

# Regional Meeting on Re-establishing A Nile Basin Civil Society Dialogue

## PROCEEDINGS



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**March 23-24, 2005  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Hosted by the Inter-Africa Group and the  
Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office**

**Supported by DFID**

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>OVERVIEW.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>OPENING STATEMENT: ATO TEFERRA BEYENE, ENTRO.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION: DR EMAD ADLY, NBD SC CHAIRPERSON .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>BACKGROUND AND MEETING OBJECTIVES: DR ALAN NICOL, ODI .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS.....</b>	<b>7</b>
5.1	BURUNDI (DR . GASPARD BIKWEMU, PRESIDENT OF THE BURUNDI NDF).....	7
5.2	EGYPT (DR EMAD ADLY, AOYE).....	8
5.3	ETHIOPIA (ATO ABIY HAILU, CS-CAFÉ).....	10
5.4	KENYA (DR PATRICIA MAKERI-MOBTE).....	12
5.5	RWANDA (MS ALBERTINE UWIMANA).....	13
5.6	SUDAN (PROFESSOR ASIM AL-MOGHRABY).....	14
5.7	TANZANIA (DR AMOS MAJULE).....	14
5.8	UGANDA (MS IRENE MAKUMBI).....	15
<b>6</b>	<b>PROGRESS REPORT ON THE NILE BASIN DISCOURSE (DR GEOFFREY HOWARD).....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>IDEN: OVERVIEW AND STATUS (DR ABDELKERIM SEID, ENTRO) .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE (SDO) (DR SALAH SHAZALI, ENTRO) .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>CBSI OVERVIEW (GORDON MUMBO, CBSI HEAD) .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>GWP: PARTICIPATION IN WATER GOVERNANCE (SIMON THUO, GWP).....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>INTEGRATING LIVESTOCK AND WATER IN THE NILE BASIN (DON PEDEN, ILRI) .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>PRESENTATION ON PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL (DR ALAN NICOL).....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>GROUP WORK: DISCUSSIONS, PRESENTATIONS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>NEXT STEPS .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>CLOSING REMARKS.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>LIST OF PARTICIPANTS.....</b>	<b>31</b>

## 1 Overview

A 'Regional Meeting on Re-establishing a Nile Basin Civil Society Dialogue' (NBD) was held in Addis Ababa on March 23-24, 2005 at the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office.

Some 30 participants comprised Steering Committee members of the NBD, representatives of civil society organizations, research institutes, members of National Discourse Forums from eight of the 10 riparian countries, water engineers, consultants, researchers, NBI managers and representatives other international organizations.

The workshop provided a platform for Nile riparians to exchange experiences on the existing NBD process at both regional and national levels. Lessons learnt could then be fed into strengthening a proposal for funding NBD activities in coming years.

The meeting also sought to assist in building a working relationship between civil society and NBI projects, regarded as crucial for the achievement of pro-poor outcomes under the NBI. The presence (and presentations) of NBI project managers was crucial in helping to make this link, particularly in areas including stakeholder identification, participation, capacity building, training and social development.

These proceedings provide a summary of the meeting's presentations and discussions and comprise: eight country presentations on NDF processes (Burundi, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda<sup>1</sup>); and presentations from the CBSI, ENTRO SDO, GWP, CPWF, IUCN, and ODI<sup>2</sup>.

## 2 Opening statement: Ato Teferra Beyene, ENTRO

On behalf of ENTRO I extend a warm welcome to you all and wish you a pleasant stay in Addis Ababa.

As you all know, the cost of the status quo in the Nile Basin has always been high and formidable. The Nile Basin countries figure among the poorest in the world. The peoples inhabiting the Nile region endure grave and widespread human poverty and deprivation. In a brave and bold step undertaken to change the deplorable realities in the basin, in 1999 riparian countries adopted a 'Shared Vision' as the basis for establishing the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). This sought to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the mobilization of benefits of the common Nile Basin water resources.

Under the umbrella of the NBI, two programmes were launched by the riparian countries. The first is the SVP consisting of seven projects (and an eight coordinating project) that focus on building a consensus and an enabling environment for sustainable development through investments on the ground. The second program is the Subsidiary Action Program (SAP) that is launched at sub-basin level – the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program (ENSAP) and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Program (NELSAP). The Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) is the technical arm of ENSAP and it is our honour to host this meeting towards the revitalization of the Nile Basin Dialogue (NBD).

The SAPs have made strides towards the realization of cooperative investments on the ground. At ENTRO, we have several investment projects under preparation. Right now, we are identifying and preparing a major initial project within a broader multi-purpose program to demonstrate the

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<sup>1</sup> Eritrea and DRC did not attend.

<sup>2</sup> Confidence Building and Stakeholder Involvement project of the Shared Vision Programme, the Social Development Office (ENTRO), the Global Water Partnership, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the Overseas Development Institute.

benefits of the cooperative approach to the management and development of Eastern Nile. One of our staff members, Dr. Abdul Kerim, will later brief you on the status of the different ENSAP projects.

Likewise, we have almost completed the preparation of the first set of projects for NELSAP. We are working on scaling up investment projects to promote cooperation among Equatorial Lakes Basin countries. The efforts exerted therefore are serious. Only last week the Nile Council of Ministers urged us to work even faster and we are committed to spare no energy to meet the challenge. However the challenge does not pertain only to ENTRO and NELSAP and is in no way confined to government levels. To ensure the relevance and effectiveness of the projects being prepared, we are highly sensitive to the fact that all stakeholders should be involved. This evidently includes civil society, the private sector, and the communities among whom the investment projects will be implemented.

We at ENTRO are indeed pro-actively promoting stakeholder involvement. Our Social Development Office (SDO) that is facilitating your meeting here has the aim to solicit stakeholder involvement in project preparation. It is already drawing work plans and organizing national and regional stakeholder forums. Last February, ENTRO, in collaboration with the University of Alexandria, and the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources of Egypt, convened a Forum for Eastern Nile private investors in Alexandria. Over the next few years, national stakeholder forums will be organized in Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt. It is to promote such stakeholder involvement in ENSAP and other NBD processes that ENTRO is hosting this meeting.

We recognize NBD as an important mechanism for stakeholders' involvement, which is a right claimed by and not granted to civil society. But we always wish that the participation would be greater especially at sub-basin and investment project levels. We are thus appreciative of your endeavours to revitalize NBD and ensure its effective involvement. We look forward to the outcome of your meeting. We also look forward to your positive and constructive input to the process of project preparation that ENTRO undertakes.

In closing, I would like to thank the organizers for initiating such an important meeting. Once again, I wish you a fruitful meeting and a pleasant stay in Addis Ababa. Thank you.

*Following, Ato Teferra's address, Timmit Abraha, Project Officer of InterAfrica Group, also extended a warm welcome to participants and declared the meeting officially open.*

### **3 Introduction: Dr Emad Adly, NBD SC Chairperson**

I am very glad to be here. I think all of us have the same feeling. The fact that we all have a shared vision in establishing the Nile Basin Discourse helps us very much to build and strengthen the role and involvement of civil society in the Nile Basin. It is true that we have faced financial problems and this naturally led to the weakening of the Discourse. But I am glad that we have been very active and successful in building our own national forums at the country levels. Because of our financial problems, we could not use our strength collectively. But now that we have managed to keep strong and active at the national levels, we have to build on that and strengthen the NBD. It is good that we have a strong base, and we must now strive to have a strong top as well.

I have also to acknowledge the role played by Dr Alan Nicol in helping us come together and in reviving the communications and the connections with the different actors. I believe this meeting will climax in a very strong revival process for the NBD at both regional and national levels. I am glad to witness participants who have come here from a range of backgrounds and representations. I am glad there are strong partners who are able to help reinforce our NBD, which has been weakened due to financial problems. Thank you.

#### 4 Background and meeting objectives: Dr Alan Nicol, ODI

Thank you everyone. We have to acknowledge that a couple of countries have not managed to come for various logistical reasons, particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). But I hope that, eventually, we will have a full range of Nile Basin countries represented.

I want to say a few words about this meeting and its objectives. As already stated, the Nile Basin Discourse has achieved great success in many places. I have travelled to about seven countries to see what people are doing to engage in the NBD. Frankly, the more you get down to the national level, the more you see the achievements made. What remains now is to make these things public and to share among us the experiences of these countries. It is certainly important to acknowledge each national success.

It is not of course enough to talk about the successes alone. It is equally important to recognize the challenges and the difficulties that have arisen, especially at the regional level, in managing this very complex process. Undeniably, the process of mobilizing civil society and engaging them is the Nile Basin Initiative in a very, very complex process. We have reached a time when the NBI is really marching ahead and rapidly developing. It is therefore important for civil society to engage and be engaged. I am deliberately using the active and passive because this has to be a two-way process. You have to have civil society effectively organizing itself to get involved and finding ways of engaging with the NBI.

We also need a basin-wide approach because the NBI is a basin-wide institution, or interim institution. It is therefore important to balance national needs with a regional perspective. It should not be forgotten as well that the local perspective, the community level perspective, is so often not heard as part of the process. I think this is the major concern and one I observed during the country visits. These concerns need to be addressed on a priority basis.

I work for the Water Policy Program of ODI and am a consultant and a researcher. This proposal is the outcome of a DFID consultancy. DFID has considerable interest in helping to establish the NBD. This is a facilitative consultancy, and is not trying to establish a particular model of what the NBD should look like, rather it is suggesting. So you have before you in this meeting a preliminary proposal that is really a suggestion. The reason we are here today is to discuss it, criticize it, pick it up and make it a consultative, fully-fledged NBD proposal that reflects the concerns of national level forums, but which also has regional scope.

As part of that process, there has been a discussion on-line with other civil society interests in the Basin, primarily the Nile Basin Society. The idea of the dialogue or discussion is to try and see where common ground could be reached, to try and identify what other opinions exist, and how to incorporate these at this meeting where the opinions are useful and constructive. For your information I have posted some notes on the Dialogue web site and you can access them. I will also distribute them later. These are the core objectives of the meeting.

- To share the experience of the Nile Basin Discourse between the riparian countries and with the NBI.
- To examine ways of strengthening the Nile Basin Discourse including interaction with the NBI.
- To feed the lessons learned into a new project documents for submission to donors for funding.

At the end of this presentation, the chairman opened the floor for discussion. Participants came up with comments, questions or suggestions on the following points:

**Has the Nile Basin Discourse been dissolved?** Various participants wanted to know the current status of the Nile Basin Discourse: 'Has NBD's Steering Committee been dissolved? Some people say the NBD is still strong and kicking, and that one only needs to fine-tune it. But others say it is defunct. Which is which? Do we have an NBD that is operational? What is the

experience of NBD? What has it achieved? What impact did it have and what difference has it made?’

**Building on the NBD’s experience:** Replying to the above question, the SC chairman recalled that the NBD had held its first General Assembly less than 15 months ago: ‘This means that one cannot announce that NBD does not exist. The last SC meeting, too, was held less than 11 months ago, which means that the NBD was functioning as of last May.’

‘The point is that there was some problem in the partnership process. It was not a problem of partnership between the civil society members themselves. It was a problem of partnership between civil society and the donors. It is as a direct result of this problem that this very meeting has been convened. This means that those who established the NBD did not decide to stop the NBD. They only decided to defer the issue of money. But NBD does not mean only money. The founders of the NBD do exist and they are here to work together. This meeting itself is a continuation of this work. We have the responsibility and commitment to work together to strengthen the NBD. We have achieved something already, but we have to build on our past experience.’

**On legal and constitutional aspects of NBD:** One participant felt the need to discuss the NBD structure, too: ‘What does the constitution say about the actual structure of the NBD? If we have accepted the constitution, then we have to discuss the NBD structure accordingly. But if we have to amend it, we have to call a General Assembly to do so. This means that we have to discuss not only the wording of the proposal, but also the implication of registering the NBD in terms of proposal writing ownership.’

**Knowing one another better:** One participant stated: ‘I feel that we in Ethiopia are a bit late in creating a national forum. But thanks to a meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March we have managed to form an ad hoc committee that is to facilitate the creation of a National Forum. I would like to congratulate some riparian countries for creating national forums that are strong and active. Even so, I am interested in understanding the experiences of those countries that formed their national forums. If the agenda of this meeting is open ended, I would like to suggest to participants to make maximum use of this occasion to get to know one another, to identify common issues as civil society organizations on which to work collectively in the region, and to move forward and engage in the NBI. During the introduction, I noticed that most participants have very rich CVs. For example Dr. Shadad heads multiple organizations. I would like to know the experience of civil society organizations which exist in the Sudan. I want to know how this could be achieved. Externally, there is a feeling that Sudan is an authoritarian regime, but yet you have got such a fantastic civil society movement. That is why I suggest that we make good use of this opportunity to get to know one another more, to share our experiences and to appreciate our strengths and weaknesses.’

**Putting the cart before the horse?** One participant observed that discussing project ideas at this stage was a hasty exercise: ‘I feel that common objectives and priorities have to be identified and put on the table. We have to build, on a priority basis, some institutional set up which will help us move forward. I am of the opinion that discussing the project idea at this stage is something like putting the cart before the horse.’

**Ownership issues:** The same participant said he believed African civil society organizations needed to be owners of the process: ‘African civil society organizations need to identify their own priorities. No priority should be put in front of them, predetermined by outsiders. Assistance and support is welcome. But this should not be something which would take away our initiative, or which would disempower us.’

**Need to know each other stressed:** Another participant reinforced the idea of the previous speaker stressing the need to know one another better: ‘The NBD must have its own aims and objectives. We cannot change our mind by only changing our donors. We need to strive to solve our finances here. We have to try to find out how to continue, how to sustain our work and find answers to our questions. I noticed that there is nothing said in the agenda about the Nile River,

about the problems of the Nile, about poverty in the region, about sustainable development etc. What are we talking about? Why should we devote only 5 to 10 minutes to the country presentations? Why not more? We have to know one another better. It means nothing if I stay here for 3 days and go back home without knowing the problems, concerns and realities of other countries. I want to know more about Ethiopia, Burundi or others. Otherwise it is just a waste of time. Don't you think so?'

*At the end of the discussions, the chairman invited Burundi, Egypt, Ethiopia and Kenya to make their country presentations in that order.*

## 5 Country presentations

### 5.1 Burundi (Dr . Gaspard Bikwemu, President of the Burundi NDF)

Burundi's portion of the Nile Basin (60% of the country) is currently facing a number of environmental problems. A high rate of population growth, deepening poverty, dependence on rainfed agriculture which gives rise to famine conditions, especially in the north of the country, overgrazing, poor crop cultivation practices, removal of vegetation cover, uncontrolled erosion along the lake shores and river banks, have combined to militate against the country's economic development. Besides, massive deforestation caused by the demands of households and communities for fuel and lack of political will have aggravated the problems. In these circumstances, there is strong need for sensitizing all stakeholders including decision makers about the gravity of the situation.

**Burundi NDF and its formation:** Burundi delegates have participated in the NBD's formative processes, attended the various meetings and served as members of the SC. In June 2003, Burundi NDF organized a workshop in Bujumbura for stakeholders aimed at sensitizing them to the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), the shared vision and the subsidiary action programs. This was the first time that civil society awareness raising had been undertaken in Burundi. The meeting was aimed at informing civil society members about the existence and objectives of the NBD. It was also an occasion for discussing the orientations of the newly created NDF.

The meeting elected an interim steering committee which was mandated to carry out the following tasks:

- Prepare the draft constitution of Burundi NDF
- Prepare a three year work plan and budget
- Organize the General Assembly meeting of NDF.

Accordingly, the General Assembly of the Burundi NDF was held in October 2003, and adopted the reports of stakeholders. The General Assembly also:

- Analyzed and adopted the NDF constitution
- Adopted a three-year plan of action
- Elected the president of NDF and a 15-man steering committee

A total of 70 participants representing a cross section of Burundi civil society comprising local and international NGOs working in the region, private sector, academia, research institutions, international and regional organizations as well as a host of CSOs attended the GA meeting.

**Achievements:** A seven-person executive committee has been elected from among the 15-person SC. This has already met twice to identify priorities from the 3-year plan of action and to establish some administrative procedures. The executive committee has also prepared a budget. Now the NDF is in the process of registration.

**Priorities:** The identified priorities are:

- To create a consultation framework among all stakeholders of the NDF with emphasis on networking

- To identify the real problems of Burundi Nile Basin management
- To sensitize all stakeholders including decision makers about the identified problems
- To strengthen the capacity of stakeholders at all levels

**Conclusion:** In Burundi, just like in all other countries, there are lots of opportunities for action in the Nile Basin region. We have already launched rural sector development support projects in the Nile Basin portion of Burundi. The problem is that some of these projects are demand-driven, but as local organizations have no capacity to prepare, execute and monitor these project activities, it was not possible to make any meaningful headway. That is why we believe NBF needs support to strengthen networking and to build the capacity of a number of member organizations of NBF. This is what I expect this meeting to discuss so that the Burundi NBF and its counterpart organizations in the Nile Basin can make a step forward.

**Discussion:** At the end of the presentation, two questions were put to the Burundi presenter: Where do you get the money to run the project activities you mentioned? Who are the main actors in the Burundi NBF?

The presenter replied to the first question saying: 'There are a number of NBF partners including the local development communities that have some money. All these are our local partners and have some money. If we are well organized we can keep the projects going somehow. We believe that information coming up to the regional NBD can be a link or can be shared with other countries. We must bring our local people to Tanzania or Ethiopia to share their experiences. We don't have to sit with folded arms and wait for money to arrive. We have to keep things going until the money arrives. Surely the money will arrive sooner or later. Concerning the second question, well, the main actors in Burundi NBF come from the private sector, NGOs, CBOs, churches, universities and other CSOs.'

## **5.2 Egypt (Dr Emad Adly, AOYE)**

The Egyptian presentation was made by Dr. Emad Adly, Head of the Arab Office for Youth and Environment (AOYE) and Chairperson of the NBD SC. Dr. Emad started by outlining the decisions reached in Cairo on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2005 at the National Workshop of the National Nile Basin Discourse Forum. The workshop was organized with the kind support of DFID.

In Egypt, we have a very open-ended and inclusive process of involving civil society in the National Forum. We have already held three sub-regional workshops, one for the southern governorates on the Nile, the second for the northern governorates and the third for the Delta. The three workshops were sub-regional or sub-national. Then we had a fourth workshop at a national level in October 2003. A total of 500 participants attended these workshops. We were acknowledged by the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources and by other government bodies all of whom commended us for supplying them with important information about NBI. They acknowledge that for the first time they are learning a lot from the civil society, which they could not get from public agencies. It is on the basis of these welcome developments that we were able to institute the Board for our Forum in Egypt.

The National workshop elected 19 Board members for our National Forum. The election took into account the need to have a fair representation of civil society based on considerations like geographical distribution and gender balance. That is why we have in the SC and the General Assembly people representing the media, women's groups and the society. Personally, I am represented in these organs in my capacity as a professional working on environment and sustainable development.

The National Forum of Egypt is not the sole body engaged in the Nile issue. Only recently, we received some 14 requests to establish local forums. Currently we have the National Forum for Egypt, and later on we will have local forums at the sub-national levels. That means we are mobilizing the involvement of more and more people in the Nile Basin process.

**Objectives:** The objectives of the Egyptian National Basin Discourse Forum are:

- Introducing the Forum and its relevant activities
- Identifying internal weak points and external obstacles
- Advancing suggestions to overcome weak points and obstacles
- Making suggestions about themes to be adopted by the National Forum

***Weak points and institutional obstacles:***

- The National Forum, which was established within the framework of the regional Forum, had to come to a temporary halt because of the weakening of NBD. This caused problems in dealing with international organizations and national governmental bodies, as well as with regard to funding and the determination of the legal status of the National Forum
- Lack of funding posed an obstacle to drawing up and implementing a comprehensive plan of action
- Lack of popular and governmental awareness of the Forum, its role and scope of action restricts the Forum's activities and cooperation with governmental and non-governmental agencies
- Lack of legal status
- Lack of sufficient information sharing—information exchange is poor both at the local level and among different linguistic groups in Nile Basin countries

***Suggestions for overcoming weaknesses and institutional obstacles:***

- Affirming the Forum's institutional status and enhancing activities
- Acquiring a legal status for the Forum
- Working in close cooperation with the media
- Forging partnerships and cooperation with relevant government agencies
- Establishing sub-committees for fund raising and discharging other duties

***Forum's future role and activities in environment related issues:*** The Forum is planning to tackle a number of local and regional environment related issues based on the following activities:

- Highlighting Nile-related issues not as technical or economic issues but rather as strategic issues
- Highlighting the risks Nasser Lake is facing and protecting it against pollution
- Tackling the pollution of Nile waters as well as agriculture and industrial waste
- Rationalizing water use in agriculture, industries and domestic activities
- Building trust between Nile-basin countries with regard to water related issues
- Removing misconceptions and misinformation about Egypt's role and the extent to which it benefits from Nile waters
- Adopting a common regional view among riparians on common issues
- Supporting Nile projects whether at the local and/or regional levels
- Supporting sustainable development projects based on rationalizing the use of the Nile waters or finding alternative sources like rainwater storage or water reuse
- Supporting joint projects and activities with Sudan

**Discussion:** At the end of the presentations, participants asked questions and made comments or suggestions based on the following points.

**What kind of relationship exists between the government and the Egyptian National Nile Basin Forum?** The presenter replied: 'The Egyptian National Forum has very strong cooperation with the Nile Basin actors at the government level. During the NBD establishment process, the Nile River Sector within the ministry was represented as an observer. We get information about the NBI and the shared vision from briefings the government provides us. We have a good partnership with the government, but this needs to be strengthened further.'

**What is the scope of the partnership with the civil society?** In reply to this question, the presenter said that: 'The people attending the Forum are all from community-based

organizations, community development societies etc. We also have within the National Forum representatives of the media, universities and so forth. Only one university did not attend the National Workshop. All the 13 universities along the Nile Basin did. Government representatives including those from the Ministry of Water Resources attended the workshop as observers.'

**Where do you get the funds?** 'The Egyptian National Forum got some support from the Fredrick Ebert Foundation. My own organization, AOYE, also provided some funds to cover logistical expenses. The Egyptian Water Partnership of which I am Board member also provided some funds. It is through this partnership that we were able to launch various activities. The Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment, a UNDP program, also helped us run some of the activities. The last workshop was basically covered by DFID with some contributes also from AOYE and the National NBD in Egypt.'

**Why cooperation only with Sudan, and not also with Ethiopia?** The participant said he was not happy with that statement especially in light of the fact that the three are all members of the Easter Nile. The presenter assured the participant, 'Egyptians are eager to forge close cooperative relationships with all civil societies in the Nile Basin, and with special emphasis on Ethiopian CSOs. I assure you that at all Egyptian meetings on the Nile issue, Egyptian CSOs express all the readiness and commitment to work cooperatively with Ethiopians.'

### **5.3 Ethiopia (Ato Abiy Hailu, CS-CAFÉ)**

Ato Abiy presented some thoughts on the cultural importance of the river to Ethiopia, before describing its historic/strategic and economic importance.

**Strategic importance:** The Abay has strategic importance especially for the rulers in Ethiopia. This is linked to the relationship between Ethiopia and its neighbours like Sudan and particularly Egypt. Egyptians, it has to be noted, were king makers for Ethiopia until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is only when a bishop was sent from the Holy See of St. Mark in Alexandria that Ethiopian kings were consecrated and gained legitimacy to the throne. As a result, Egyptians exercised tremendous influence on Ethiopian life. But the reverse is also true to some extent. Ethiopian rulers, when they were not happy with Egyptians, often flexed their muscles and frightened Egyptians saying, "we shall divert away the Nile from you". Of course Ethiopians did not have the technology to do so. Even so Ethiopians could make life difficult for the Egyptians by taking refuge in their impenetrable highland fortresses. In that way the kings attached strategic importance to the Nile. As a matter of fact, the Egyptians attempted to control the source of the Nile towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The attempt led to the eruption of frequent wars between Egypt and Ethiopia. Ethiopian Emperor Yohannes lost his life while fighting a defensive war against invaders.

**Economic significance:** The most interesting feature about the Nile and about other rivers in Ethiopia centres around their economic value. In the 1950s, the Awash River, located in the central part of the country, was harnessed for development proposes. Dams, irrigation schemes, and hydroelectric power stations were built. From that time on, it was realized at the country level that waters could be a source of economic development and prosperity. It was since then that this kind of perception began to emerge. But there were serious constraints. There was lack of technological know-how and shortage of capital. More importantly, unlike the Awash River, the Nile (and others) are transboundary rivers. So there is need for negotiating with neighbours if one has to make effective use of these resources. Even so, the lessons drawn from the Awash River experience brought beneficial results. The experience led to the initiation by the government of various studies on Ethiopian rivers, and master plans were developed.

Be that as it may, the 1970s ushered in some dramatic events in Ethiopia. We had this terrible drought that caused a cycle of poverty and vulnerability, and human and livestock casualties. Let me cite some figures. The 1973-74 droughts affected about one million people out of a total population of 35 million. Over 200,000 people died and the rest internally displaced. It was this event that gave rise to the Ethiopian revolution that brought about the demise of the imperial regime.

In 1981, we had another bout of drought and 2.8 million people were affected. During the 1984-85 droughts, 4.2 million people were affected out of a total of 40 million people. That was over 10% of the total population of the country. In the year 2000, another cycle of drought hit a total of 10 million people out of the country's 63 million people. In 2003, 14 million people were affected out of an estimated 70 million people. This represents 20% of the total population, or one out of five people.

That was the sad scenario in which the Ethiopian people lived. A perception has now emerged among Ethiopians that in order to thwart the effects of droughts, you need to make maximum use of rainwaters as well as the rivers that are available. The Nile is very important in this because it traverses two-thirds of the country's territory.

**Role of civil society:** NGOs began to emerge in Ethiopia as vibrant civil society organizations especially during the 1970s and 1980s. NGOs came to the country in response to the big famines of the 1970s. A number of international organizations came to undertake relief operations. Local NGOs also emerged in increasing numbers and started to work in long-term development activities. Most of these were engaged in food security programs, because that was the country's number one priority. But the first civil society engagement in the Nile Basin started in response to the invitation extended by the NBD. I think CRDA, SLUF and IAG<sup>3</sup> represented Ethiopian civil society organizations.

It is worth noting that these civil society organizations engaging in the Nile have stepped up activities concertedly. CRDA organized a National Conference. IAG conducted community research studies to find out what actually are the needs of the community in terms of access to water. SLUF designed a study on national resource management. The SLUF project was not undertaken because there was a funding promise from NBD, which did not materialize.

As I said earlier, the 2002-2003 famines struck 14 million people. That was another set back for many of us working in development agencies. As humanitarian organizations, we organized relief efforts. But we wondered for how long, and often we could endure such eventualities. We noticed that the drought cycles were becoming shorter while the number of affected people grew by leaps and bounds. That was what we witnessed. We tried to ask, "How could we break this cycle of recurrent famine in Ethiopia?"

**National Conference convened:** All these efforts led to the holding of a National Conference. It was noted during the conference that droughts need not be cause for famine. As a result, the conference identified certain structural problems. One structural problem is the fact that Ethiopia depends on rain-fed agriculture. This is in addition to the problems of environmental degradation, population pressure and institutional incapacity the country faces. It was therefore concluded that participants should act on the recommendations immediately. A follow-up committee was set up. This led to the establishment of the civil society Campaign Against Famine in Ethiopia (CS-CAFÉ). SC-CAFÉ was set up two years ago and a couple of important Nile Basin related tasks were accomplished since then. One was the initiation by the government to build various projects like dams in Ethiopia with support from foreign governments. We were able to discover that 200,000 hectares of land could be irrigated very quickly and could be put to use. We began putting pressure on the government to begin these projects. Secondly, there was a gentleman who came up with a vision for diverting the tributaries of the Nile in 4 phases. It is envisaged that this project could create 3-5 million jobs. Of course the idea is not without criticisms. That was why a follow-up committee comprising 22 experts from the private sector was set up to undertake feasibility studies and to make a presentation to the government.

Accordingly, a preliminary presentation was made to the government and there was interest in it. More importantly, the CS- CAFÉ offered to organize a Citizens Nile Dialogue Forum. It was assumed that a National Forum would emerge from this. Interestingly, however, there was this meeting on March 11 which Dr. Alan Nicol and IAG organized at which the ideas of CS-CAFÉ and other stakeholders converged. It was at this meeting that we decided to set up an Ad Hoc

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<sup>3</sup> Spell out...

Committee to organize a National Forum for the Nile in Ethiopia with various terms of reference. It was thought that Ethiopia should be represented at NBD through these mechanisms. I hope this meeting will be a forum for mutual learning and identifying common agenda issues on which to work together in the coming years. Thank you.

**Discussions:** The discussion focused on the following points.

**Ethiopia must be encouraged to build dams:** One participant observed that Ethiopia's presentation was very clear and comprehensive and should be an example to others: 'I think we should develop a perception for sharing the Nile Basin resources, instead of competing. We should share the capabilities of each one of us. Ethiopia is a water tower of Africa. Yet in the Sudan we are opposed to Ethiopia building dams. This is wrong. We should encourage you to build the dams because the dams will guarantee the purity of the waters. Besides, building the dams will help solve the problems of siltation and such things.'

**Government-CSOs relationship:** A participant sought explanation on the kind of relationship that existed between the successive Ethiopian political systems and the civil societies: 'The relationship from one regime to another was a difficult one. There have been ups and downs. But there is great hope that these relationships will get smoother from time to time. We have to realize that governments are willing to engage when CSOs come up with well-researched ideas and views, not just with impressions. So CSOs have to be very strong in putting their ideas across when they engage with governments. Governments are ready to cooperate when others come up with good ideas. NBI engagement can be no different.'

**What is the opportunity cost for envisaged projects?** Another participant demanded explanation on the opportunity costs involved in the projects envisaged to create 3-5 million jobs: 'This project idea was the vision of one individual. The project idea was presented to a meeting of about 200 people. There was great interest in the idea. But there was also a challenge, as many questioned its practicality. A multi-disciplinary team of experts was thus set up to study the feasibility of the vision. We are still not through sorting out matters. So I am not able to give you answer at the moment.'

**Why late in establishing National Forum?** Another participant wondered why Ethiopia had been late forming the Ad Hoc Committee or Forum: 'This is unfortunate. However it is better late than never. In any case we have managed to attend such dialogues as this. We are latecomers, true. But there is a clear advantage because we learn from you. We don't want to make the mistakes that you made. What is important is the commitment and the resolve. This is a question of survival after all. I would like to assure you at this stage that there has always been the sense of magnanimity and willingness to share in Ethiopia. There are a number of Ethiopians who would argue back and express concern for Egypt during debates over the use of Nile waters. So there isn't selfishness in Ethiopia. In that sense, I see a lot of opportunity for dialogue and cooperation.'

#### **5.4 Kenya (Dr Patricia Makeri-Mobte)**

Dr Patricia started with an introduction highlighting the challenges involved in managing international waters: Different states reflect different interests and the potential for conflict in use and management is always great. There is strong need for cooperation between states as well as between basin users, while international law should be the basis for negotiations of rules to govern transboundary water course. The Nile Basin Initiative is the outcome of the perception that the Nile waters constitute a major and vital resource for the people of the basin countries. It is realized, however, that governments cannot go it alone and must include other stakeholders such as civil society.

**KNDF establishment.** Dr. Patricia explained that the Kenya National Discourse Forum (KNDF) was established in July 2003. The Kisumu-based KNDF has an SC comprising 13 members representing different interests—agriculture, power, environment, applied training, water,

fisheries, river basin management, gender and the private sector. KNDF is seen as an embryo for a larger engagement of the civil society.

KNDF held its General Assembly meeting in December 2003. Its main activities are:

- popularizing the Forum within means available
- meeting with the Kenya Ministry of Water
- looking for possible sources of funding

**Challenges:** Dr Patricia explained that: 'The KNDF is faced with several challenges including structural problems. It is not yet clear who represents the Forum. Is it the SC or the 2003 GA meeting? KNDF is also faced with institutional and legal problems originating from lack of an institutional home, delay in registration which impacts on the Forum's legal status. Absence of legal status has implication for capacity to impact on policy and engage government.'

**Conclusion:** Stakeholder participation in the Nile River Basin is a facet of procedural rights in the realm of environment rights as outlined in principle 10 of the Rio Declaration. The principle provides for: access to information by all; public participation in decision making; freedom of association; access to justice.

The KNDF noted that the process of engendering stakeholder involvement is not smooth and therefore requires nurturing. There is also need for demarcating boundaries between NDFs and the regional NBD on the basis of balance and principle of subsidiary, Dr. Patricia concluded.

## **5.5 Rwanda (Ms Albertine Uwimana)**

**Introduction:** My presentation focuses on the various activities that have been carried out to establish the NDF-Rwanda, as well as the challenges met and the achievements made. To begin with, NDF-Rwanda is a member of the NBD. It was launched officially on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2003. NDF-Rwanda is now composed of 32 organizations. We followed different steps to establish NDF-Rwanda. The first step was to identify credible stakeholders. Accordingly we identified 20 local NGOs, 7 international NGOs, 5 donor agencies, 7 government ministries, the private sector, 6 research and academic institutions and 7 press houses. These were invited to the first stakeholder meeting. At that meeting we had presentations from the NBI officials, from the ministers of Land, Water and Natural Resources.

The second step was to organize a workshop of stakeholders. At the workshop, civil society organizations had the opportunity to learn about the NBI and the NBF in Rwanda. During the first stakeholder meeting, we elected the interim-SC which prepared the draft constitution with help from a legal consultant in accordance with the Rwandan legislation governing NGOs. The draft statutes were circulated to the potential members of NDF-Rwanda prior to its launching.

The next step was the official launching of NDF-Rwanda (comprising 32 CSOs) during the 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop organized for the purpose. The second workshop also undertook a number of activities: it Discussed the draft statutes, amended and adopted them; adopted the first workshop report; and elected a steering committee for a 2-year term that is renewable once, as per the statutes. The SC is composed of 9 members. The president, 2 vice presidents, the secretary general, the treasurer and 4 advisers.

**Achievements:** NDF-Rwanda has successfully established an organizational structure through which it has been possible to sign a memorandum of collaboration with a Dutch organization to provide institutional support. In addition, the UNDP-GEF, through its small grants program, has expressed interest in working with the Forum. NDF-Rwanda has now reached the stage of being registered as a legal organization.

NDF-Rwanda has not faced many problems in identifying itself because of its status as an umbrella of different CSOs intervening in water resources management, human rights, gender

and media. It has the same status as other umbrella organisations including women's and human rights associations and developmental organizations.

**Challenges:** NDF-Rwanda is however faced with some challenges:

- Lack of a coordination office
- Too much bureaucracy to get legal personality as an NGO

**Priorities:** Our priorities include:

- Receiving funding to start envisaged activities
- Speeding up the process of acquiring legal personality
- Setting up a permanent secretariat to ensure day-to-day activities
- Strengthening collaboration with international organizations
- Strengthening networking with other regional Forums in information sharing
- Supporting baseline surveys and research on the environmental situation in Rwanda as pertains to the Nile Basin.'

**Conclusion:** Ms Uwimana concluded that: The NDF-Rwanda believes greater efforts need to be made to establish the structures of the NBD both at national and regional levels. It also believes it is necessary to continue from where we are. We have made steps that need to be reinforced and continued. What is lacking is funding to speed up the process and start activities on the ground.

## **5.6 Sudan (Professor Asim al-Moghraby)**

**Introduction:** The Sudanese Friends of the Nile Network/Nile Basin Discourse (FON/NBD) has undertaken several activities since its inception amid lack of financial support. It has held meetings of its steering committee to discuss topical issues and to draw work plans. It has encouraged the media to write articles on the Nile and the BBC has devoted broad coverage to the issue on more occasions than one. This is part of our awareness raising activity that we have undertaken in past years. The steering committee has also tackled sensitive issues like the 1929 Nile Waters Agreement. It has also contacted international NGOs like the International Rivers Network, Fredrich Ebert Foundation and the BBC to provide us with training assistance.

More importantly, we organized on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March a National Nile Basin Dialogue Forum, which was organized in collaboration with the Environmental Forum of the Sudanese Environmental Conservation Society (SECS). The focus of the workshop was on awareness-raising, past experience, lessons learnt and future outlook. Addressing the workshop were lead specialists of the Transboundary Environmental Project of the shared vision component of NBI. The workshop was the first joint activity of the NBD and NBI in the Sudan. Prior to that the NBI never had an institutionalized relationship with NBD.

**Challenges:** Prof. Assim continued: It is recognized by the Sudanese NBD that lack of communications between stakeholders is a critical challenge. More often than not, many key stakeholders are not even categorized. There is therefore strong need to forge partnerships with NGOs and CBOs at the local, regional and riparian levels as well as with external NGOs, organizations and donors.

It is to overcome such challenges that the Sudanese NBD gives special attention to public awareness through the Environmental Education and Awareness Program. The program covers three levels—public awareness, secondary schools and universities. The activities include national working groups, environmental education materials, capacity building, school networks and curriculum development. The program is aimed at providing basic information on the Nile Basin in all the countries, its potential, the uses, the problems involved and so on.

## **5.7 Tanzania (Dr Amos Majule)**

**Introduction:** In Tanzania, we started establishing the National Discourse Forum by identifying key stakeholders that have an interest in the Nile Basin. Subsequently, we held a national workshop in August 2003. It was then that the General Assembly and the steering committee

were elected. It was also then that the constitution was approved and the Forum's structure developed. The workshop also managed to involve government in the person of the Director of Water Resources which was significant.

**Activities:** Dr Majule continued: It was after laying the Forum's structure that we began participating in different activities through the NBD in Entebbe.

**Terms of Reference:** The TNDF operated within the following terms of reference:

- How do civil societies address the various socio-economic and environmental issues in the Nile Basin?
- How can we establish something that could better address these issues?
- How do we identify obstacles, opportunities, as well as steps and processes for revitalizing dialogue? How can we identify challenges?

**Overview of NBD/TNDF:** The perception of the NBD/TNDF was based on the following points:

- There is lack of focus on role of NBD
- There is need to harmonize the projects
- There are conflicts of interest in the projects
- There is need to be more practical—i.e. not only issuing working papers
- There is need to improve the existing structure

**Tanzanian experience:** TNDF is accumulating broad experience in NBD activities. It has participated in various water-related meetings like the meeting on the Development of the Kagera and Mara Basins held in Entebbe in 2003, and the Meeting of the Tanzanian Water Partnership (TWP)—WP-SA. We also attended the meetings of power options for Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania. Meetings have already been held in Dar-es-Salam and the next meeting will be in Nairobi.

**Strengths:** Dr Majule highlighted strengths and weaknesses identified: 'The TNDF has various strong points:

- Willingness of donors to provide funds
- Presence of active governance structure
- Existence of potential development partners
- Growing international recognition or credibility
- Participation of a diversity of NGOs, CBOs etc.

As well as some major constraints:

- Lack of financial resources
- Lack of physical resources
- Lack of clarity from IUCN
- Lack of clear objectives from NBD
- Commitment overshadowed by lack of information
- Lack of working space, office, resource centre.

In conclusion he stated: There is room for improvement in the NBD/TNDF process. This involves finalization of the legal registration process. It is also important to expand the instruments of dialogue between different countries and the NBI through launching of internet communication, newsletters, meetings, radio and TV programs etc.

## **5.8 Uganda (Ms Irene Makumbi)**

**Introduction:** The process of establishing the Nile Discourse Forum (UNBDF) in Uganda is no different from the other countries. Uganda is the source of the Nile. But we believe we have enough waters to share with the rest of the countries. So to begin with, we launched the Forum in September 2003 and we carried out various activities since then. What have we achieved in Uganda? The Forum first of all decided to engage its members through the establishment of working groups based on the various NBI projects.

**Envisaged activities:** We embarked on our strategy preparation based on the following activities:

- create awareness on watershed and catchment management
- provide information, education and communication materials
- identify policy and regulations that may support our activities
- coordinate with other national Forums within the region
- conduct surveys and research on the utilization of Nile Basin resources

**Challenges:** We identified the following major challenges:

- Creating an enabling environment for cooperation
- Strengthening institutional capacity
- Overcoming cultural differences and practices in the region
- Lack of funds to implement activities
- Poor information exchanges.

**Strengths:** The strong points we identified include:

- CSO networks exist at local regional level
- Location of NBI offices in Uganda

**Way forward:** We envisaged the following as the next steps:

- Establish working groups – members already registered to work on NBI projects
- Develop proposals based on an area of interest
- Develop strategies for joint transboundary projects with other NDFs.
- Fundraising
- Links with NBI strengthened
- Increase visibility

## 6 Progress Report on the Nile Basin Discourse (Dr Geoffrey Howard)

*Participants requested that Dr Geoffrey Howard provide input on the NBD process.*

Let me start with the genesis of the Nile Basin Initiative. It was in 1997 that a group of national experts on the Nile held a meeting, which led to the setting up of the NBI. This was mainly inter-governmental. Concern was expressed later to include civil society as well as the environment in the NBI agenda. That was the basis of how the whole thing began. At the time, international bodies, not necessarily riparian, wanted to somehow facilitate the role of civil society in NBI process. So the Discourse was set up as an independent initiative of civil society and NGOs concerned with the development of the Nile Basin, primarily through the NBI. In the initial stages, international organizations and NGOs, even the private sector as well as semi-government bodies, were also included.

**Objective:** The objective of the Nile Basin Discourse is to promote a broad-based open dialogue, discussion and sharing of views on development in the Nile River Basin, mainly through the NBI, between all stakeholders and affected parties. These include CSOs, academia, NGOs, private sector, communities and governments at national, regional and international levels.

**History of NBD:** The first meeting was in January 2001 in Gland, Switzerland. A group of national, regional and international organizations got together to try to work out what should happen so far as civil society was concerned. Organizations like CARE, ICRC and various interested organizations already working in the Nile attended the meeting. Meanwhile IUCN was already taking the lead in preparing an international consultative meeting of donors and the 10 riparian countries. That meeting was held in Geneva in 2001. At the time we were given a few minutes to make a civil society presentation about the development of the Nile Basin Discourse. This would bring civil society's views to the NBI process. Four of us were there. One of us, Dr. Patricia of Kenya, made the presentation that was greatly appreciated by some of the governments. But some governments questioned the relevance of the civil society representation

in the meeting. There were plenty of donors there. Two of us worked up a proposal quickly to fund the development of the NBD. The next year, in January 2002, Canadian CIDA offered to give one million Canadian dollars and demanded a proposal to that effect. That was the basis for starting up the Nile Basin Civil Society Discourse Desk.

Over the next eight months, we were able to go through a process which included appointing a person, finding an office, making that office operational, and then funding meetings and recruiting staff. But we faced a major challenge. How could we, as international actors, set up representation of civil society across national boundaries? It is an extremely difficult thing to do. That was how NBD began by a group of us who brought together people that we knew and were selected on the basis of relating to water and environment and poverty reduction issues. Subsequently, we went back to the riparian countries with some finance for each of them to set up National Discourse forums. The CIDA money was designed to last for one year. We had promises from other organizations to continue that funding until 2 or three years.

We managed to use that money for a year and a half and managed the process from an office in Entebbe. This was in line with one of the basic principles of remaining separate, yet working with the NBI. Throughout this period, we attempted to prepare a memorandum of understanding of interaction with NBI. But despite 18 months of work, this process was not completed at the time funding ran out. For these reasons other donors disappeared, which required that we had to close that particular office, put the equipment in a container in Kampala, ready for use if and when the Discourse started up again. The existing NBD equipment—vehicles, computers etc—can be put to operation as soon as funding is found.

So the Discourse exists, but it has no funding basis. Still there needs to be some kind of coordination for reopening the Discourse. When we had to disband, we handed over virtual coordination to Uganda because the Uganda Discourse Forum was there. The Ugandans have made some attempts to begin to register an international organization that could become the Nile Basin Discourse.

**Discussion:** The presentation was followed by questions and comments focusing on the following points:

**How transparent was NBD? To whom was it accountable?** Many participants wondered how transparent the NBD had been during its operations. They also asked to whom it was accountable. To the SC? To IUCN? Obviously, the CIDA fund of US\$600,000 was not a lot of money, yet it was not too little either to be spent in one and a half years. What system of accountability that was in place?

**Who is responsible for the NBD's closure?** Another participant expressed appreciation for the efforts made to solicit funds for the NBD as outlined in the presentation. But the participant wondered why, if they had gone such a distance, had the founders or the SC members not been able to take things in hand? 'Don't you think the steering committee members of the Desk staff are responsible for the successes as well as of the errors? Besides, don't you think it should be you, not the CIDA funders that should be doing the evaluation or the assessment?'

**Why make a big show in the first place?** Another participant wondered why, operating in the midst of budgetary constraints and all uncertainties, the NBD Desk should go the way it did? 'Why did it make such a big show with fantastic headquarters, cars and spending all that money? Basically, it is right to show to the NBI that the NBD exists and that it has facilities, computers, offices and all. But isn't it erroneous to be showing too much?' Another participant asked why the Desk did not seek other funds when the CIDA Fund ran out.

**Responses:** Replying to the above questions or comments, the presenter said he agreed to the comment that the SC should have taken control. 'But this was impossible because the SC had no legal basis. In fact, one of the basic intentions of the Nile Basin Discourse Desk was to set up a legal organization that could secure funds internationally and be responsible for it. We had spent

two years preparing that process by developing a constitution, having an elected SC. The SC wanted to take control, but this couldn't be done until there was a legal institution to do so.'

'Concerning the evaluation report, this was prepared and sent out to all stakeholders in time. This included the report of the auditor that was sent last July. They are still available for anybody to see.

'Why we didn't seek funds from other donors? Well, we did everything possible to raise funds for the next phase after the CIDA money ran out? We sent several members of our SC to an international water meeting specifically to talk to donors very early in the process. We were also engaged with various donors, particularly DFID. We also approached other donors including FINNIDA, a Finish organization, but we did not succeed.

Dr Nicol also explained that 'DFID was not willing to fund because the proposal was not good enough. DFID did not feel that it could commit large resources to the proposal that was presented last year. This is not an uncommon occurrence with donors. One thing donors need is an action-oriented document that starts with action and uses those actions to justify structures and processes. That is why I stress the need for building from the national Forums upwards. I think every national Forum should think in terms of action. I think that is the basic reason why the proposal was not funded. There is no mystery—simply the proposal was not good enough.'

**Has divergence of interests been a problem?** One participant, noting that countries have differing interests, asked if such a condition has been an obstacle to funding. The participant observed that: 'Some countries are interested more in poverty alleviation and others in environment protection. When donors go around and do their evaluation, I think they get the impression that there are different priorities and there is no common ground. I feel that if we are in a dialogue with different countries then we must reach some kind of common consensus. I feel we should discuss these issues at our meeting here to enrich the proposal.'

## 7 IDEN<sup>4</sup>: Overview and status (Dr Abdelkerim Seid, ENTRO)

The Integrated Development of the Eastern Nile (IDEN) has seven projects under it. Recently we have started to work on the multi-purpose development program that potentially will involve bigger and more complete projects. Essentially the IDEN projects are being designed in a regional context, although some have national components.

The seven IDEN projects are:

- Eastern Nile Planning Model Project
- Baro-Akobo Multipurpose Development
- Flood Preparedness and Early warning
- Ethio-Sudan Transmission Interconnection
- Eastern Nile Power Trade Investment Program
- Irrigation and Drainage
- Watershed Management

**Eastern Nile Planning Model Project:** The objective of this project is to assist in identifying, evaluating and prioritizing projects as part of the investment planning process for the sustainable development and management of Eastern Nile waters.

The major components of this project are:

- Strengthening institutional and human capacity
- Developing a modeling system
- Streamlining information management.

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<sup>4</sup> Integrated Development of the Eastern Nile.

The preparation of this project is financed by a Japanese PHRD Grant. We started working on this project very recently. For the implementation of the project, we have a regional coordinator, social development officer and regional working group at the regional level. At the national level, we have national model coordinators and the Ministries of Water Affairs in the three countries Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt.

**Baro- Akobo multipurpose development:** The objective of this project is to develop the Baro-Akobo (Sobat) river with the view to bringing regional benefits to all EN countries.

**The Flood Preparedness and Early Warning:** The basic components of this project are:

- Flood forecasting, warning and communication
- Flood mitigation planning
- Flood preparedness and emergency response
- Regional coordination

The preparation of the project is financed by a Japanese Grant. We also have pledges for implementing the project from the European Union Water Facility and the Netherlands Government. We also have support from external donors and consultants.

**Ethiopia–Sudan Transmission Interconnection:** The objective of this project is to facilitate cross border energy trade between the two countries. This has two components the engineering component and the environmental and social impact component.

**Eastern Nile power Trade Investment Program:** This is aimed at initiating the development of a regional power trade investment program. The components of this program are:

- Standardization of input data for EN planning model
- Eastern Nile regional power market development
- Initiation of EN regional power trade investment program
- Advancing preparation of site-specific projects.

**Irrigation and drainage:** The objective of this project is to support development and expansion of irrigated agriculture, improve productivity of small and large-scale agriculture through improved agricultural water use.

The components of this project are:

- Irrigation and drainage infrastructure
- Establish and strengthen farmers organizations
- Agricultural development and rural infrastructure
- Institutional and legislative reform
- Inter-regional cooperation

**Watershed management:** The objective of this project is to establish a sustainable framework for the management of selected watersheds to improve living conditions of the people, enhance agricultural production, protect the environment, reduce sediment transport and prepare for sustainable development-oriented.

Finally, the multipurpose development of the Eastern Nile was launched last February 2005. The objective of this project is poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability through cooperative development and management of the EN river basin as a unified system.

## **8 Social Development Office (SDO) (Dr Salah Shazali, ENTRO)**

The Social Development Office (SDO) has the overall objective of building capacity in social development at ENTRO and national teams working on ENSAP investment projects. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) has allocated monies for the recruitment of a

part-time international expert and full-time regional social development officer as well as for the implementation of certain prioritized activities over a period of two years. The regional officer started work in July 2004.

**Functions of SDO:** The functions of SDO are:

- Capacity building and skills development
- Support to project design
- Initiation of pilot and background studies
- Establishment of database and documentation unit
- Development of guidelines
- Networking

SDO has a plan to launch its planned capacity building activities soon. There is a plan to organize national workshops, one in each country and two regional workshops.

The SDO is also involved in the establishment of a networking system

- In-country networking
- Networking within NBI
- International networking

I believe that networking with NBI is central for the success of our projects.

## **9 CBSI Overview (Gordon Mumbo, CBSI Head)**

This is one of the projects of the Nile Basin under the Shared Vision Program (SVP). There are seven projects under the Shared Vision Program. The eighth program is a coordination program. Besides the Shared Vision program, there is the Subsidiary Action Program (ENSAP) and NELSAP. ENSAP is based in Addis Ababa and NELSAP is based in Kigali. The stakeholder involvement project is a latecomer. The development objective of the CBSI is three-pronged—to build a relationship among the countries, share information across the Nile Basin and start a process of involving people in decision making activities.

The broad indicators that have been developed in the project include:

- Increasing awareness and understanding of the NBI based on provision of accurate information about the NBI to diverse basin stakeholder groups
- Strengthening stakeholder participation in NBI initiatives
- Expanding confidence, throughout the basin, among the cooperating countries

The objective of the stakeholder process is to facilitate a process that offers stakeholders opportunity for shared learning and evaluation of options on the investment projects. The objective of the confidence building process is to support the planning and implementation of what may otherwise seem an undefined process between people and among societies. Some of the project benefits expected to accrue to target population are:

- Expanded communications and public information of all groups
- Enhanced participation in policies and investment decisions
- Increased formalization of participation mechanisms for civil society involvement
- Increased basin-wide confidence in NBI
- Increased basin-wide confidence among neighbouring countries
- Enhanced trust among riparian countries.

The CBSI is pleased to work with the Nile Basin Discourse. We believe that things will be done the right way when the NBD can also be a watchdog to what the NBI is doing. The CBSI is looking forward to a situation when citizens, the NBI, civil society and governments come

together to establish platforms for open and frank discussion of issues that affect people living within the Nile Basin countries.

## 10 GWP: Participation in water governance (Simon Thuo, GWP)

UNDP and the World Bank started the Global Water Partnership (GWP) in 1996. It was hosted by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) in Stockholm and became an independent institution only last year. It was active for seven years without being a legal entity. The early focus was on advocacy and integrated water resource management. This was very successful and led to the adoption of the Johannesburg summit of the IWRM target. The GWP plan now is to move from regional and global thinking to action-oriented activities in countries by transforming international principle into country context. So we launched the GWP in 2002 in Uganda. We are now based at the Nile Basin in Entebbe. We have successful partnerships in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda and Kenya.

We are getting donor support for some of the activities: we have Canadian support for the IWRM in Kenya and we now have interest in Ethiopia from Norway. The US is funding us in Ethiopia to do a pilot project in some *woredas* and we also have Dutch interest in Eritrea. We hope all these will lead to integration of water resources management and water efficiency. We have formed dynamic partnerships already and have working teams committed to giving their time and energy. So our partnership in short is a platform for bringing together governments, civil society, research organizations and all other stakeholders in order to discuss issues that affect the water sector in the different countries.

GWP believes that water is a factor for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It also fully supports the efforts of IWRM in promoting the co-coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising sustainability of vital eco-systems.

Some of the key areas that GWP have looked at are:

- Equality – planning to ensure access to good quality water for the poor
- Economic efficiency–planning to enhance efficient food production by/for the poor
- Environmental sustainability–planning to conserve ecosystem productivity for the benefit of the poor
- Livelihood/resources–planning to balance development of 'good' livelihoods and resource exploitation

We had a case study in Burkina Faso from which we learnt a lot of lessons, including:

- Political will by decision makers should be established at an early stage
- Processes should be firmly anchored in responsible ministries
- Processes should be accompanied by a communication strategy for involving stakeholders, technical and financial partners

In order to help water stakeholders better understand the context of water in their country, GWP has prepared a Tool Box. This is a structured vehicle for exchange of experience and knowledge within IWRM. It is not a manual, but a resource based on real life experience.

What is GWP doing in the different countries? In Kenya, GWP is helping the preparation of an IWRM plan. This has three components:

- Intersectoral collaboration by key actors affecting water
- Strengthening stakeholder involvement through structured information
- Promoting integration of PRSP, ERSWG<sup>5</sup> national economic development frameworks

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<sup>5</sup> Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans, and ????

In Eritrea, GWP is trying to address critical water strategies through technical assistance. In Ethiopia, we are processing US funding for a pilot in two *woredas*. In Sudan, we are promoting water for peace in Khartoum. In Uganda, we are engaged in a study on decentralization impact on IWRM implementation, and capacity building through a toolbox training program. It is widely believed that the conflict in Darfur itself arose because of water problems.

## 11 Integrating livestock and water in the Nile Basin (Don Peden, ILRI)

My presentation focuses on an issue that has not been really touched on by others. I believe the subject of livestock and water management is a highly neglected issue. My presentation essentially deals with the Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF), livestock and water in the Nile basin, as well as partners and opportunities.

The CPWF is a global program which attempts to improve water productivity and food production in ways that are pro-poor, gender-equitable and environmentally sustainable. At the basin level, water productivity needs to be understood in the widest possible sense that includes:

- Crop, livestock and fish yields
- Ecosystem services
- Social impact such as health
- Effective resource governance that ensures equitable sharing of benefits

CPWF Priorities in African river basins focus on:

- Improving basin farming, herding, and water management practices in relation to local types, climates, social conditions, market and infrastructure
- Integrated approaches to assessment and allocation of water among multiple users
- Sharing of transboundary waters
- Developing fisheries and rational productive use of wetlands in balance with environment
- Promoting win-win solutions for up and downstream uses.

The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) is contributing to this program by helping reduce poverty, hunger and environmental degradation through increased livestock-water productivity with a focus on the Nile Basin.

**Why livestock?** It has to be noticed that livestock are needed for the following reasons:

- Income generation for farmers, pastoralists
- Drought coping livelihood strategy
- Traditional basis of wealth
- Culturally important
- Trade purposes
- Quality nutrition and health
- Animal power.

**What do we want to achieve?** The project aims at achieving the following among others:

- Understanding of livestock use of water and their impact on water resources in the Nile
- Improved community management of water and livestock resources
- Livestock and water policies to help improve productive use of water in the Nile Basin
- Conflict resolution
- Increased research and development in the Nile.
- Collaboration with NBI

**Partnerships:** The current partners include:

- ASARECA – AARNET<sup>6</sup>
- Ethiopian Rainwater Harvesting Association
- CARE

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<sup>6</sup> ????

- Ethiopian Agriculture Resource Organization
- Sudan Ministry of Science and Technology
- **NARO** Uganda – Makerere University
- FAO – Livestock, Environment and Development Initiative
- International Water Management Institute
- International Livestock Research Institute

For the project to be effective, collaboration with NBI and NBD is most desirable. To that effect, a memorandum of understanding is expected to be signed in April 2005. It is also believed that linkages to civil society at all levels are needed.

At the end of the presentations, participants raised questions and made comments based on the following points:

**Why didn't you mention the 4<sup>th</sup> country in ENSAP?** The presenter replied that 'ENTRO and ENSAP include four countries including Eritrea. But Eritrea has not appeared so far. Right now it is only an observer. We hope it will join us soon.'

**To what extent do you involve the civil society in ENTRO?** The presenter explained that 'ENTRO is the technical arm of ENSAP. We are very serious about civil society involvement. Look, you all are here with us as members of civil society. You are a living witness about our efforts to involve the civil society in ENTRO. We are also trying to involve the academia. This is not a grant; it is a right. Even if we don't come to you, you have to come to us.'

**How much attention does ENTRO give to NBD?** The presenter explained that 'the objectives of ENTRO projects are basically poverty reduction. We are keen to closely work with NBD which also focuses on poverty reduction. I personally addressed the Ethiopian national forum. We are transparent.'

**Is it true that ENTRO focuses on the Sudan, and not on Ethiopia?** The presenter said the Environmental Impact Assessment is undertaken in both Sudan and Ethiopia. ENTRO belongs to the three countries and we undertake transboundary studies in all three countries. We work through the countries, through national focal points.'

**What is your relationship with NELSAP?** 'NELSAP is our counterpart. There is a coordination whereby the two SAPs come together. We agreed to convene a joint regional workshop on hydro-power and social development. We can share experiences with all stakeholders.'

**What is the time frame of CBSI?** Replying to this, the presenter said 'the project is divided into two phases. Phase one runs for four years. Phase two runs for two years depending on funding. The amount of funding was small until last week when we got commitment from EU which will enable us to run the project for the first 4 years. We are in the process of fundraising for project activities in phase two.'

**Why isn't CBSI much in the media?** 'CBSI is advertising positions for national project coordinators. Our instrument of communications is the newsletter called the Nile Basin which has a wide circulation.'

**Can you explain what you mean when you say CBSI is involved in conflict resolution?** The presenter explained that 'Transboundary water bodies have traditionally been used as catalyst in building peace. The Nile is no different. In much the same way as transboundary rivers can trigger conflict, so also can they be used for bringing people together. We are involved in building trust and confidence among riparian countries or among people whose livelihood depends on the Nile.'

**Can you explain more on IWRM process and its principles?** 'The presenter said that basically it is three things. How do you balance equity, sharing of water between different sectors or different communities or different water users? How do you ensure that there is equitable distribution there? What is the best utilization of water which relates to economic efficiency? What

is the outcome in terms of social, economic progress? How do you ensure that this is environmentally sustainable? These are the basic principles of IWRM.'

**How can GWP interact with NBD?** 'This is a good question. We can interact with NBD through our regional or national forums. We can share information with NBD through these forums. We can do training together. We are happy you are strengthening NBD. We need strong and organized groups with whom to interact.'

## **12 Presentation on Preliminary Proposal (Dr Alan Nicol)**

The Proposal was submitted at the end of January. It was tailor-made for the EU Water Facility and put together as a concept note, or preliminary proposal. If successful it would go through to the full proposal submission phase. The EU Water Facility is specifically focused on poverty reduction and the link between the water sector and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In some ways the proposal does not hit the target as clearly and centrally as it should because it focuses on poverty, water management, civil society and governance issues. The EU Water Facility resources are more geared towards water supply and sanitation because they consider this subsector as having a very direct impact on poverty reduction. However, we have tried to show how our proposal directly addresses poverty within the basin.

I met a member of the European Commission in Kigali last week. He told me that there have been some 800 proposals submitted to the EU Water Facility, so there is huge competition for funds. The NBI (CBSI) has already received funding from the European Water Facility. I think the proposal has only even chances of getting through to the second stage, but nevertheless this is a good way of developing a generic proposal that can be submitted more widely to other donors as well. Fortunately, almost all the donors I spoke to wanted something to be sent to them.

The proposal starts with a preamble about the importance of poverty reduction. It also highlights the fact the NBI itself states that poverty reduction is a core objective. It talks about the subsidiary action programs and the shared vision programs. It also mentions the background to the involvement of civil society and describes how projects have been fast tracked, how the NBI is doing things, and how civil society is lagging far behind in engaging with these processes. There is a feeling that things are moving very fast and there is need for immediate CS engagement.

The proposal also presents a rationale for civil society engagement both at the national and regional level. Almost certainly a formal Basin organization will emerge eventually, and civil society cannot afford to miss the opportunity of representation or involvement in this organization. In Ethiopia, as in many other basin countries, civil society organizations like CS-CAFÉ, SLUF and others are already engaged in debates like poverty reduction, food security and environment issues. Their role is very much recognized by donors and their broad experience can be brought into engagement with the NBI.

The proposal is based on your original proposal from April 2004. I did not start afresh. I looked into your proposal and I tried to extract the key messages that you had, making these clearer and a little bit focused. The objectives as stated in the proposal are to:

- Promote the open sharing and exchange of information on current Nile Basin development under the NBI
- Establish a pro-active approach to civil society engagement in development processes under NBI
- Develop the means to monitor and evaluate the impact of Nile Basin projects on civil society throughout the basin
- Build capacity for civil society to craft further ideas for development that will centre on the Nile and its waters, while reducing poverty in the Basin.

The governance structures envisaged in the proposal again reflect the existing structure. It is not attempting to make substantial changes, but there are issues like the steering committee and its relationship to the IUCN that needs addressing. The question of how the National Forums fit into

the management of NBD also needs to be addressed. So a lot is expected from this meeting on governance structure and the issue of financial flows.

You also need to address the role of the secretariat, which plays the part of facilitator. The secretariat is expected to provide technical and administrative support but it should not be a structure for controlling activities in the basin. It is only expected to facilitate or link national activities within a regional perspective. Similarly, the size of the SC and the frequency of its meetings is a critical issue, too. This is a question of empowerment. How many tasks does the SC perform? How frequently shall it meet and are people available to meet frequently? How much money should be set aside for these meetings? And concerning the relationship to the NBI, there is a draft memorandum of understanding. The question is whether it needs to be revisited. Is this MOU the best way forward?

Now a word about the activity program, which I believe, is very important. This is where it changes quite substantially from the existing proposal and puts greater emphasis on poverty reduction. The activity program will have a clear set of targets, milestones and a system of reporting from country level upwards. Tracking and reporting on the achievement of targets and milestones will be the responsibility of each country's SC members, with assistance from the NBD in Entebbe. The activity program's emphasis is on action-oriented approaches undertaken at a country level. This will then be shared across the basin under the coordination and guidance of the NBD. Nevertheless, the idea will also be to encourage direct linkages (i.e country-to-country) between NDFs and to facilitate the development of networks of interest between and within countries on specific themes.

The four outputs are:

- Establishing civil society dialogue across the Nile Basin
- Establishing knowledge resources across the Nile Basin civil society
- Integrating pro-poor research, analysis and advocacy with the NBI
- Capacity building of civil society for monitoring and evaluation of development impacts

That is the general framework of the proposal submitted by ODI and IUCN on behalf of the NBD. It is a starting point and is not supposed to be a fully-fledged, complete piece of work. Just to give you an idea, the indicative budget is 5 million Euros over five years. This is the maximum allowable. If you divide this across the Nile countries, over five years, it is not an enormous amount of money for national activities in each country. So you can work on this assumption and determine what scale of activity each country can and should undertake. This may help you to think of the cost of each activity you want to carry out.

Finally, I would like to reassert the about the need for establishing a web-based tool for more effective information sharing among civil society across the Nile Basin. This is an example of a tool that we have developed in outline [online presentation]. In addition I have circulated to you a note on the last posting I made to the Nile Basin online dialogue on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2005.

**Discussion:** The discussions that followed the presentation on the preliminary proposal focused on the following points:

**Governance and structure:** A participant who attended the December 2003 General Assembly meeting in Nairobi observed that 'the NBD governance structure has already moved from the interim status to a legal governance status, except that it was not registered. This means that NBD has a constitution on which to act. It has representatives who are democratically elected. The General Assembly is the baseline for all NBD decisions. That means there is no sufficient reason for changing from Discourse to Dialogue. Doing so would only complicate things and create confusion. We have to build on the past and keep the name Discourse.'

**Ownership:** The same participant, as indeed many others, proposed that the ownership of the proposal be given to the SC, which is mandated by the General Assembly. The SC should be in charge of hiring people, adopting and owning proposals.

**Designing projects:** Thirdly, the same participant suggested that ‘action-oriented projects be designed and launched on the ground. NBD should not only be about capacity building or awareness creation. We have to carry out actions that will link civil society to the Nile Basin. And finally, we have to build on the existing website. This is important for information sharing.’

**NBD-NDF relationship – keeping the balance:** Another participant said it is ‘important to have a governance structure for the national Forums which should relate to the regional structure. If we have a very strong governance structure at the regional level and don’t have the same at the national level, you end up with lack of articulation between the regional and the national. In that way we can overcome the ineffectiveness of NBD.’

**DFID or EU Water Facility?** One participant said he was assuming that the proposal came from DFID. ‘But now we hear the proposal has a link to the EU Water Facility. I need some clarification.’ In reply to the question, it was explained that DFID originally never intended to fund the whole Nile Discourse programme, but might have provided up to £300,000 pounds for research and information exchange activities. The DFID offer was only in regard to potential co-financing. Similarly, whilst this proposal is to the EU Water Facility, it would also involve DFID potentially co-funding a percentage.

**No mandate to change NBD governance:** A participant observed that ‘NBD has its own General Assembly and other structures. Obviously, we can’t change a governance structure of an institution which has its own constitution. If the donors want to support us, they have to support us as NBD. All we can do now is to give orientations for structures to be built at the national levels so they would reach their respective communities easily. Otherwise, we have to respect the constitution of the NBD.’

**Why delay in updating proposal?** Another participant wondered why it was not possible to update the proposal at an early stage? Replying to this, the IUCN representative said ‘the proposal was not updated because it was specifically designed for a time line, which was the end of January. It was agreed that any changes or alteration would be made after consultations with the various country groups. The purpose of this meeting itself is to extract suggestions that could be used as the basis for updating the proposal.’

**Proposal lacks mechanisms for engagement in NBI:** A presenter suggested that the proposal must include mechanisms or modalities for civil society engagement in the NBI. It is also necessary to include a budget. The presenter agreed and said this will be taken care of in the next full version.

**On securing space in decision making at NBI:** Another participant observed that it is ‘important to secure a space for NBD to engage in NBI activities. The real concern of this focal point is to engage with national governments through NBI. Naturally, the NBI projects are designed and decided by the cooperating governments. My suggestion is that NBD should get a space at the decision making organs in NBI from where it could influence priorities in terms of projects which are normally decided by cooperating governments.’

**Producing Source Book for the Nile, not bits and pieces:** One participant suggested that the approaches so far are fragmentary, and not holistic. ‘Do we have a common understanding about the Nile? Is it only a body of water or more than that? What resources does it have in terms of cultures, fisheries of economic or social significance? What hazards does it pose? I think we have to have a source book about the Nile. We have to talk about concrete things about the Nile and its resources, and not simply talk about bits and pieces.’

**Need for drawing a common agenda:** Another participant said he believed that ‘CSOs and NGOs often act as fire fighters. Governments in the Nile Basin make a great deal of effort deciding what is good or bad for their peoples. But when their decisions go wrong, it is often the CSOs or NGOs that intervene and mend things. So there is need for these organizations to have a common understanding and to act in solidarity. The NBD structures need to operate at the regional, sub-regional and national level especially through ENSAP, NELSAPs etc. There should

be different levels of action that need to be articulated. The action points need to be identified based on a common agenda.'

## **13 Group Work: Discussions, Presentations**

At the end of the session on the preliminary proposal, all participants broke into three working groups to discuss future proposal development in light of the following key issues identified by three workshop facilitators during the preceding sessions. The groups were led by the three workshop facilitators.

- Discourse or Dialogue?
- Representativeness / inclusiveness of Civil Society
- Role of donors
- Legal Status / Registration—Regional NBD and National Discourse Forums
- Funding for NBD and NDFs
- Relationship / balance of roles between regional NBD and NDFs
- Ownership of the process—who should lead in the process?
- Creating common ground at the regional level versus specificity of problems at the national level
- Defining a clear and proactive role for civil society involvement in the NBI
- Engagement with NBI and Sub-regional Initiatives (ENSAP and NELSAP)
- Representation in the various activities initiated in the NBI (e.g. CBSI / SDO)
- Bridging the gap between government and civil society
- Creating a proactive role
- Sharing information and establishing communication channels
- Other comments

Following the discussions, participants met in the plenary and heard the presentations of the three groups on the basis of the identified issues.

### **1. Discourse or Dialogue?**

All three groups agreed to keep the term Discourse. It was felt that changing to Dialogue would serve no purpose except to create confusion. Moreover, we are engaged in building on the previous structure, and there is no need for a change of name.

### **2. Representativeness/Inclusiveness of Civil Society**

- Efforts shall be made to ensure that everybody particularly at the national level is included. Care should be taken to avoid marginalization because of language barrier. Civil society members having expert knowledge as well as local knowledge shall be represented (G-1)
- Refer to constitution for guidance. Inclusiveness should not mean 'every issue' (Group 2&3)

### **3. Role of Donors**

- NBD shall set its agenda in addition to the one set by donors. (G-1)
- Technical intermediaries can be taken as observers. (G-1)
- Technical intermediaries and donors shall not sit in the SC. They shall have no voting rights (G-1)
- Donors are partners, not facilitators (G-3)
- Five seats shall be reserved for donors or international organizations in General Assembly (G-3)
- SC shall mediate relationship between donors / intermediaries (ODI, IUCN) and General Assembly (G-3)

### **4. Legal Status/Registration- Regional NBD and NDFs.**

- Legal status shall not be looked at in isolation of country legal frameworks (G-1)
- Different countries have different requirements of registration, hence no common suggestion (G-1)
- NBD shall have to register in a European country, then have local registration (G-1)
- SC shall take charge of hosting the NBD. It shall make all other decisions related to registration and work coordination (G-1)
- Framework for NBD shall be provided to operate at an international level (G-2)
- Proposal shall be submitted by SC in partnership with IUCN / ODI (G-2)
- Issue of securing physical address in proposal shall be first activity (G-2)
- Proposal shall phase out within two years from involvement of international organization (G-3)

## **5. Funding for NBD and NDFs**

- There is a strong need for diversifying donors. Danger in relying on one donor (G-1).
- Knowledge generation vis-à-vis advocacy lobbying activities shall be increased (G-1).
- Need for local fund mobilization to reduce dependence on NBD (G-1)
- Mechanism of funding shall be put in place to ensure sustainability (G-1)
- Budgetary allocations shall be made with minimum at apex and maximum at national for action on the ground. For example apex 20%, sub-apex 20% and NDF 60% (G-1)
- Ten year strategic plan shall be drawn to invite donors to fund (G-2)
- There is need to clarify the exact roles of NBD and NDF (G-3)
- IUCN shall provide institutional and financial support (G-3)
- ODI shall provide technical assistance
- 25% to institutional and technical support
- 25% to cover regional meetings, GA, SC, Desk meetings, and
- 50% allocated to national Forum activities (G-3).
- SC shall take responsibility of securing funds and be involved in fund-raising processes in partnership with ODI/IUCN (G-3)
- NDF shall share responsibility of maintaining sustainability at the national level (G-3)
- A resource mobilization task force shall be set up in the case of multiple donors. The task force shall be composed of the SC chair, some SC members and donors (G-3)

## **6. Relationship/balance of roles between regional NBD & NDFs**

- Clear roles shall be drawn for the two organs since this would allow visibility (G-1)
- Regional NBD shall take coordinating role to maintain regional voice (G-1)
- Regional NBD shall coordinate trans-boundary and sub-regional program activities. (G-1)
- NDFs shall act as drivers while regional NBD shall be coordinator (G-1)

## **7. Ownership of the process – who should be the lead in the process?**

- Every country shall be a leader of the process. NBD shall take a coordinating role (G-1)
- Every country shall set its own priorities (G-1)
- Stakeholder beneficiaries shall own the process (G-1)
- National level ownership shall belong to NDF (G-3)
- Regional level ownership shall belong to SC (G-3)
- Proposal and fundraising process shall be owned by SC—Intermediaries are just intermediaries (G-1)
- Vehicle of fundraising shall be any organization (including African NGOs) selected by SC (G-1)

## **8. Creating common ground at regional level vs. specificity of problems at national level**

- Country experiences shall be regularly fed into the process (G-1)
- Water resources, national resources including livestock and fisheries shall be conceptualized (G-1)

- NBD, and through it NDF, shall have representation in NBI (G-2)
- Draft MOU between SC and NBI shall be revisited (G-2)
- National Forums shall hold consultations up stream and downstream to learn from activities in other countries (G-2)
- Strong links shall be established between regional and national entities of NBI (G-3)
- Community involvement shall be encouraged and supported at local or nation level (G-3)

#### **9. Defining clear and proactive role for civil society involvement in NBI**

- Civil Society involvement shall be according to need using a bottom-up approach. This shall be determined taking into account flexibility of design, and ability to adjust to unforeseen circumstances in order to maintain sustainability of existing initiatives (G-1)
- Civil society shall attach greater emphasis to capacity building at grassroots level (G-1)
- CS shall generate information on the NBI and disseminate it; it shall generate new knowledge especially at local levels; it shall evaluate impacts of NBI projects (G-1)
- CS shall create roster of experts for making assessment of local viability and sustainability of proposed development projects (G-1)
- CS shall inform governments of activities being undertaken in relation to NBI (G-2)
- Platforms shall be created for communities to express their views in the country and across the region. The platforms shall be a link where NDFs can work together with CBSI in raising awareness (G-3)

#### **10. Engagement with NBI and Sub-regional Initiatives (ENSAP, NELSAP).**

- Mechanisms shall be created for recognizing civil society as equal partners to engage with (G-1)
- Donors with negative attitude towards civil society participation shall be required to change their perception. Donors shall provide information at all levels (G-1)
- Civil society shall be perceived as equal partners, not as competitors with NBI (G-3)

#### **11. Bridging the gap between government and civil society**

- NBD shall raise awareness and build confidence between CS and governments (G-1)
- CS shall have a common view about impacts of government decisions at the local level (G-1)
- CS shall be considered as complementary rather than competitive or rival. Mutual opportunities shall be explored (G-1)
- CS and Governments shall keep each other updated on what they are both doing to avoid conflict of interest. They shall learn to work with each other (G-1)

#### **12. Creating a proactive role**

- Civil society shall intervene with ideas of NBI projects (G-2)

#### **13. Sharing information and establishing communication channels**

- Established website shall be strengthened and updated. Other necessary communication channels shall be established (G-2)

#### **14. General Comments**

- Constitution shall provide the baseline for any document produced by NBD. (G-3)
- Existing NBD is still valid. There is no need for developing a new constitution (G-3)
- The SC shall meet three times a year for the purpose of this proposal (G-3)
- The Constitution shall be referred to for a change of quorum. (G-3)
- Include budget for each activity within final proposal
- SC shall appoint someone to revisit document after revision

## 14 Next Steps

After hearing the presentations of the working groups, the meeting suggested the following actions as the next steps.

- Concept Note shall be revised according to conclusions of meeting
  - Redrafted version shall be completed by end of April and submitted to SC chair
  - Final version shall be completed by May 15
- Minimum Plan of Action shall be drawn based on existing resources at national level
- Concept Note shall be submitted to a range of donors
  - Donor consultations shall be organized
  - Concept Note distributed for possible funding
- AOYE shall take responsibility for updating website in the coming 3 months.
- Uganda shall take responsibility for Interim Desk responsibilities
- Summary report of meeting shall be drafted by ODI and submitted to SC chair for approval
- Proceedings shall be distributed to SC chair for distribution to SC members.

## 15 Closing remarks

**Dr. Salah Shalazi, ENTRO:** It has been a great honour to receive you. This is an expression of our intent, resolve and seriousness in having an interface with you. We hope that we at ENTRO and CBSI will take this initiative forward and root it in our countries to achieve our common goals. We are looking forward to the real interface at sub-basin and project level. That is why I admire the emphasis that you have put on the national level actions. I hope you will be able to secure the funds you are applying for. We at ENTRO are always open as members of the NBI family. I wish you all the best.

**Geoffrey Howard, IUCN:** It has been a pleasure interacting with you. I encourage you all to think both nationally and regionally for the development of the Nile Basin, the general ecosystem and about the linkages between the countries. It is important to underscore the role of cross border activities of NDFs if we are to enhance the Nile brotherhood. It is also important to consider our links with other regional initiatives. We have not to forget the possible role of NEPAD processes including the environment action plan of NEPAD, and the roles of IGAD and COMESA in the development of the Nile Basin. Certainly, these bodies have important linkages in the commercial, environmental and social sectors. I wish you all good luck.

**Timnit Abraha, IAG:** I have no doubt that we have had a fruitful and successful meeting. I realize I have not been here all the time as I had been busy with my administrative work which I believe made some modest contributions to your stay here. But I have full access to your outputs which I will share with my organization. And good luck.

**Dr. Alan Nicol:** Let me start by thanking IAG and ENTRO for their amazing support, hosting of this meeting and making it work. I would also like to thank Dr. Emad Edly, the president of NBD and the SC members for showing keen interest in driving this process. I hope we are successful and let us keep going. I am glad that participants are enthusiastic about the ownership issue. This is a reflection of their desire to take things into their hands. This is encouraging. I hope we will succeed in securing the funding. But I encourage you to focus on action-oriented projects in the next two weeks. This is what we need above all else.

**Dr. Emad Edly, NBD president:** I am extremely glad and impressed by the hospitality extended to us by ENTRO. Please convey our gratitude, Dr. Salah, to all your colleagues who made us feel at home throughout our stay. Please also extend our thanks to NBI because you are part of the NBI family. I hope this partnership will continue to be strengthened. Thank you.

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**Objectives and (revised) Draft Agenda for Discussion  
Regional Meeting on re-establishing Nile Basin Civil Society Dialogue**

23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> March 2005, Addis Ababa

**Objectives:**

- **To share experience of the Nile Basin Discourse between Nile countries and with the NBI**
- **To examine ways of strengthening the Nile Basin Dialogue including interaction with the NBI**
- **To feed the lessons learned into a new project document for submission to donors for funding**

Wednesday  
23<sup>rd</sup> march

<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Emad Adly (AOYE)</b>
09.00	Registration/tea & coffee	
09.15	Welcome by ENTRO Interim Manager Inter-Africa Group	Ato Teferra (ENTRO) Timnit Abraha (IAG)
09.30	Introduction by Chairman	Emad Adly (AOYE)
09.35	Background and meeting objectives	Alan Nicol (ODI)
09.45	Comments on objectives, agenda and process	Participants
10.50	Tea/coffee break	
11.10	Country presentations and clarification	Burundi, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya
12.10	Discourse desk experience	Jean Bigagaza/ Geoffrey Howard
12.30	Country presentations	Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda
13.30	Lunch	Ararat Hotel
<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Irene Makumbi (UWS)</b>
14.30	Presentation on ENTRO projects	Abdel-Karim Hussein
14.30	Presentation on ENTRO SDO	Salah Shazali
14.45	Feedback and clarification	Participants
15.00	Presentation on CBSI	Gordon Mumbo (CBSI)
15.15	GWP: National Partnership Programme	Simon Thuo (GWP)
15.30	Integrating Water and Livestock in the Nile Basin	Don Peden (ILRI)
15.45	Feedback and discussion	Facilitators
16.15	Tea/ coffee break	

16.30	Facilitated discussion: Experience-sharing	Facilitators /plenary
17.30	Summing up and agenda for Day 2	Chair
17.45	Close	
Evening	Dinner invitation	

#### Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>

March

*16.1.a.i.1.3 Session 3 Chair* *Amos Majule*

09.00	Aims and objectives	Chair
09.10	Presentation of preliminary proposal	ODI/IUCN
09.30	Feedback and discussion	Participants
10.00	How to strengthen/improve the proposal (3 groups)	Facilitators
10.45	Break tea/coffee	
11.00	Group work continues (3 group)	Facilitators
11.45	Feedback and facilitated plenary discussion	Facilitators
12.45	Summary	Chair/facilitators
13.00	Lunch	Ararat Hotel

**Session 4** **Chair** **Albertine Uwimana**

14.30	Next steps: Facilitated plenary discussion	Participants
15.30	Summary	Chair
15.45	Final comments from participants	Participants
16.00	Close	
Evening	Free time	

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> Field Trip to Bule Nile Gorge Depart 6am; return

March evening

Evening Jenet Restaurant (cultural show) Dinner invitation