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Nile Voices



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 nile basin discourse

Editorial

Dear Readers,

The Nile Basin Discourse is happy to communicate to you through its June 2014 edition of the Nile Voice newsletter.

In this issue, we look at the 41st Nile technical advisory committee (Nile-TAC) and the 22nd Nile council of ministers (Nile-COM) meeting held on the 16 - 19th June 2014 in Khartoum, Sudan. In these meeting, strategic issues to advance Nile Cooperation as well as NBI operational issues were discussed and decisions made.

This Nile Voice issue also contains a summary of the statements and speeches made by the Nile riparian states Water Affairs Ministers. The report also contains details about the presentation of the NBI progress reports, plans and budgets and draft policy documents to the Nile Council of Minister's so that they can note progress, review and adopt.

The meeting also facilitated the process of changing the governance positions and top management position, in keeping with NBI's tradition of rotating the key top positions among member states.

Happy reading! And for any ideas and opinions regarding our activities at the Nile Basin Discourse, please contact the editorial committee using the address below:

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The 41st Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) Meeting and the 22nd Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM)

Meeting were held on the 16 - 19th June 2014 at the Corinthia Hotel, Khartoum, The Sudan.

By Abby M. Onencan

The 41st Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) Meeting and the 22nd Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM) Meeting were held on the 16 - 19th June 2014 at the Corinthia Hotel, Khartoum, The Sudan.



Some of the NBI Governance Members

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) is a regional intergovernmental partnership that seeks to develop the Nile River in a cooperative manner, share substantial socio-economic benefits and promote regional peace and security. It was launched on 22nd February 1999 by Ministers in charge of Water Affairs in the riparian countries namely: Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, The Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Eritrea participates as an observer. NBI provides riparian countries with a regional platform for multi stakeholder dialogue, information sharing as well as joint planning and management of water and related resources in the Nile Basin. The NBI

shared vision is to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources.

The NBI Governance is the Nile Council of Minister (Nile-COM). It comprises of Ministers in charge of Water Affairs in the Nile Basin. It is the highest decision making organ for the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). The organ meets once every year to conduct its ordinary business on all political and development affairs within the basin.

To support its work, its technical arm – the Nile Technical Advisory Committee meets a few days before the Ministers' meeting to prepare for the Ministerial meeting. This organ meets at least twice a year to conduct its ordinary business. This organ is divided into three sub-committees: Nile-TAC technical sub-committee, Nile – TAC audit sub-committee and Nile-TAC Finance and Human Resources sub-committee.

platform for dialogue on cooperative management and development of the Nile water resources. He added that with satisfactory program implementation, the Nile TAC was sure to enhance overall annual program performance and provide strategic guidance and direction to the NBI. He highlighted the fact that financial sustainability of the NBI is a key question especially with the imminent closure of NBTF. Mr. Oka also stated that a functional and strong NBI at national level is important for sustainability of the member states. He therefore appealed to the member states to carefully consider those issues back home so as to strengthen NBI at the national level. During the speeches, it was also noted

that, apart from Ethiopia, Rwanda had also concluded the ratification process and Kenya and Uganda are in the final stages of ratification.

The 22nd Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM) meeting was attended by the Nile Council of Ministers and their representatives and Nile-TAC members. The Nile-COM and Nile-TAC meetings were also attended by Management and staff from Nile-SEC, NELSAP CU and ENTRO. GIZ representative and NBD attended both meetings as observers. NBD attended the technical sub-committee, Nile-TAC and Nile-COM meetings.

This report will delve on the final decision making meeting outcomes of the Nile-COM. The main that was conducted by the Nile-COM was as follows: The Opening Session; Elect Nile-COM office bearers; Adopt the agenda; Review matters arising from the 20th Nile –COM meeting; Discuss the NBI Management Report; Discuss the Nile-TAC report to the Nile –COM; and Appoint a new Executive Director for NBI.

The subsequent part of the document will explain what transpired in each of these Nile-COM sessions and the decisions that were made.



Sudanese Children perform at the official opening

While opening the 41st Nile-TAC meeting, Mr Alier Oka the outgoing TAC member stated that the Nile Basin Initiative has continued to grow in its capacity to leverage developments and provide the sole

Opening session

The country representatives made their speeches, one striking speech was from Prof Maghembe, He stated that the Tanzanian government had given its final approval for the Co-operative Framework Agreement (CFA) to be presented to parliament for ratification. He stated that the process is in its final stages and he is confident that before the lapse of the year, Tanzania will have ratified the CFA. Prof Maghembe also appealed to Nile Basin countries to continue strengthening cooperation in order to achieve sustainable utilization and development of water resources in the basin. He also emphasized the importance of the Nile River system to the economic and social well-being of people in the Basin. In his concluding remarks, Prof. Maghembe commended Ethiopia and Rwanda for their decision to ratify the CFA, and observed that it is a very encouraging move towards safeguarding the natural resources in the Nile Basin.



Dr Callist Tindimugaya-Nile TAC Member

On behalf of Hon. Betty Bigombe State Ministry for Water in Uganda Dr. Callist Tindimugaya Nile TAC member and commissioner Water Resources in charge of water regulation delivered the speech thanking the Government of Sudan for the kind hospitality accorded to the delegation and appreciated the demonstrated commitment and support of the Sudan Government to the Nile Basin Initiative cooperative development path and processes. In the speech, Hon. Betty Bigombe reiterated that it is through increased cooperation coupled with common action that sustainable utilization of and benefit from the common water resources of the Nile river Basin can be achieved. She made an observation that it might appear that we have abundant water resources in the Nile Basin. However, countries should note that the populations in most riparian states of the Nile Basin are growing at rates exceeding 2.5% per year, some of the highest rates in the world. Being aware that the available water resources in the basin are finite, implies that there is ever increasing reduction in the available water per person in the basin. Hon. Bigombe concluded her speech by informing the meeting that Uganda, being both an upstream and downstream country and with about 98% of her water resources lying wholly in the Nile River Basin, there is a lot of importance attached to transboundary cooperative management of the shared water resources.

H.E. Alemayehu Tegen Ethiopia's minister of Water and Energy, stated that the populations of many countries of the Nile Basin are dependent on the bounty of the Nile River for their survival and almost all upstream countries including Sudan have no alternative source of water except the River Nile. He added that erratic and highly variable rain fall makes rain-fed agriculture an unreliable enterprise. He noted with concern

that member states capacities to harness and utilize the water resources of the Nile is highly limited by financial limitation and complications caused by the hydropolitics of the basin. He stressed that the impact of climate change on countries is not only becoming evident, but also being intensified. In addition, the resilience toward the impact of Climate change is very much limited by the countries capacity to mitigate the impact which is extremely low. As a consequence, he called for coordinated efforts to mitigate the impact and adapt to its consequences

H.E Alemayehu Tegenu further stressed that the development of water resources in the Nile Basin is challenged by scarcity of the resource base, uneven distribution, unfair and unwise utilization, lack of capacity, financial limitations, poor infrastructure and uncoordinated developments. All these are as a result of the absence of an all-inclusive Institutional and legal framework to foster basin wide cooperation. He reiterated that a joint action on the ground is the only trans boundary solution. He further added that Ethiopia has participated genuinely in all cooperative processes that lead to equitable and reasonable utilization and result in riparian states benefitting from the common water resources. He concluded that Ethiopia, as a member country of the NBI, has done its level best to fulfill its obligations and will do so faithfully in the future.

Hon. Prof. Judi Wakhungu, Cabinet Secretary, ministry of environment, water and natural resources from Kenya noted that through the years since the launch of the NBI in 1999, commitment of riparian countries to the Nile Cooperation had continued to strengthen and with member state's demonstrated enthusiasm and effective participation in the NBI activities had enhanced visibility of the NBI at country. Prof. Judi further noted that Kenya recognizes the potential that the water resources of the Nile Basin hold for addressing and complimenting our efforts at reducing poverty, stimulating sustainable socio-economic growth and reversing environmental degradation. Hence the need to give a lot of emphasis for sustainable Management of its River Basin most of which are transboundary in nature and NBI provides a platform for the country to develop and manage some of her shared water resources. Hon. Prof. Judi Wakhungu also noted the efforts that have been put into the preparation and



Hon. Alemayehu Tegenu II

implementation of the NBI programs which initiatives have enabled the identification and preparation of joint transboundary investment programs in the region.

Hon. Prof. Judi Wakhungu reiterated that her Country recognizes the importance of sustaining ownership of the NBI process through continued strategic guidance and also by meeting their country obligations through timely payment of our annual subscriptions and emphasized the need for sustainable development and management of resources for the benefit of the people and to achieve this is through renewal of commitments towards the completion of accession to and ratification of the Cooperative Framework Agreement for the establishment of the Nile Basin Commission, which would provide a solid platform for sustainable cooperation, she also informed the meeting that Kenya had signed the CFA and would soon finalize the ratification process. Prof. Judi Concluded by informing and inviting all members and development partners to the 4th NBDF that will be taking place in Nairobi, Kenya.

Election of Nile-COM office bearers

The Nile-COM chair is a rotational position which falls vacant every year and is filled by the Minister of Water Affairs of a Nile riparian state, in an alphabetical order. The outgoing Nile-COM chair is South Sudan's Minister in charge of Water Affairs, Hon. Jemma Nunu Kumba. She handed over to the incoming chairperson of the Nile-COM and Minister of Water Resources and Electricity of The Sudan: Hon. Mutaz Musa Abdalla Salim. The chairperson of the Nile-TAC also moved from South Sudan to The Sudan. Hon. Jemma Nunu Kumba was commended for her good work in the past one year



Hon. Jemma Kumba-Out Going Nile COM Chair



Newly Appointed Nile COM Chair Hon. Mutaz Musa Abudalla

and received an award for her exemplary work during the handing-over ceremony.

Sudan will chair both the Nile Council of Ministers and the Technical Advisory Committee of the NBI for the next one year.

Matters arising from the 20th Nile - COM meeting

Three emerging issues on matters arising were: NBI sustainability, participation of Egypt in Nile basin initiatives and communication to the African Union on the need to bring the NEPAD project that was launched in December 2013 in Egypt under the umbrella of NBI. The project was launched in Egypt's capital Cairo under the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative (PICI), to interlink ten East and North African countries from Uganda via Lake Victoria to Egypt through the river Nile and the Mediterranean Sea.

On NBI sustainability, it was noted that none of the development partners who were invited attended the meetings except GIZ. The World Bank made their presentation on video and it was played to the Ministers during the meeting. This video presentation highlighted the World Bank's concern that the Nile Basin Trust Fund (NBTF) is coming to its natural closure in December 2014 and that NBI sustainability is a key issue. Mr. Gustavo called upon the Nile-COM to ensure the implementation of the agreed sustainability plan which ensures that by 2017, NBI core costs are fully financed by riparian states contributions.

It was noted that to date US 18 million has been secured from NBTF/CIWA, 1 million Euros from AFD and 3 million Euros from GIZ. In addition, there are ongoing discussions, at different levels of commitment, with various development partners. In addition, a round table has been planned for October 2014 in Nairobi after the NBDF. A Nile-TAC task team was formulated to support the Nile-SEC in the resource mobilization efforts. In addition, it was noted that the riparian countries have also made efforts to remit country

contributions. However at the time of the meeting US\$ 1,545,585 remained outstanding in arrears.

Nile-COM was requested not only to note the resource mobilization efforts but also to address the issue of country contributions.

There was a closed-door meeting by the Nile-COM, to discuss the NBI sustainability issues and country contributions. After the closed-door meeting, the Ministers came back to the ordinary session and communicated their decision. The Ministers reaffirmed their ownership to the NBI institutions and undertook to honor their annual financial obligations in a timely manner.

The issue of the freezing of Egypt's participation was also discussed in the closed-door meeting. The communication from the Nile-COM chairperson after the closed-door meeting was that the Nile riparian states once again call upon Egypt to unfreeze its participation in the NBI activities. This is because an all-inclusive cooperation remains paramount for optimizing basin-wide development. The Nile-COM also made a commitment to continue discussions with Egypt during the year on their participation in NBI meetings.

NBI Progress Reports

The NBI management report was presented by the outgoing Executive Director. The report comprised of progress achieved; challenges and lessons learnt in financial year 2013/2014. The Executive Director noted that 78% of the results was achieved with 75% of the budget being utilized. Key activities included: the Permanent Secretaries participating in an experience

sharing tour to the Eastern Nile Basin; the senior management team (SMT) undertaking working visits to countries and proactively engaging with national NBI offices and an enhancement of NBI strategic communication to meet the information needs of various stakeholders.

Under the Water Resources management core function NBI continued to build analytical capacity in the Nile Basin through a dedicated help desk of users of the Nile Basin Decision Support System. Technical analysis on key water resources issues was undertaken to improve the understanding of the basin and preliminary results were shared. In addition, NBI knowledge products could be readily accessed by the public through an improved NBI information and knowledge portal.

The report also highlighted on challenges to implementation in the reporting period. The challenges experienced were delays in signing the financing agreement for the NBTf additional financing, delays in remittances of riparian states country contributions and non-participation of Egypt.

NELSAP Progress Report

The Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program promotes investments in power development and trade and water resources management and development. NELSAP countries include the Republic of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of South-Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Republic of Uganda. The NELSAP mission is to “contribute to the eradication of poverty, promotion of economic growth, and reversal of environmental degradation” in the Nile Equatorial

Lakes Region. NELSAP’s mandate is to ‘facilitate, support and strengthen the identification, preparation and implementation supervision processes for NELSAP projects for the benefit of all riparian.’

The brief from NELSAP progress in achieving its expected results was given by Mr. Antoine Sendama, the coordinator of NELSAP during the Nile-TAC meeting. The presentation covered the natural resources and power program components. The pre-investment costs utilized were approximately 100 million and this resulted in investment implementation worth 1 billion. One important point to note from Mr. Sendama’s presentation was his statement that the trust in NELSAP as the institution to implement trans-boundary projects for the NELSAP sub-region has increased significantly. He gave the example of Rusumo where the countries requested NELSAP to oversee its implementation even though its mandate stops at project development stage. He reiterated that this calls for a re-thinking of the NELSAP mandate and also a deeper insight to what has led to the increased trust at the sub-regional level while at the basin-wide level, there is still a struggle to maintain legitimacy and trust.

ENSAP Progress Report

The Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) is one of the three Centers of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). It is the executive arm of the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program, jointly established by Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, in 1999. South-Sudan is now a new member of ENTRO. The added value of ENTRO is in the regional planning perspectives it propagates and the trans-boundary solutions to national problems that it identifies and promotes.



Dr. Yusif Ibrahim - Officer in charge of ENTRO

The brief from ENSAP was made by Dr. Yusif Ibrahim, the officer in charge of ENTRO. He stated that ENSAP's institutional challenges have been eased due to the resumption of the governance decision-making. He added that the process of recruiting the Executive Director of ENTRO is ongoing. He also pointed out that there were at that moment many ongoing activities that were being implemented under the Nile Cooperation for Results (NCORE) Project. The Eastern Nile Multi-Sector Investment Opportunity Analysis (EN MSIOA) study was being undertaken to identify and prepare a new generation of projects for the Eastern Nile.

The Nile Council of Ministers reviewed and commended NBI for the progress achieved during the previous financing year and approved the NBI plans and budgets for the coming year.

Nile - TAC report to the Nile - COM

FY 2014/2015 work plan and budget

The FY 2014/2015 work plan and budget of US dollars 7,250,768 was presented. The major expected outputs were: strengthening NBI institutional foundation, strengthening member states capacity to cooperate, sustaining a platform for cooperation, strengthening capacity for water resources management, undertake technical analyses that inform dialogue, enhance access to knowledge products, design specifications of the water resources monitoring network and prepare actual evapo-transpiration estimates and continued trans-boundary water policy support at the national level.

NBI Communication and Stakeholder engagement strategy

NBI Communication and Stakeholder engagement strategy was also discussed. The goal of the strategy was to keep NBI stakeholders informed and constructively engaged in NBI processes. The strategy articulated the key stakeholders, key messages and key engagement channels.

In the Nile-TAC meeting, NBD raised the issue of non-engagement of the NBD network in the formulation of the document. The issue was discussed in detail by the Nile-TAC and it was agreed that since it is a living document that can be revised and refined as NBI moves ahead with implementation, CSOs and other stakeholders will be provided with a window to read it in more depth, internalize it, review it and own it.

The incoming Nile-COM chairperson reiterated NBD's position in the Nile-COM governance meeting. Before the strategy was approved, he stated that the strategy should be widely circulated and owned by the stakeholders. This was a clear indication that NBD does not just attend the meetings as an observer but has the power to influence the process and outcome.

Looking forward, there is need for Nile Basin CSOs to come together and develop a document through a bottom up process that clearly states how CSOs are currently engaging. Thereafter, NBD should develop a clear engagement strategy for CSOs in Nile Cooperation and Development Initiatives. The current NBD strategic plan only answers the question "what do CSOs want to engage in?" but to be effective CSOs have to move a step further and answer the question "how should CSOs engage with other actors?" This engagement should be at all levels of governance starting from the local level. The NBI Stakeholder Engagement Strategy opens the window of engagement and the NBD CSO Engagement strategy clearly defines how CSOs will engage in the future in Nile Cooperation Processes and Developments. Both processes and documents are very important and should inform each other and complement one another.

In the current program funded under CIWA, NBD will be working on a segment of this. The initial step that is currently financed is to undertake a comprehensive stakeholder mapping. This is aimed at informing CSOs and other stakeholders how NBD is currently structured as a network at all levels and how NBD is currently engaging, including the gaps and opportunities. NBD already has some basic information, but it keeps on changing as NBD continues to grow.

The concluding remarks of the Nile-TAC report to the Nile-COM session were:

1. Nile-COM reiterated the riparian states commitment to the Nile cooperation as the only way forward to sustainably manage the Nile Basin water resources in the wake of shared risks and challenges such as climate change and environmental degradation.
2. NBI is organising a high level regional event, the 4th Nile Basin Development Forum. The event will take place on the 6th to the 7th of October 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya. Nile-COM reiterated that all NBI stakeholders are invited to participate.
3. The NBI FY 2014/2015 work plan and budget were approved.
4. The NBI Communication and Stakeholder engagement strategy was approved.



Eng. Teferra Beyene-Out Going Executive Director

Appointment of a new Executive Director for NBI

The Nile-COM approved Kenya's appointment of the next Executive Director of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) Secretariat . Mr. John Rao Nyaoro becomes the 7th Executive Director effective 1st September 2014 for the next two years. He succeeds Eng. Teferra Beyene from Ethiopia.

The changes in the leadership and top management are in keeping with the NBI tradition of rotating the Executive Director among Member States in alphabetical order. Whereas the position of Nile-COM chair rotates each year, that of Executive Director rotates every two years.



Mr John Nyaoro Executive Director of the Nile Basin Initiative Secretariate

Next Nile –COM Annual Meeting

The next Nile-COM meeting shall take place in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in mid-2015.



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