

From Vision to Impact: Final Mission Reviews Landmark Nile Basin Climate Resilience Project

Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience (NCCR) Project for the 10TH Implementation Support Mission (ISM).

The 10th Implementation Support Mission (ISM) for the Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience (NCCR) Project was held from October 14-16, 2025, in Kigali, Rwanda. Organized by NELSAP-CU, this mission marks the final review before the project's scheduled conclusion in November 2025.

The primary objective of the mission is to review the progress made since 10th ISM implementation including financial and procurement performance, and to plan for a smooth project closure. The mission commenced with the customary prayer, followed by introductory remarks from the Heads of Implementing Agencies (IAs), the World Bank, and official opening remarks by the host NELCOM chair, Her Excellency Dr. Bernadette Arakwiye.

Opening remarks from key implementing agencies highlighted significant achievements.

Dr. Isaac Aluwke, NELSAP-CU Regional Coordinator, on his welcoming remarks highlight the essential role of teamwork, stakeholder support, and long-term vision in the successful execution of NELSAP projects. As the project phase ends, Dr. Aluwke emphasized the importance of turning achievements into real benefits for communities and noted the legacy of cooperation and innovation that has been created.

Finally, His gratitude towards partners World Bank, member states, implementing agencies, and all partners embodies for the collaborative spirit that is vital for achieving meaningful outcomes in community development initiatives, Dr. Issac Aluwke said ***“Your support has been the wind beneath our water-quality-tested wings. The completion of this project is not a finish line—it is a launchpad for future possibilities.”***

Eng. Coletha Ruhanya, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC), spoke about the successful collaboration with partner states and the World Bank on the NCCR Project. She emphasized the importance of sustainable, resilient, and inclusive development within the Lake Victoria Basin. Eng. Coletha highlighted how the NCCR Project has fostered strong institutional partnerships aimed at achieving shared goals. Additionally, she detailed the LVBC's efforts in harmonizing policies related to water quality management in line with the East African Community (EAC) standards, indicated that the project has addressed gaps in existing policies, and promoted effective management strategies for regional water quality challenges.

As the project draws to an end Eng. Coletha said ***“While this marks the conclusion of the NCCR Project, it is truly the beginning of new opportunities to sustainably manage the Lake Victoria and Nile Basins. Together, let us continue to work for the people and the planet we are entrusted to serve.”***

Ms. Verdiane Nyiramana, Chairperson of the Nile Basin Discourse (NBD) emphasizes the importance of inclusive governance in sustainable cooperation across the Nile Basin's ten riparian countries. NBD has facilitated grassroots dialogues and citizen data initiatives that connect community realities with regional policy-making processes. The chairperson also highlights the engagement of a diverse range of participants, including women and youth, in discussions about resilience and policy. She said that ***“Our engagement has strengthened legitimacy, broadened ownership, and demonstrated that inclusive governance is not an add-on, but a cornerstone of durable cooperation. The strong participation of women, youth, and community actors in resilience dialogues and policy forums is a testament to the growing maturity and diversity of the Nile cooperation agenda.”*** Furthermore, Ms. Verdiane appreciates the collaborative efforts and support from various partner institutions and expresses NBD's commitment to continuing to build on its achievements beyond specific projects.

Eng. Teshome Atenafie, Acting Executive Director of the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO), wherein expresses his gratitude towards various stakeholders for their support in hosting an event related to the Nile Cooperation and Climate Resilience (NCCR) Project. Eng. Teshome emphasizes the project's significance in fostering cooperation across the Nile Basin for water resources management amid at climate change challenges. He highlights the substantial financial execution of the project despite some delays, as well as its effectiveness in producing valuable tools and policies that facilitate enhanced regional cooperation even amid complex political contexts, he said ***“NCCR Project demonstrated high relevance and coherence with basin priorities, producing tangible tools, results and policies that advanced cooperation despite implemented in a politically complex environment in EN sub-Basin. Effectiveness was strong, with multiple outputs and targets exceeding planned Project targets.”***

The World Bank team Dr. Shyam KC, NCCR Project TTL ,expressed the privilege to be in Kigali and reflected on nearly 5 years of partnership in the Nile Basin. He states that the NCCR project has consolidated past gains, establishing analytic frameworks for climate-smart investments, platforms that foster trust, and institutions promoting cooperation beyond project boundaries, by which the initiative demonstrates **that collaboration is practical, measurable, and directly benefits communities.** Dr. Shyam Said that ***“As we are a team from the World Bank, I would like to express our deep appreciation to all our implementing teams, developing partners and country representatives for the professionalism, trust and persistence that brought us here.”*** Said Dr. Appreciation was also extended to implementing teams and country representatives for their professionalism and persistence.

Finally, he emphasizes that the mission is unique, combining final supervision with project completion and results documentation, ensuring a smooth closure while capturing lessons for future cooperation. The team looks forward to continued dialogue and strengthened collaboration in the region.

In her speech, Dr. Florence Grace Adongo, the Executive Director of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), expressed congratulations to the newly appointed Rwandan Minister of Environment and extended gratitude to Rwanda's government, the World Bank, and various partners for their ongoing support of the Nile Basin Initiative. Dr. Florence emphasized the success of the Nile Cooperative Climate Resilience (NCCR) Project, which has enhanced cooperative water management across the Nile Basin. Dr. Adongo highlighted the risk of diminishing achievements of the NCCR Project by saying ***“As we draw closer to the conclusion of this important Project this November 2025, we, as NBI find ourselves at crossroads. The achievements of the NCCR Project, its institutional capacities, cooperative frameworks, and technical tools; risk being diminished if there is no follow-up phase to sustain them.”*** if a follow-up phase is not established post-2025 and made a compelling plea for continued support from the World Bank to preserve the progress made. She concluded her remarks by welcoming the Honorable Minister to officially launch the 10th Implementation Support Mission of the NCCR Project.

The opening remarks by Honorable Dr. Bernadette Arakwiye, the Minister of Environment of Rwanda and Chair of the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program Coordination Committee (NELCOM), emphasizes the importance of continued support from partners, particularly the World Bank, as the NCCR Project approaches its conclusion in November 2025. Honorable Dr. Bernadette said that ***“As the NCCR Project approaches its scheduled conclusion in November 2025, I urge our partners, especially the World Bank, to continue their support. The Nile Cooperation process is not just a project; it is a shared vision of collective resilience, inclusive prosperity, and regional peace. . . . This is not the moment to scale down our efforts—it is the time to deepen them,”*** said NELCOM.

Dr. Arakwiye encourages deepening efforts in collaborative resilience, regional prosperity, and peace. Additionally, she expresses gratitude to all involved with the mission. By saying this Honorable Dr. Bernadette Arakwiye Minister of Environment of Rwanda and NELCOM Chair declares that the **10th Implementation Support Mission** of the Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience Project is officially open and wishes fruitful deliberations and a successful mission.

After the official opening ceremony, participants held discussions and presentations highlighting progress in thematic areas, financial Situations, and Progress and work plan from each center.

About Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience (NCCR) Project

The Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience (NCCR) Project is a five-year initiative that began in March 2021 and will be concluded in November 2025. Its objective is to strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms for the sustainable management and development of water resources in the Nile Basin.

The project is implemented by NBI through the NBI Secretariat (Nile-SEC), Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program Coordination unit (NELSAP-CU), Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO), Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) and Nile Basin Discourse

(NBD). The NCCR project is organized into five thematic areas, namely: platforms for cooperation, flood and drought risk mitigation, dam safety capacity building, innovative information services for climate-resilient investment planning and water quality investment planning and prioritization.