



H.E. Nestor Ntahontuye, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Burundi (cream suit) with Nile-COM members and Dr Florence Grace Adongo, NBI Executive Director (second right) during the 33rd Nile-COM meeting (Detailed captions on Page 27)

NBI Governance Meet in Bujumbura, Decide on New Chairperson and Executive Director, NBI

The Government of Burundi hosted the 33rd meeting of the Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM) at Kiriri Gardens Hotel in Bujumbura on 6 December 2025. The meeting was preceded by several days of deliberations by the Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC), which reviews a wide range of Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) matters – including programme plans and strategies, as well as human resources, finance and audit issues – and submits recommendations for ministerial decision-making.

The Nile-COM meeting was officially opened by H.E. Nestor Ntahontuye, Prime Minister of Burundi. Ministers from Burundi, Egypt, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda

attended the meeting while Ethiopia and Sudan were represented. Rwanda participated virtually.

Other partners and stakeholders at the opening of the 33rd meeting included senior officials of the Government of Burundi, representatives of the World Bank and GIZ, diplomats accredited to Burundi, and the Chairperson of the Board of the Nile Basin Discourse.

During the meeting, the Nile-COM elected Burundi as Chair for the 2025/2026 financial year and appointed a new Executive Director of the Nile Basin Initiative, Dr Eng. Nestor Niyonzima.

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Reader,

I am delighted to present to you the Quarter 2 edition of Nile News for the 2025/2026 financial year, covering the period from October to December 2025.

I congratulate the Government of Burundi for successfully hosting the December 2025 Governance Meetings. It was an honour to have the Prime Minister, H.E. Mr. Nestor Ntahontuye, officially open the 33rd meeting of the Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM).

I congratulate the new Nile-COM chairperson, H.E. Calinie Mbarushimana on taking over stewardship of the highest governing body of NBI. NBI Secretariat looks forward to a continued collaboration with the office she now holds.

Furthermore, I extend a warm welcome to Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima, whom the Nile-COM endorsed to succeed me as Executive Director of the Nile Basin Initiative. I am confident that he will ably steer the organisation towards delivering benefits that matter most to the more than 300 million people who depend on the Great Nile River.

As you read through this edition, you will find details of the Governance Meetings, including key strategic decisions taken, as well as updates on progress across our programmes, most notably the successful closure of the Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience (NCCR) project on 30 November 2025. For the first time, NBI handed over high-tech equipment to Member States to enhance their capacity in water quality monitoring. Previously through the regional hydrological monitoring system, the Basin in general only monitored water quantity.



NBI issued yet another edition of the critical Nile Basin Seasonal Hydrological Outlook and advisory, further enhancing preparedness against floods and other climate extremes.

Nile River Basin Investment Programme

NBI together with key players in the Basin (Regional Economic Communities/lake and river basin organisations) continued to coordinate collaborative approaches to resource mobilisation for highly transformative investment projects through the Nile River Basin Investment Programme. Some 59 cooperative investment projects designed to stimulate socio-economic development across the Basin were submitted for Governance approval. This is in fulfillment of the Executive Directive by Nile Basin Heads of State and Government during their first Summit in Entebbe in 2017.

Elsewhere, NBI made significant progress in finalising detailed designs and a resource mobilisation plan for the Nile Basin Centre of Excellence, resource mobilisation for the 8th Nile Basin Development Forum due to take place in Tanzania in 2026 and preparing for Nile Day 2026. It was an honour for me to gain the consent of the Republic of South Sudan to host the historic 20th regional commemoration of Nile Day.

Journey of Collective Achievement

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Government of Uganda for entrusting me with the responsibility of serving as Executive Director since November 2023. I am deeply proud of the collective achievements realized during my tenure, made possible through the enduring guidance of NBI's Governance, led by the Nile-COM, the steadfast support of our development and strategic partners, and the dedication, skill, and passion of NBI's staff at the Secretariat and our investment arms, the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme Coordination Unit (NELSAP-CU).

Three Outstanding Matters

Three issues remain outstanding, however: the Second Summit of Nile Basin Heads of State and Government, and continued engagement with non-ratifying countries on the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA), which will lead to actualisation of the Nile River Basin Commission. The third aspect is diversification of funding sources and innovative approaches for resource mobilisation, including realisation of regular country contributions. I am confident that under prevailing political will and collective resolve, these matters will come to a conclusion.

Dr Florence Grace Adongo
Executive Director from 1 November
2023 to 31 December 2025

33RD NILE-COM CONTINUED



Entertainers welcomed the Prime Minister, H.E. Nestor Ntahontuye to the 33rd Nile-COM meeting. Top right, H.E. Calinie Mbarushimana became the new Nile-COM chairperson. Above right, Dr Florence Grace Adongo received from the Prime Minister an award for her dedicated service in the position of Executive Director (2023 - 2025)

Press statement <https://nilebasin.org/node/13474>

New Executive Director

Under Minute 33.6.1, the Nile-COM endorsed Burundian national Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima as the 12th Executive Director of the Nile Basin Initiative.

Dr. Eng. Niyonzima is the second Burundian national to hold the position of NBI Executive Director, following Mr Audace Ndayizeye, whose term was from 2006 to 2008. Stewardship of NBI rotates every two years with each of the institution's Member States assuming leadership in English-language alphabetical order and based on the

endorsement of the Nile-COM. Born in 1982, Dr. Eng. Niyonzima holds a PhD in Water Engineering, the equivalent of a Master's degree in Hydraulics Engineering and Water Management, and a Diploma in University Teaching from the Moscow State University of Environmental Engineering in the Russian Federation. He also previously worked as a senior lecturer at the University of Burundi.

Full press release <https://nilebasin.org/node/13478>



Executive Director, Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima

KEY MESSAGES DELIVERED

H.E. Nestor Ntahontuye, Prime Minister of Burundi

- a. The Nile Basin faces ever-growing challenges of a transboundary nature, including climate change and severe environmental decline. This situation arises at a time when the Basin's environmental resources are under increasing pressure from human economic activities
- b. There is need for a collective response
- c. Aware of the need to take cooperation on the Nile to a higher level, Burundi ratified the CFA on 25 September 2023
- d. Non-ratifying countries are encouraged to do so as soon as possible so NBI can create a more competitive space for cooperation

Full speech on Page 28 (outside back cover)

Executive Director Dr Florence Grace Adongo:

- a. Congratulated five ministers upon their appointment in the preceding four months, thus becoming Nile-COM members.
- b. Egypt appointed two new members on the Nile-TAC and NELTAC for the first time since its withdrawal from NBI's technical meetings in 2010.
- c. Dr. Abraha Adunga from Ethiopia took up position of Deputy Executive Director/Head of Basin-wide Programme in May 2025.
- d. NBI is implementing institutional and programme activities, demonstrating benefits to Member States and delivered through partnerships.
- e. The activities include sharing data across various information systems, and investment projects, majorly the Regional Rusumo Falls Hydroelectric Project.
- f. NBI faces challenges including the geopolitical environment. This limits

- g. progress in project implementation.
- g. Grateful to Nile-COM and development partners for their support during her tenure.

H.E. Calinie Mbarushimana, chairperson, Nile-COM and Minister for Environment, Agriculture and Livestock of Burundi

- a. NBI is important for sustainable development and exchanging common experiences on the Nile.
- b. Challenges of meeting water demands are exacerbated by climate change.
- c. Burundi's national priorities are economic sustainability and poverty alleviation, and these are both related to integrated water resources management.
- d. Burundi ratified the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) on 25 September 2023.

The minister outlined the ongoing national programmes related to transboundary water cooperation, reaffirming Burundi's commitment to Nile cooperation.

H.E. Prof. Dr. Hani Seliwam, Nile-COM Member and Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of Egypt

- a. NBI remains the only all-inclusive institution for Nile cooperation.
- b. Egypt welcomes consultative and constructive engagement with the non-ratifying Member States to the CFA. Thanks to Uganda, Rwanda, and South Sudan for ably leading the process.
- c. Look forward to continued consultation in the current format as a means of restoring win-win cooperation, inclusivity, confidence, and Egypt's full participation in NBI in the spirit of cooperation and trust.
- d. International partners experienced in transboundary water

- e. management urged to support the consultative process, refraining from assisting divisive actions.
- e. Nile Basin challenges cannot be addressed through unilateral actions.
- f. Some 36 Nile Equatorial Lakes projects were approved within the Nile River Basin Investment Programme (NR-BIP) based on their compliance with the established project selection criteria. Egypt looks forward to replicating this approach in the Eastern Nile.
- g. Egypt is not against the development aspirations of any Nile Basin country.

Hon. Eng. Eric Murithi Mugaa, Nile-COM Member and Cabinet Secretary for Water, Sanitation and Irrigation of Kenya

- a. Kenya is committed to Nile cooperation and to making every investment count - for the conservation of the riparian lands and catchments of the Nile Basin.
- b. Every basin faces challenges. Currently the Nile Basin is faced with cashflow challenges. Its survival depends heavily on country contributions.
- c. Kenya appreciates development partners that have stood with NBI since 1999.
- d. Member States are bound together by the Nile Basin and continued engagement.
- e. NBI's period of transition to the CFA is critical with dialogue needed to find amicable solutions. Member States must put interests of the Basin first.
- f. Kenya has made remittances to the Basin annually and participated in NBI's various fora, platforms, and Governance engagements.
- g. Kenya commends the incoming chairperson of the Nile-COM and wishes her a successful term.

Hon. Dr. Bernadette Arakwiye, Nile-COM Member and the Minister of Environment of Rwanda

- a. Thanks to Government of Burundi for hosting the 33rd Nile COM meeting; Rwanda is commitment to cooperating with the in-coming chairperson.
- b. Thanks to Uganda for exemplary leadership of the Nile-COM in last two years, with clarity, commitment, purpose and inclusivity
- c. Rwanda commends Nile-TAC and the NBI Secretariat for preparations made for the Governance meetings in Bujumbura
- d. Challenges of Nile Basin justify NBI's existence.
- e. Cooperation remains cornerstone of strategic water management in the Basin.
- f. Rwanda re-affirms commitment to Nile cooperation for mutual trust and shared benefits.

Hon. James Mawich Makuach, Nile-COM Member and Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of South Sudan

- a. Greetings from H.E. President Salva Kiir of South Sudan
- b. South Sudan commends Hon. Sam Cheptoris for his wise leadership of the Nile-COM
- c. South Sudan welcomes water quality management equipment received through NBI's Executive Director. The equipment will enhance the country's capacity to gather real-time data on water quality.
- d. South Sudan continues to suffer from devastating impacts of climate change, particularly recurring flood and droughts. Riparian countries, water experts, policy makers, and academia urged to collectively help find lasting solution.
- e. Report of Special Committee of engagement with CFA non-ratifying countries is comprehensive and well-articulated. NBI must press on with dialogue so that concerns

raised by non-ratifying countries can be addressed. CFA is a flexible document.

- f. South Sudan is committed to meeting its financial obligations with NBI
- g. South Sudan to host regional commemoration of Nile Day on 22 February 2026.

Hon. Eng. Mathew Kundo, Deputy Minister of Water, representing Nile-COM Member of Tanzania

- a. Thanks to Government of Burundi for its hospitality during the 33rd Nile-COM meeting
- b. Tanzania will continue to support NBI given the challenges of water scarcity and knowing that sustainable water management contributes significantly to socio-economic development and peaceful cooperation.
- c. Working in silos is old-fashioned.
- d. Cooperation comes with both rights and responsibilities: As it is the right of riparian states to enjoy the Nile's water, it is also their responsibility to honour obligations
- e. There is a lack of fairness on the issue of country contributions. Tanzania calls on all Member States to meet their obligations.
- f. Financial resources are necessary to keep the Nile River flowing. This generation found the Nile flowing, we must leave it flowing.

Dr. Zebene Lakew, representing H.E. Dr. Eng. Habtamu Itefa, Nile COM Member of Ethiopia

- a. NBI commended for building trust and confidence, strengthening human and institutional capacity, and building a robust knowledge base. A lot more is known about the Nile Basin now than in the years prior to 1999.
- b. NBI has prepared investment projects that hold immense promise for shared development, notably through the NR-BIP; there is need

to mobilize resources so that these projects are implemented.

- c. It is encouraging that consultations with non-ratifying countries to CFA are in advanced stages. The four countries urged to join the CFA; it can accommodate their interests.
- d. NBI urged to focus on facilitating a smooth transition to the Nile River Basin Commission. Development partners urged to support Commission
- e. Ethiopia is grateful to riparian countries that shared in the momentous occasion of its inauguration of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
- f. Ethiopia appreciates riparian states that have stood for the principle of equitable and reasonable utilisation of the Nile.

Dr. Salih Hamad Omer, the Chairperson of the Water Resources Technical Organ, representing the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation of Sudan

- a. NBI has built trust and confidence, but more is required to consolidate the gains. This will come about through implementation of joint investment projects.
- b. NBI Secretariat's efforts to develop the NR-BIP are commendable. However, progress toward implementation of projects requires support from Member States and the international community.
- c. Throughout implementation of all NBI projects, stakeholders must be continuously involved and informed.
- d. Hon. Sam Cheptoris commended for fostering strategic goals of the region.
- e. The growing pressure on the water resources requires wise and innovative approaches and inclusivity.
- f. Recent efforts to bring the non-ratifying countries to the CFA are welcome. Sudan is committed to regional cooperation and welcomes all the initiatives.

Hon. Beatrice Atim Anywar, holding fort for the Minister of Water and Environment, Hon. Sam Cheptoris

- a. Nile cooperation is anchored in unity, trust, and shared responsibility.
- b. Nile Basin faces serious challenges including climate change, hydrological variability, and growing populations. At institutional level, declining international financing threatens our capacity to sustain gains made.
- c. A lot has been realized during Uganda's two-years tenure: The following aspects were transformative:
 - » CFA entered into force on 13 October 2024.
 - » Five Nile-COM meetings were held to address complex Nile cooperation matters and ensure continuity of NBI
 - » High-level policy dialogues were held,

and NBI engaged with development partners in Bonn, Germany (BMZ) and Brussels, Belgium (European Union)

- » NBI consistently participated in high-level water fora to further update the international community on Nile cooperation and discuss resourcing.
 - » Uganda was assigned leadership of Special Committee to engage the CFA non-ratifying countries. Grateful for cordial engagement with Rwanda and South Sudan, as well as DR Congo, Egypt, Kenya and Sudan
- d. Dr Florence Grace Adongo commended for her stewardship of NBI.
 - e. Confident that during her tenure, Burundi will continue to demonstrate progress towards NBI's Shared Vision Objective.

Dr. Anders Jagerskog, Programme Manager of Cooperation in International Waters (CIWA) of the World Bank and on behalf of Development Partners

- a. Increasing pressure on water resources, compounded by climate change and population growth, requires countries to work together.
- b. NCCR closed successfully, having addressed areas such as water quality, information systems, floods and drought early warning, and dam safety. CIWA hopes results will be sustained.
- c. Riparian countries urged to take a deeper look into country contributions to ensure sustainability of NBI. Country ownership is vital.
- d. Patience will be key in addressing the matters on the Nile.

KEY DECISIONS TAKEN BY NILE-COM

- a. The Nile-COM approved the following:
- b. The regionally led, multi-sector and multi-agency Nile River Basin Investment Programme
- c. The establishment of a fund for maintenance and development of the [Regional Hydrological Monitoring System](#), supported by partner contributions.
- d. The provision of [Nile Basin Decision Support System](#) licenses to countries currently without access, alongside expanded awareness, outreach, and sustainable financing for [NBI's 17 information systems](#).
- e. A Climate Action Strategy 2025–2035, incorporating a policy to climate-proof all investment plans, programmes, and projects
- f. [Nile Basin Flash Flood Early Warning System](#) and basin-wide [Drought and Early Warning System \(DEWS\)](#)
- g. [Nile Basin Dam Safety Risk Management Framework](#)
- h. NBI Macro-plastic Monitoring Action Plan.
- i. Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (2025-2029), Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Implementation Strategy 2025 and ICT Policy 2025
- j. Renewal of memorandum of understanding with the [Nile Basin Discourse](#).
- k. Theme of the [8th Nile Basin Development Forum](#): “Building a resilient and inclusive Nile future: investing in people, innovation and cooperation and shared prosperity.”



The Nile-COM thanked World Bank/CIWA, BMZ/GIZ, European Union, the Global Environment Fund/ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for their longstanding partnership.

A NEW NILE-TAC CHAIR FROM BURUNDI, TWO RAPPOTUERS



Mr. Augustin Ngenzirabona, Director General of the Geographic Institute of Burundi (IGEBU), receives the Governance Charter from Dr Callist Tindimugaya of Uganda during the Nile-TAC meetings, as the latter handed over the TAC Chair office for the financial year 2025/2026. Looking on in

Dr Florence Grace Adongo Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo were elected as rapporteurs for English and French respectively.

[Story continues on Page 27](#)

South Sudan to Host Historic Regional Nile Day 2026

During their 33rd meeting on 6 December 2025 in Bujumbura, Burundi, the Nile Council of Ministers seconded an offer by South Sudan to host the 20th regional commemoration of Nile Day in the country's capital, Juba. It will be South Sudan's first time to host the regional Nile Day commemoration, which happens every 22 February to mark the birth date of the Nile Basin Initiative in 1999.

A FITTING FIRST: WHY SOUTH SUDAN IS A SUITABLE HOST

- a. Nearly all of South Sudan lies in the Nile Basin, and the country is situated at the heart of the White Nile. Its stewardship of the Sudd, one of the world's largest and most ecologically significant wetlands, is of international importance.
- b. As a country whose communities depend heavily on the Nile and its resources for livelihoods, mobility, and cultural identity, South Sudan exemplifies the importance of cooperation on transboundary waters for sustainable development.
- c. South Sudan's central position makes it a natural bridge between upstream and downstream states, underscoring the shared responsibility and mutual benefits that Nile cooperation brings.
- d. South Sudan's rich cultural diversity offers a compelling backdrop for celebrating the varied heritage of the Nile Basin.



The Bank of South Sudan Headquarters complex where South Sudan will host the regional celebration of Nile Day 2026. It includes a basketball court

More on what the Minister and the Executive Director discussed



- i To highlight the importance of cooperation in the sustainable management and development of a common resource, the Nile
- ii To exchange experiences and ideas on Nile Basin issues such as climate extremes and pollution, and how they can be addressed through cooperation.
- iii To re-affirm commitment to Nile cooperation, celebrate cultures of the Nile Basin, and reflect on how cooperation is transforming lives, communities and economies.



Progress on Groundwater Pilot: Five Sites Built, 10 Boreholes Completed

The Nile Basin Initiative is currently implementing pilot projects in five sites distributed along four countries, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. The projects demonstrate managed aquifer recharge (MAR) techniques of conjunctive use of ground and surface water within the framework of Integrated Water Resources Management and Sustainable Development Goal 6.3.2. Funded by the Global Environment Facility and the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP), the pilots are designed to improve the situation of drinking water, as well as hygiene, sanitation and human wellbeing. The pilots are complemented by a regional monitoring system composed of 20 boreholes drilled in Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda and 10 in Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi. Another 10 boreholes and two MAR sites will be completed by end of March 2026.





From page 8 MAR works in Burundi, Uganda and Kenya. Immediately above, left, NBI hands over the Kabenza-Nyagatare site in Rwanda to a contractor for the MAR pilot

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: KENYA PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFY BENEFITS & RISKS OF “CLEAN WATER PROJECT”

From 8–12 December 2025, the Nile Basin Discourse through the Kenya Nile Discourse Forum sensitised communities of Lukesi, Lukhome and Mwitha villages in Saboti Sub-county, Kenya to strengthen awareness and ownership of the MAR clean water project. The activity focused on community understanding of the project, expected benefits, potential risks, and the roles households play in protecting and sustaining the project. Participants identified key benefits such as reliable access to clean water, reduced walking distances in search of water, improved health, and stronger community cohesion. They also discussed risks to the project including vandalism, silting, and seasonal flooding, and proposed mitigation measures such as fencing, by-laws, night guarding and community patrols. A water user committee was formed to oversee operations, maintenance, mobilisation, and grievance handling. Before the outreach, NBD held meetings with the Water Resources Authority and

Kitale Sub-basin and Saboti Sub-county officials to align on the project objectives and ensure coordinated support. The Lukesi (Kitale) MAR site is one of five transboundary pilots under the pilot. Sister pilot sites are in Bunabiro, Bulambuli District and Kakukuru-Rwenanura, Ntungamo District in Uganda, Muyinga in Burundi and Kabeza–Nyagatare in Rwanda. NBD leads stakeholder engagement to build community ownership and support long-term sustainability of project outcomes. Once the pilots are completed, NBI will scale successful techniques to enhance conjunctive use of ground and surface water. NBI will also produce a video documentary demonstrating the impact of the NBI intervention for raising awareness among policymakers basin-wide. Many recent studies found that groundwater also has a strong impact on poverty, migration, conflicts, school attendance, and human health.



NBI RESTORES REGIONAL HYDROLOGICAL STATIONS IN BURUNDI AND KENYA

In Kenya from 29 October to 9 November 2025, NBI supported the restoration of five out of six stations established along with a data management system in 2023 to strengthen transboundary water monitoring and management in the Nile under Nile Basin Regional Hydrological Monitoring System.

The intervention took place on:

- a. Nzoia River at Rwambwa
- b. Yala River at Kadenge
- c. Sondu-Miriu River at Nyawkere
- d. Gucha-Migori River at Wath Ong'er, and
- e. Mara River at Mara Rianda, where the stations were hit by malfunctions and vandalism and could therefore no longer provide timely, reliable and accurate data and information on water levels and rainfall. Such information is critical for water security and climate resilience in line with NBI's 10-year Strategy.

The stations are now back to 100 percent

functionality thanks to the exercise, in which NBI worked closely with Kenya's Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation and the Water Resources Authority, as well as Mara Conservancy. The mission successfully enhanced data availability and reliability, system security, and regional cooperation in hydrological monitoring.

Recommendations for Sustainability

The team recommended strengthening operation, maintenance, and sustainability of the regional hydrological monitoring stations and systems in Kenya through

- » enhanced station security;
- » institutionalised maintenance schedules and routines;
- » strengthened collaboration and research;
- » data and information sharing;
- » support to community-based monitoring and awareness; and
- » translation of data into community benefits.



Repairs at the Mara River in Kenya



BURUNDI BUILDS OPERATION AND MAINTAINANCE CAPACITY

In Burundi, NBI supported a similar mission from 7 to 10 October 2025 on the Ruvubu River where the regional monitoring station at Gitega suffered technical failures in data transmission and another station, at Muyinga, unrealistic water level measurement. Following NBI's intervention – in collaboration with the Geographic Institute of Burundi (IGEBU) – the two stations were restored to 100 percent functionality. During the mission, NBI also supported

installation and set-up of a data management system – DataSight – for the head of the National Hydrological Services, with full access rights.

The following were noted:

- a. Significant capacity has been built and strengthened at IGEBU; consequently, the NBI Secretariat will provide remote support for future operations and maintenance

(O&M) activities.

- b. As the Muyinga hydrological station is equipped with an online water quality sensor, there is a need to better coordinate and streamline operations and maintenance activities between the Hydromet and water quality teams.

NBI, WMO, RWANDA WATER BOARD TRAIN HYDROLOGISTS IN GREATER HORN ON AFRICA

Between 13 to 17 October 2025 in Musanze, Rwanda, NBI in collaboration with the UN's World Meteorological Organization and the Rwanda Water Resources Board conducted a regional field training exercise for hydrologists from NBI member countries and Somalia and Djibouti from the Greater Horn of Africa. The objective of the exercise was to equip participants with knowledge of both modern and standard methods for conducting streamflow measurements, as well as appropriate tools for data analysis.



[News article here here](#)

Academic Paper

From the In-situ Hydrological Monitoring to Forecasting of Hydropower and Revenue Generation. Case Study of Rusumo Hydropower Station in Tanzania and Rwanda.

Abstract

River flow information is an important factor in planning, development, and operation of hydropower plant. It determines the structural design, equipment specifications and quantity of power production. In the design and specifications, flow estimate requires a series of continues monitoring of long-term streamflow and analysis of long-term record to reflect the variability and availability of flow in the long-term future. However, in the operations of hydropower, near real-time and forecast river flow information is critical for optimization and planning operation and transmission of power to the grid.

<https://agu.confex.com/agu/agu24/meetingapp.cgi/Paper/1660638>



The Akagera River at the Regional Rusumo Falls Hydro-electric Power Project

Three Win Hackathon on Nile Basin Data Analytics Services

NBI concluded the [Nile Basin Data and Analytics Services](#) (NB-DAS) hackathon with a successful awards and showcase webinar held on 10 October 2025. The event celebrated innovative, data-driven solutions addressing key water management challenges across the Nile Basin and brought together 152 participants from across the region. The showcase featured presentations from the top five use cases, selected through a combination of expert evaluation and community voting. The winning solutions addressed challenges in water management, agriculture, hydropower and climate resilience,

demonstrating the potential of the NB-DAS platform to support regional data sharing, analysis and evidence-based decision-making.

The hackathon built on an initial session held on 3 September 2025, which introduced participants to the NB-DAS platform and guided them through the development of practical use cases. Following this session, individuals and teams developed and submitted innovative applications responding to real-world challenges across the Basin. NB-DAS is one of NBI's flagship platforms, providing stakeholders with access to data, analytical tools and

visualisation services to support water resources planning and management across the Nile Basin. Through initiatives such as the hackathon, and in collaboration with the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the Nile Basin Discourse, NBI continues to strengthen user engagement and promote innovation using regional data and analytics.

Congratulations to all the winners for their great contributions!

NBI's Deputy Executive Director and Head of the Basin-wide Programme, Dr Abraha Adugna said,

- NBI continues to elevate, evaluate and align all its information systems with the needs of its partners and Member States.
- Through DAS, NBI aims to build a shared foundation for decision-making, transparency, and innovation across all the Member States.
- Every idea presented on DAS is extremely important and contributes to the Basin's future.

OUTREACH WEBINAR BOOSTS ENGAGEMENT WITH NBI INFORMATION SERVICES

On 20 November 2025 NBI in partnership with the Nile Basin Discourse (NBD), successfully held an online outreach webinar that brought together nearly 80 participants from across Nile Basin countries. The event aimed to enhance awareness and practical use of NBI Information Services among government institutions, academia, civil society organisations and development partners.

The webinar highlighted [NBI's wide range of basin-wide information systems](#), including flood and drought early warning systems, hydrological and climate databases, analytical tools, decision support system (NB-DSS), and the Integrated Knowledge Portal. Through live demonstrations and guided walkthroughs, participants gained practical insights into how these digital services support evidence-based planning, climate resilience, and cooperative water resources management.

Strong engagement was observed throughout the session and feedback shared directly through the webinar chat. Participants expressed high satisfaction with the clarity of presentations, the relevance of the use cases presented, and the hands-on guidance on accessing NBI online platforms and the helpdesk. Notably, there was an increase in visitor traffic to NBI online during and immediately after the webinar, reflecting growing interest in the showcased services. The webinar marked an important step in strengthening connections between

data providers and end users across the Nile Basin. It reaffirmed NBI's commitment to ensuring that basin-wide information is accessible, understood, and effectively used to support informed decision-making and regional cooperation.

Positive Feedback Follows NBI Stakeholder Engagement Training

The Nile Basin Initiative received encouraging reviews on 2 October 2025 following a one-day training for senior professional staff from its Secretariat, ENTRO and NELSAP-CU, as well as one programme staff member each from the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the Nile Basin Discourse (NBD), focusing on stakeholder engagement. A total of 27 participants attended the training in Kampala, Uganda, including NCCR staff and the Team Leader of NBI's Groundwater Project.

Nearly all respondents to a post-training feedback survey rated the workshop between "Satisfied" and "Very Satisfied" across several areas, including the trainer's technical

capacity, delivery of the workshop, knowledge gained, confidence in applying the new learning, and the execution of group activities and role plays. In addition, almost all respondents indicated that they would recommend the training programme to others. One participant noted that such trainings should be conducted regularly for the benefit of all staff, while another observed that too much training material had been compressed into a single day.

Opening the workshop, Dr Florence Grace Adongo earlier told the trainees:

"You, as staff of NBI, are our first point of human contact with stakeholders. You represent the institution, its values and its message. Your awareness of communication and stakeholder engagement is therefore very important, as are your capacity and motivation to contribute to its structured application in implementing the Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (2025-2029)."

Dr Florence noted that NBI faces challenges in effectively engaging its diverse stakeholders due to geographic, political and institutional complexities, as well as socio-economic, cultural and historical differences across Nile Basin member countries. In addition, the institution faces resourcing constraints. Against this backdrop, she underscored the need for NBI to remain efficient by continuously defining, identifying, categorising and prioritising its stakeholders and designing engagement approaches based on sound scientific knowledge and principles.

In closing the workshop, Dr Isaac Alukwe, Regional Coordinator of NELSAP-CU, remarked: "I learned a lot. I think this is the first workshop in which I have seen such a high level of interest, with everyone attentive and actively participating."

The training covered the following themes: definitions and understanding of stakeholder engagement; stakeholder mapping and analysis; the importance of inclusive stakeholder engagement; and managing different stakeholders, including a role-play exercise.



Left, Procurement, NBD, Corporate Services and Groundwater staff participate in a role play during the training. Below left trainees participate in an exercise on stakeholder mapping.



The training was followed by a separate session for senior NBI staff on social media awareness, which also generated high levels of interest and engagement.

NBI HANDS OVER EQUIPMENT, TRAINS LAB TECHNICIANS FROM NINE COUNTRIES

From 3 to 7 November 2025, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) conducted a regional training for laboratory technicians from nine member countries participating in its water quality monitoring programme under the NCCR project, funded by the World Bank through the Cooperation in International Waters in Africa (CIWA) Trust Fund. The training aimed to strengthen technicians' knowledge and skills in the operation and maintenance of sensors and other advanced equipment that NBI has deployed across the Nile Basin to enhance water quality monitoring amid increasing environmental pollution. Speaking at the opening of the training

at Uganda's National Water Quality Monitoring Reference Laboratory in Entebbe, NBI Regional Water Quality Expert Dr Jean Namugize highlighted that assessments conducted across the Basin had revealed significant variations in technical capacity for water sampling, analysis, and data management. He said the training was therefore essential to harmonise standards, build sustainable national capacity, and support the exchange of data and knowledge to inform decision-making at both national and regional levels. The training involved one laboratory technician and one laboratory manager from each of the nine participating

countries —Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda (18 participants in total). The programme covered key areas including water quality sampling (objectives, types, methods, and chain-of-custody procedures); field observations and the use of water quality testing kits and automated monitoring technologies; laboratory-based water quality testing and analysis; quality assurance and quality control; laboratory safety; and the use of laboratory information management systems.



REACTIONS FROM THE CLASS

Dawit Assefa, Head of Water Quality Laboratories, Ministry of Water and Energy, Ethiopia:

“The training enriched my knowledge on how to lead laboratories in Ethiopia co-operatively, and how to manage and share lab results with other countries of the Nile Basin”.

Florence Okoth (left, foreground), Water Quality and Pollution Control Officer, Kenya

“The training was timely and highly beneficial, as it enhanced my skills and knowledge in water analysis and the management of water quality in relation to water catchments, ecosystems, and the environment.”

MORE BASIN COUNTRIES WELCOME HIGH-TECH EQUIPMENT

The training took place as the Executive Director, Dr Florence Grace Adongo, continued handing over the high-tech equipment that will enable countries to collect and analyse water quality data around the clock, leveraging the Regional Hydrological Monitoring System for monitoring water quantity.

The Executive Director called for sustainable systems including a continuous funding mechanism, as she handed over equipment in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and South Sudan

between 20 October and 28 November 2025. Each of the countries received sensors, lab equipment and field tool kits for monitoring water quality. Barriers that countries face Despite growing awareness, many Nile Basin countries face major barriers to effective water quality monitoring. These include:

- Limited or outdated monitoring stations
- Inadequate lab facilities and data systems
- Shortage of trained personnel

- Lack of real-time telemetry and data-sharing protocols
- Insufficient national funding for maintenance and upgrades
- Absence of established protocols for cross-border sharing of operational water resource data

The NBI addressed these gaps across the region, through the NCCR project in partnership with the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the Nile Basin Discourse.

BURUNDI



KENYA



While in Kisumu, a visit to the Executive Secretary, LVBC



While in Kisumu, Kenya, Dr Florence Grace Adongo visited the Executive Secretary of the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) Dr Masinde Bwire, to discuss issues of common interest, including the NBI-LVBC partnership. Dr Masinde received a gift, the [Atlas of Transboundary Wetlands in the Nile Basin](#).

RWANDA



SOUTH SUDAN



The event was officiated by Hon. Achier Manyuat John (above), the then Undersecretary of the Ministry, who signed handover documents with Dr. Florence Grace Adongo.

WATCH THE SOUTH SUDAN HAND OVER



UGANDA

On 15 December 2025, the Executive Director Dr Florence Grace Adongo visited the National Water Quality Reference Laboratory at Entebbe, Uganda to see equipment that the Nile Basin Initiative donated to Uganda to help upgrade water quality monitoring.

Dr Florence met with the Ugandan water quality staff, discussed functionality of the equipment and engaged in troubleshooting with support from technical staff of NBI. She also took tour

of a construction project for the planned new premises of the laboratory.



The Nile riparian countries continued to benefit from a wide range of products from the NCCR project, coordinated by the NBI Secretariat, including the [East African Community Water Quality Management Policy Guideline](#), [water quality database](#), [eight online courses](#), national and regional water quality technical working groups, water quality coarse maps, models developed in hotspots of water pollution, and a screening criterion adopted by Member States to rank 50 identified water quality hotspots.

A FAREWELL TO A STAFF MEMBER

Dr Jean Namugize (right) received a secret token from the NBI Secretariat when his contract as Regional Expert for Water Quality ended. Here are some of the comments written by his colleagues:

“You joined NBI at a crucial time and hit the road running with the Water Quality component of the NCCR project with such strong

commitment to work, focus, and dedication. This enabled you to accomplish much within a short period”

“You have developed a good profile on water quality in the Nile Basin and encouraged the culture of fighting pollution, and environmental safeguards. These will last long in the Basin”.



UNDER NILE COOPERATION FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE (NCCR) PROJECT, YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FINISH WELL



Mr. Zaleke Challa, the NBI Earth Observation Expert who coordinated the Young Professionals programme, stands with the graduands (left to right) Emmanuel, Kenvin and Flugence. Centre is NBI Head, Corporate Services, Mr Martin Mutua, who presided over the graduation day.

NBI successfully hosted the final cohort of the second phase of the Young Professionals programme under the NCCR project over a period of two and a half months –18 September to 27 November 2025.

The young professionals received hands-on training in earth observation and GIS tools for water resources analysis, hydrological analysis, water resources modelling, and groundwater analysis. In addition, they undertook laboratory training in water quality monitoring (above image), which included field-based water sampling exercises in Jinja. These activities enabled participants to gain practical experience in water

quality assessment, from field collection through to laboratory analysis.

A distinctive feature of this final cohort was the completion of mini projects aligned with NBI's technical mandate. Upon presentation of these projects, NBI staff provided valuable technical feedback, enhancing the professionals' analytical and presentation skills. Overall, under the NCCR project, NBI trained 18 young professionals in two phases. This final cohort benefited from extensive exposure to NBI's core technical and operational activities, including Communication and Stakeholder Engagement.

The participants were:

- a. **Flugence Nahimana** (red shirt), a hydrogeology engineer from Gitega, Burundi, working with IJEBU.
- b. **Kevin Iyaka Butine**, a hydraulic engineer specialising in rainfall forecasting and climate change, based in Kinshasa, DR Congo, and working with the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and New Climate Economics.
- c. **Emmanuel Shyaka**, Co-Lead of the WASH and Climate Resilience Department at Rwanda Young Water Professionals, Kigali.



NCCR Closure: An Independent Performance Evaluation

The Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience (NCCR) Project (2021–2025), led by the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) and funded by the World Bank through CIWA, aimed to strengthen basin-wide cooperation, climate resilience, and institutional capacity for transboundary water management. Implemented by five regional entities, the project addressed data systems, flood and drought management, dam safety, water quality, and stakeholder inclusion. The five entities are NBI's Secretariat, its investment arms the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) and

the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme Coordination Unit (NELSAP-CU), the Nile Basin Discourse and Lake Victoria Basin Commission.

An independent evaluation using Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) criteria found strong achievements, including enhanced governance through joint decisions, upgraded regional data platforms, operational early warning systems, improved dam safety frameworks, and harmonised water

quality policies. The project significantly expanded stakeholder participation, institutionalising roles for civil society, women, and youth, and trained over 3,000 stakeholders across ten countries. However, sustainability risks remain due to reliance on external funding, uneven national uptake, and early efficiency challenges. Recommendations focus on institutionalising outputs, securing long-term financing, improving data integration, and strengthening ownership and inclusive engagement to sustain impacts.

CIWA'S REPORT, STARRING MILLY



“Flash flood early warning systems can have a dramatic impact, saving lives, protecting livelihoods and safeguarding livelihoods by mitigating adverse impacts on floods on agriculture and other economic activities”



HOW NBI TECHNOLOGY WILL MONITOR WATER QUALITY ACROSS THE NILE





In Kigali City, the Rwanda Minister of Environment, and Chairperson of the Nile Equatorial Lakes Council of Ministers, Dr Bernadette Arakwiye (top, centre), joined NBI and the World Bank staff on the NCCR project to celebrate the successful conclusion of the NCCR. Dr Shyam K.C., the Bank Task Team Lead found a hat for the party

NBI-Secretariat All-staff retreat 2025: Three big Takeaways

- a. Cyber tools are not neutral; they are diplomatic instruments that shape trust, power, and cooperation.
- b. Water management in the #NileBasin is increasingly digital, information-driven, and cyber-vulnerable. Any sort of breakthrough helps us harness diplomatic potential to bring countries together, carry out negotiations, mediate & broker agreements
- c. Strengthening cybersecurity, governance and regional cooperation is essential for peace and sustainability in water management and investments.
- d. Data can betray us, impacting efforts toward information sharing among Member States of NBI. But if we assess risks, take precautions &



Dr Anne Abaho of Nkumba University in Uganda speaks on “Cybersecurity and Digital Issue in Diplomacy”

- e. Diplomacy is not about quantities, neither is negotiation about statistics. The art of negotiation is narratives combined with

psychology, rhetoric, knowing who you are dealing with. Cyber technology allows us to use numbers in our diplomatic engagements.

Reading material
https://lnkd.in/gU8X_8Fm



Staff activities during the December 2025 staff retreat

KENYAN ARCHITECT/COACH STEPHEN MUIRU ON “ENHANCING A TEAM SPIRIT IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY”

1. A winning team thrives on a combination of factors: personnel, vision, leadership, work ethic and culture
2. Leadership is everyone’s business. In whatever we do, we must take charge consistently and with clarity
3. Leadership rides on credibility, personal values, forward-thinking, being an example, collaboration (versus competition), caring, building relationships, challenging oneself and strength from adversity.
4. Seven “diseases of Attitude”, which compromise team performance: indecision, self-doubt, worry/fear, over-caution/paralysis/timidity, pessimism/toxicity, fault-finding, complaining (versus gratitude) & indifference/casual attitude.
5. In sum, 3 winning attitudes: humility, hunger to learn, emotional intelligence

ENG. IVAN KALEMA

WALL OF HOPELESSNESS:

All organizations, communities, individuals run into a wall of hopelessness: leadership gets us over that wall, including by showing up – in time – & solving a problem.

WRITING YOUR STORY:

Leadership is about holding the pen & writing one’s, or an organization’s, or a community’s story – of the trajectory from “here” to “there”. Our stories are not imaginary; they are real, and we must take charge in writing them. “There is no neutral day: our story is continually being written – by ourselves or by someone else”.

SEVEN MINDSETS OF A LEADER:

Lift your head, see yourself as a leader, see & take responsibility, change something, be focused (performance = potential minus interference), be proactive, be appreciative. “A cat that aspires to become a lion must lose its appetite for rats.”



Eng. Ivan Kalema delivers his teaching on leadership in times of crisis

A Dedicated Deputy and his Last Dance

Dr. Michael Kizza, who worked at NBI as a Water Resources Specialist and Deputy Executive Director (2018 – 2025) spent the evening of 19 December 2025 with his former colleagues at the end-of-year staff party in Munyonyo, Kampala.

Through Dr. Florence Grace Adongo, Michael received a gift from his former colleagues for his “dedicated and exemplary service.”

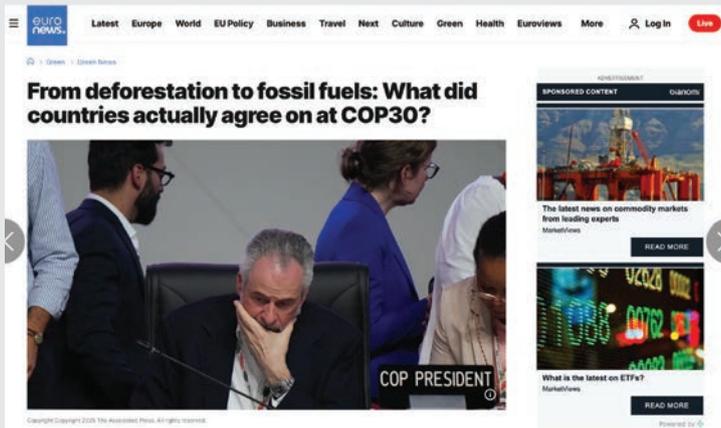
Dr. Florence Grace Adongo:

“Dr Michael was a young leader who always kept a smiling face and calm attitude even in the most stressful moments. His expertise will always be tapped, and he will remain an ambassador for NBI’s Shared Vision Objective.”



IN OTHER NEWS (& OPINIONS)

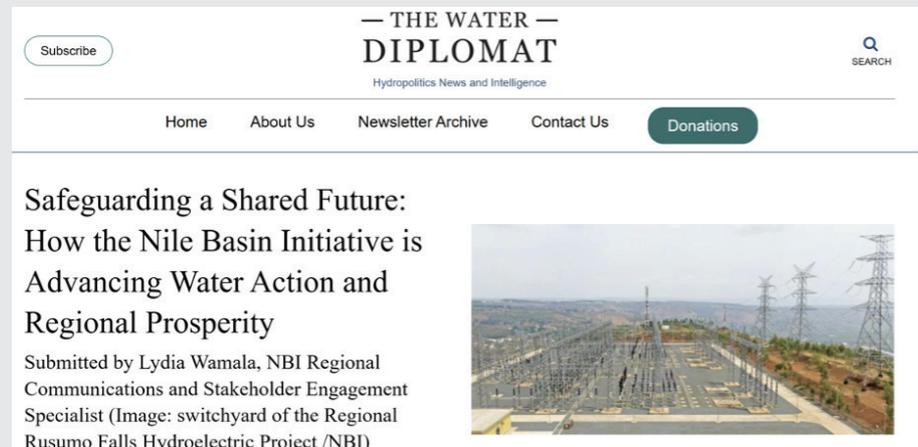
Nile Basin media - NBI mention



The Water Diplomat NBI-focused

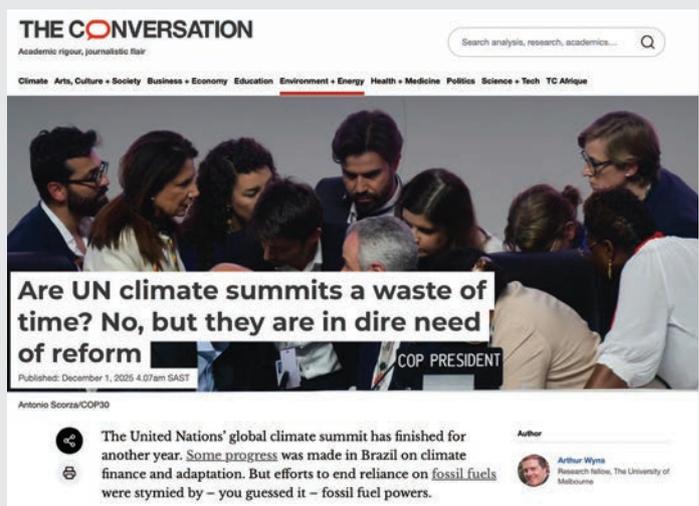
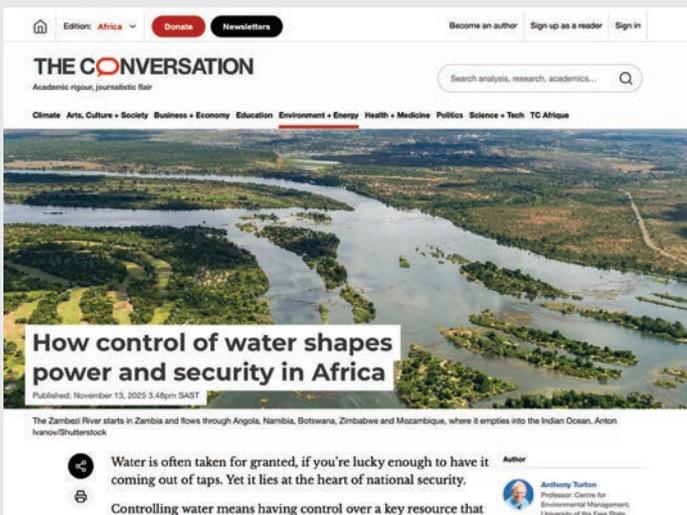
The Water Diplomat magazine (www.waterdiplomat.org), featured NBI in regard to “the sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources”. This, taken from NBI’s Shared Vision Objective, is one of the commitments made under the Water Action Agenda during the UN 2023 Water Conference. The story outlined progress NBI made in implementing this commitment since March 2023.

The Water Diplomat is a magazine on water intelligence and current affairs in international cooperation in the water sector. It is committed to supporting



public awareness raising in the run up to the UN 2026 Water Conference. The magazine strives to be a common platform

for the sharing of news and initiatives in the water sector.



SOCIAL MEDIA (X AND LINKEDIN, HIGHEST IMPRESSIONS)

Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat • You
Intergovernmental Partnership at Nile Basin Member States
2w • Edited • 🌐

#NEWSRELEASE, 12 January 2025
ENTEbbe – The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) today welcomed Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima, its 12th Executive Director. ...more

You reposted
NELSAP-CU
@NelsapCu

A joint team from NELSAP-CU, UETCL, and SSEC is guiding shortlisted supervision and management consultancy firms along the Karuma–Olwiyo–Bibia–Juba 400 kV interconnection line route. The visit enables firms to better understand the project design and prepare informed proposals.

Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat • You
Intergovernmental Partnership at Nile Basin Member States
1mo • Edited • 🌐

#NileCooperation
Hard discussions are underway on the Nile. In the Burundian capital, Bujumbura 📍

NBI has once again brought all 10 riparian member states to the same table, at the 67th Nile Technical Advisory Committee meeting.

Nile Basin Initiative 🌐
@nbiweb

All 10 member states sharing the Nile are concerned about meeting their rising demand for water, food & electricity.

Nile Technical Advisory Committee has 2 envoys for each country, representing its unique interests, fears, & concerns. #NileCooperation

Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat • You
Intergovernmental Partnership at Nile Basin Member States
1mo • 🌐

Our all-staff retreat is underway. Somewhere on the fringes of Kampala City 📍 ...more

Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat • You
Intergovernmental Partnership at Nile Basin Member States
1mo • 🌐

#NileCooperation
Dr. Adanech Yared, Regional Coordinator/Expert for the Nile River Basin Investment Programme led many of the stretches, re-igniting necks, ...more

Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat reposted this

DYNOBA
246 followers
1mo • Edited • 🌐

Assessment of Groundwater Availability in the Western Rift Valley and Mgahinga Aquifers: an important milestone reached for Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat!

📍 Within DYNObA project, which is funded by Agence Française de Développement and implemented by International Office for Water, a team from BRL Ingénierie, Antea Group - France and #WEconsult was commissioned to assess the groundwater availability in the Western Rift Valley and Mgahinga Aquifer.

📌 The INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT, sent in early December, provided a draft version of an availability map. This map is about mapping where groundwater is most likely to be found in sufficient quantity. It follows on from 5 previous steps:

1. A kick off mission leading to the preparation and submission of the Inception Report;
2. A bibliographic review and compilation of existing datasets;
3. Development of the detailed methodological framework;
4. Implementation of two field campaigns in Uganda and Rwanda;
5. Development of a harmonized GIS database integrating remote sensing, archival, and field data

The next phase of the assignment will focus on the organization of stakeholder validation workshops and the preparation and submission of the Final Report and associated GIS database. 🌊🌊🌊

Évaluation de la disponibilité de des eaux souterraines dans la vallée du Rift occidental et les aquifères de Mgahinga : une étape importante franchie pour Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat !

All-staff retreat of the fittest. See more on pages 19 and 20

Q2 Calendar (1 January - 31 March 2026)

NCCR: Support Preparation of Lender's Implementation Completion and Results Report (Borrower's has been Completed)

WATER SECURITY

REGIONAL HYDROLOGICAL MONITORING SYSTEM

- 7th Nile Basin Regional Expert Working Group on Hydrology to generate March-May seasonal hydrological outlook in collaboration with IGAD/ICPAC, GIZ and the UN's World Meteorological Organization
- Rehabilitation of regional hydrological monitoring stations in Uganda
- Second stakeholder engagement workshop for enhanced hydrological services Rusumo Falls Hydro-electric Power Project

CONJUNCTIVE USE OF GROUND AND SURFACE WATER

- NBI's new memorandum of understanding with the SADC Groundwater Management Institute in Pretoria to be executed within the Global Environment Facility twinning programme for south-south exchange visits of groundwater experts.
- The Bulambuli managed aquifer recharge (MAR) site in Uganda to conduct the first injection of surface water in the groundwater formation in February as part of ongoing pilot (More on page TBC)
- NBI to engage member countries as it drafts a concept note on the second phase of the project scaling up conjunctive use for sustainable transboundary water management
- NBI is conducting engagements with countries through the NILE TACS to prepare
- The draft for the second phase of the project concept note focused on scaling the project

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

- Final workshop for Victoria Nile Dam and flow optimisation
- Virtual training on Mike Hydro River and on climate data handling using Python, for selected experts per riparian country
- Coordination meeting between Uganda and South Sudan senior officials
- Climate change consultation workshop about cascade dams in Uganda

TRANSBOUNDARY WATER GOVERNANCE

- 20th Regional Commemoration of Nile Day in Juba, South Sudan
- Governance Meetings and High-level Policy Dialogue
- Mind-year Update to Governance: Programme Implementation
- Nile COM Special Committee Meeting on Cooperative Framework Agreement
- Resource mobilization for 8th Nile Basin Development Forum
- Engagement of Desk Officers and Communication Officers on workplans, Nile Day and Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
- Participate in Uganda Water and Environment Week Event around World Water Day and World Meteorological Day
- Publish premier regional journalists' sourcebook: Reporting the Nile Basin



Hon. James Mawich Makuach, South Sudan's Minister for Water Resources and Irrigation invited us in today for a planning meeting for #NileDay2026 .22nd February!

"All leaders and people of #SouthSudan are delighted to host this historical regional event for the 1st time," he said. "South Sudan is the mother of the White Nile and 97% of the country lies in the Nile Basin."



Outgoing Executive Director Dr Florence Grace Adongo was recognised for her "visionary leadership & dedicated service". Since November 2023.

Dr Florence was 2nd female to occupy this position since NBI was established nearly 27 years ago.

#NileCooperation #WaterKnowsNoBoundaries



33RD NILE-COM CONTINUED



Above, H.E. Prof. Hani Sewilam, Egypt's Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation. Above right, Hon. Beatrice Atim Anywar, receives an award from H.E. Prime Minister Nestor Ntahontuye for her dedicated service while holding fort for outgoing Nile-COM chairperson, Hon. Sam Cheptoris



Below, right to left, Hon. James Mawich Makuach, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of South Sudan, Dr. Salih Hamad Omer, representing Sudan's Nile-COM member, Hon. Eng. Mathew Kundo, Deputy Minister of Water, representing Nile-COM Member of Tanzania, and Dr Callist Tindimugaya, a Nile-TAC member for Uganda. In background is NBI's Deputy Executive Director, Dr Abraha Aduгна



Above, Hon. Eng. Eric M. Mugaa (centre) Cabinet Secretary for Water, Sanitation and Irrigation of Kenya. On his left, Dr. Zebene Lakew, who represented Ethiopia's Minister of Water and Irrigation



Below right, Nile TAC Chairperson, Augustin Ngenzirabona on backrow from senior officials of the Government of Burundi. Below left, Acting Executive Director, ENTRO, Mr Teshome Atnafie, Finance Officer, ENTRO. Mr El-Sadiq Goda and GIZ's Head of Basin Project, Dr Malte Grossmann



Speech by H.E. Nestor Ntahontuye, Prime Minister of Burundi (Translated from French and Edited)

Salutations

On behalf of His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Burundi, and on my own behalf, allow me to welcome you to our beautiful country, Burundi, and to our beautiful economic capital, Bujumbura.

Allow me also to convey the warmest greetings from His Excellency the President of the Republic of Burundi, Maj. Gen. Evariste Ndayishimiye, who was unable to be with us at these events.

Burundi is committed to linking its destiny to that of its sister countries in the Nile Basin through the Nile Basin Initiative and is pleased to have made this choice, which has already brought much to the country but also to other member countries through joint actions and multifaceted exchanges. We remain convinced that the best is yet to come despite the challenges facing our region.

Indeed, since the creation of the Nile Basin Initiative in 1999, many achievements have been made in various fields: energy production and interconnection, watershed management, agricultural production and food security, early warning, capacity building to cope with extreme weather events, etc. We warmly congratulate the members of the Council of Ministers and the technical support teams for these achievements, which are a clear sign that Member States are committed to working together to find appropriate solutions to the challenges they face.

Today, more than ever, the Nile Basin faces ever-growing challenges, the most salient of which, without being exhaustive, are population growth, severe environmental degradation, the adverse effects of climate change, growing energy demand and insufficient supply in a context of a clear desire for industrialisation, food security, etc. This situation arises at a time when our environmental resources, such as wetlands, forests, rivers, lakes, etc., are under increasing pressure from human economic activities and inadequate cross-border mechanisms for protection, restoration and sustainable use. Given the transboundary nature of most of the challenges listed above, a collective response is required from member countries.

Concerned by this alarming situation, Burundi has made a

firm commitment to sustainable development through its Vision Burundi Emerging Country 2040, Developed Country 2060 and its National Development Plan 2018-2027, which provide a solid foundation for progressively moving towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite these efforts, we remain convinced that responding effectively and sustainably to our problems requires more collective action, hence the need for cohesion among our countries to always act in concert. A saying here in our country goes, **“Ubirigiri bugira babiri,”** which can be translated as, **“Unity is strength.”**

Aware of the need to take cooperation on the Nile to another level, with the ambition of making our organisation a more effective instrument, capable of leading us more quickly to the sustainable socio-economic development to which we all aspire, the Republic of Burundi ratified the Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework on 25 September 2023.

By this act, Burundi has once again demonstrated its attachment to our region and our common asset, the Nile, and its unwavering commitment to seeing our organisation reach new horizons. We encourage our brothers who have not yet ratified the Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework to consider doing so as soon as possible so that we can create a more competitive space for cooperation.

The future of our region lies in our hands, and the asset to shape it, the Nile, has been generously bestowed upon us. It is up to us to make good use of it.

I thank you for inviting me to participate in this event and take this opportunity to wish you fruitful deliberations. It is with the prospect of making the Nile Basin an area of fraternal cooperation and shared development for the benefit of our respective populations that I solemnly declare open the proceedings of the 33rd Council of Ministers of the Nile Basin Initiative.

**Long live cooperation in the Nile River Basin!
Long live the brotherly peoples of the Nile Basin region!**

Thank you.



Photographs: Various, professional, Christopher Abesirwe, Lydia Wamala

Editorial Team: Lydia Wamala, Charles Mwine, Juliet Nakasagga, Patrick Rutagwera, Tom Waako