to address the needs of all riparians, the Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM), the highest political decision making body of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), tasked the Secretariat in 2015, to undertake a study. The aim of the study is to generate the

infrastructure and management options that will help Member States to meet their current and future water, food and energy demands and in a more sustainable manner.

As the only basin-wide platform that brings Nile Basin countries together to discuss how to jointly take care of and utilise the shared water resources, NBI has a key role in making sure that the needs of all riparian countries are addressed.

Working together with Member States through the Regional Expert Working Group members, the Secretariat embarked on phase 1 of the study in 2015 and completed it in 2016. This phase focused on establishing the baseline on water availability, water demand and actual water use for various sectors in the riparian countries; compiling the countries' water resources development plans up to the year 2050; and developing projection of water availability and water demands using the Nile Basin Decision Support System - a model jointly developed by NBI and Member States. This is in addition to generating a range of scenarios of hydrology of the Nile Basin under climate change and a range of



scenarios of water demand and water supply reliability under climate change; as well as developing preliminary estimates of water balance of the Nile Basin under the range of development and climate change scenarios.

All study results show that the Nile Basin is likely to face severe water stress and a risk of substantial deficit in water supply.

The process and results of the first phase have also helped in creating a common view among the Regional Expert Working Group regarding the basin's water security challenges as well as the need and possibility for finding solutions to the challenges. Furthermore, through the analysis, a common basin-wide model and database have been created and shared among the NBI Member States. The model and the database cover existing water infrastructure, data on planned water resources development projects and data on current water demands and water uses for key sectors in the riparian countries, among others.

The NBI is currently undertaking the second phase, in which it is engaging the Member States to determine the best options for enhancing the water supply, managing the demands and optimising water use across the Nile Basin States.

The recent proclamation of 2019 as the Year of the Nile Basin with the motto: Putting Water at the heart of Regional Transformation, by the chairman of the Nile Council of Ministers, Hon Dr Deo-Guide Rurema is also in view of the fact that the Nile waters are key to achieving the regional development agenda and enabling regional integration.

“By declaring 2019 ‘The Year of the Nile Basin’, the Nile Basin community recognises that the River Nile plays an integral part in achieving not only water security but also food and energy security as well as eradicating poverty for the people of the Nile Basin region”, said Dr. Rurema, who is also Burundi's Minister of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock.

Going forward, the results from both phases of the strategic water resources analysis will be used in the design of a water resources management plan and basin-wide investment programme.

**Abdulkarim H Seid (PhD)**

**Deputy Executive Director/Head of Basin-wide Programme  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe**

## Kenya kicks off National NBI planning consultations

**N**ational planning meetings whose aim is to enable harnessing of inputs of the national actors in the NBI annual work planning for FY 2019/2020 kicked off recently, with Kenya hosting the first meeting.

The meeting attended by representatives from key ministries including water, agricultural, environment, foreign affairs and Attorney General's office was key to ensuring consistence with and coherence to national priorities.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Chrispine O. Juma, Director for Water Resources and Nile-TAC Member for Kenya. He noted that for Member States to realise the benefits of NBI they need to work together and, synchronisation of work plans, is a means towards that end.

The NBI shared the planned results and key activities for the financial year 2019/2020 and sought inputs on how the national actors can contribute to their successful implementation.

The two day meeting held from March 18 – 19, 2019 was also attended by sector focal points of NBI programmes at national level, members of the NBI Regional Expert Working Groups; as well as NBI staff from Nile-SEC and NELSAP-CU.

**Tom Waako**

**Programme Officer  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe**

## Preparation of State of the River Nile Basin Report 2018 in advanced stages



**E**xperts from the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) Member States and staff of NBI met recently in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania as part of the ongoing process to develop the second State of the River Nile Basin Report 2018.

During the two-day workshop, March 29 – 30, 2019, participants reviewed and validated the content for each of the thematic chapters, including the key messages, data, information and findings/conclusions as well as illustrative graphs. The 2018 report comprises six thematic chapters that are aligned to the NBI 10-year Strategy 2017-2027, namely; Water Security, Energy Security, Food Security, Environmental Sustainability, Climate Change adaptation, as well as Transboundary Water Governance.

The State of the River Nile Basin Report 2018 describes the state of the River Nile Basin as of the latest information and data available in 2018. It takes note of the fact that as the Nile Basin States undergo economic development, they will require more water to grow more food, produce more energy and provide more services to growing cities and more vulnerable rural populations. The report discusses a number of pertinent issues facing the Nile Basin States including the decreasing per capita water availability and storage due to rapid population growth, urbanisation and inadequate investment by the countries in hydraulic infrastructure over the last four decades.

The 2018 report provides a monitoring report card, highlights bottlenecks and threats, and offers suggestions towards achieving basin management objectives and development goals.

The State of River Nile Basin Report 2018 is jointly prepared by NBI Centres and Member States, represented by members of the Regional Working Group (RWG), comprising three experts from each country. The report is expected to be launched in 2019, The Year of the Nile Basin.

The NBI first published the State of River Nile Basin Report in 2012. This report provides information on the general health of the Nile Basin, River Nile and its tributaries and raises awareness on the biophysical, socio-cultural and economic conditions within the Basin. It also highlights water hot spots and hope spots and emphasises that cooperation amongst the riparian states is crucial for solving the Basin's multiple environmental and socio-economic problems as well as achieving sustainable development basin wide.

Read the State of the River Nile Basin Report 2012: <http://sob.nilebasin.org/>

**Jane K. Baitwa**  
Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe



# Children illustrate what the Nile means to them in drawing competition



The winners, (L-R) Paul Imasiku Mwenda, Dorcas Uwineza and Tresor Bizimungu

**W**hat does the Nile mean to you? This question was posed to a group of school-going children in Kigali, Rwanda who participated in a drawing competition as part of the activities to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nile Basin Initiative on February 22, 2019.

Their imagination took them to capturing images of what the Nile means to them; many of them interpreted this to mean how the River Nile benefits the different communities that depend on it, focusing on fishing, power generation, agriculture as well as water for domestic use.

The competition saw a total of 27 pupils, aged 8-12 years, selected from nine schools, compete for the top prize. Although there were quite a number of good submissions, in the end, only three finalists could claim prizes. The second runner-up was Dorcas Uwineza, a primary 5 pupil from GS Saint Dominique Romera primary school. She walked away with a USD100 prize and a photo opportunity with the guest of honor Rwanda's Minister of Environment, Dr Vincent Biruta.

Her drawing illustrated the green and desert areas along and around the Nile, including activities such as farming and irrigation. She also captured the famous Nile crocodiles in the water.

The first runner-up was Tresor Bizimungu, a pupil from Rwiza Primary School, who won USD200. His drawing captured various activities in the Nile Basin, including fishing, hunting, agriculture and irrigation among others.

The winner, Paul Imasiku Mwenda, from Camp Kigali School, received a cash prize of USD300. According to one of the judges, Ms Milly Mbuliro, the GIS and Remote Sensing Specialist at the NBI Secretariat, Mwenda's message came out strongly and he had a clear sense of the images he was creating, in addition to the placement of the River Nile in Africa.

Speaking about his win, Mwenda said he was excited that he had come out top of the competition.

**Elizabeth Agiro**  
Media Relations Expert  
Nile-SEC, ENTEBBE

# A Long River Journey - 20 Years of Cooperation under the NBI

The publication, launched on February 22, 2019 on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) outlines the evolution and development of the organisation in the last 20 years (February 1999 – February 2019) and what lessons can be drawn to feed into future cooperation. It shows the range and complexity of the programmes and activities undertaken over the years as well as some of the major outcomes. It points out that whilst much has been achieved, the NBI still has a long journey ahead.

The publication also attempts to show why the NBI is critical for the Nile to survive as one system that can benefit all; and what real collective action can and does achieve.

Read more: <http://nbi20.nilebasin.org/anniversary-publication/>



Hon Dr Vincent Biruta Rwanda's Minister of Environment unveils the publication

## NBI participates in Uganda Water Week 2019

The NBI, represented by the Secretariat and one of its investment arms, the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme Coordination Unit (NELSAP CU), took part in the Uganda Water and Environment Week (UWEWK) 2019. The event was held at the Water Resource Institute in Entebbe from March 18 –22, 2019.

Besides participating in the different technical sessions, NBI set up an exhibition booth to show case communication and knowledge products as well as scientific tools developed over the last 20 years that empower Member States and Nile Basin citizens to manage shared water resources effectively.



Stakeholders expressed interest in the wide range of products that included the Nile Basin Water Resources Atlas, State of the River Nile Basin Report 2012, the NBI Regional bibliography,

Environmental Flows Strategy, Wetland fact sheets as well as the annual Corporate Report 2018. All these documents are also available online: <http://www.nilebasin.org/>

The Uganda Water and Environment Week is organised annually by the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), spearheaded by Water Resources Institute. Since its initiation in 2018, the event seeks to contribute towards the attainment of Sustainable Socio-economic Transformation in collaboration with various partners and stakeholders.

**Juliet Nakasagga**  
Knowledge Management Officer  
Nile-SEC, Entebbe



## WHAT'S ON? April - June 2019

Dates	Activity	Venue
April 4	Donor Meeting: Visit to World Bank Headquarters, USA	Washington DC
Apr 8	Official handover ceremony, Office of the ED, NBI Secretariat	Entebbe, Uganda
Apr 10 - 11	Enhancing Conjunctive Management of Surface and Groundwater Resources Project	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
April 12	Appraisal Mission for the DR Congo-Uganda Transmission Interconnection Project	Uganda
April 24-29	AfDB Project preparation and appraisal - Climate Services for Adaptive Water Resources Management in the Nile Basin	Entebbe, Uganda
April TBC	Rusumo Project PSC & RPCL Board of Directors Meeting	Rusumo, Rwanda
April TBC	Donor Meeting: Visit to KfW Headquarters in Germany	Frankfurt
April TBC	Rusumo Project: Dissemination Workshop on Induced Migration with Rusumo Border Officials	Rusumo, Rwanda
Apr - May	National NBI Planning Meetings	National NBI Offices
May 2-4	Nile-SEC Planning Retreat	Entebbe
May 6 - 7	NCORE CIWA/WB Implementation support mission to Nile-SEC	Entebbe, Uganda
May 12 -18	Wetlands Project: Workshop to Update Wetlands Management Plans, CIPS for three Trans boundary Wetlands (Sango-Minziro, Sio-Siteko, Semliki Delta)	Entebbe, Uganda
May 14-17	LEAF II PROJECT: Workshop to Review Situation Analysis Report for Nkusi and Muzizi CMPs	Hoima, Uganda
May 15	LEAF II PROJECT: Regional Project Steering Committee (RPSC) Meeting	Uganda
May 19	Rusumo Project: Dissemination Workshop on Induced Migration with Rusumo Border Officials	Rusumo, Rwanda
May 19	NCORE-CIWA: Sensitization and Awareness Meetings on Preparation of Angololo Irrigation Development and Watershed Management Projects	Angololo, Kenya
May 20 - 24	NCORE-CIWA: Dam Safety Capacity Building and Training for National Regulatory Authorities.	Addis-Ababa
May TBC	Donor Meeting: Visit to DBSA South Africa	Johannesburg
MAY TBC	Donor Meeting: Visit to Exim Bank of India	India
June 13 -14	NCORE-CIWA: Validation Workshop for design and Tender of Nyimur Multipurpose Water Resources and Development Project	Entebbe, Uganda
June 24 - 28	NCORE-CIWA: Dam Safety Training for Civil Societies, Regulators and Policy Makers from National Water Boards, MPs and Directors from Ministries	Arusha, Tanzania



Access NBI knowledge and best practices in water resource management.  
Share your knowledge and best practices.  
Log on to <http://nileis.nilebasin.org>

### NBI MEMBER STATES



Burundi



DR Congo



Egypt



Ethiopia



Kenya



Rwanda



South Sudan



The Sudan



Tanzania



Uganda

### NBI SHARED VISION OBJECTIVE

To achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilisation of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources.



NILE-SEC  
**NILE BASIN INITIATIVE**  
INITIATIVE DU BASSIN DU NIL

Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat  
P. O. Box 192 Entebbe - Uganda  
Tel: +256 417 705 000, +256 414 321 329  
+256 414 321 424  
Email: [nbisec@nilebasin.org](mailto:nbisec@nilebasin.org)  
Website: [www.nilebasin.org](http://www.nilebasin.org)

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Want to know more about NBI?



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