



# INTERNATIONAL WATERS RESULTS NOTES

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04-03-2013

## Nile Transboundary Environmental Action Project (NTEAP), Tranche 2

GEF ID#: 2584, PIMS ID#: 3999

Project Status: Completed



### Key results:

1. The capacity of regional and national institutions to address transboundary environmental threats to the Nile ecosystem was increased through hundreds of trainings involving thousands of participants.
2. Environmental education and awareness was vastly increased through national forums, public education campaigns, and school and university programs.
3. Over 340 micro-grant and national eligible projects demonstrated stress reduction measures for reducing human impacts and improving water quality.

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## PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The Nile is the world's longest river, flowing 6,671 km from its source in Burundi to the Mediterranean Sea in Egypt. The river and its tributaries run through nine countries, and the Nile River Basin (NRB) has an area of more than 3,349,000 sq km. The Nile Trans-boundary Environmental Action Project (NTEAP) had an over-all goal of strengthening cooperation amongst riparian states to manage the delicate ecosystem of the NRB.

NTEAP was one of eight thematic projects within the Nile Basin Initiative's (NBI) Shared Vision Program. NBI was formed to develop NRB water resources in a sustainable and equitable way and consists of nine member countries: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

The objective of NTEAP was to develop a framework of actions to address high priority transboundary environmental issues in the NRB through: (a) provision of a forum to discuss development paths for the Nile; (b) improvement in the understanding of the relationship between water resources management and the environment; and (c) enhancement of basin-wide cooperation among NBI countries. A specific project focus developed after several years, which was: To protect critical NRB ecosystem and water resources from transboundary threats through a framework of actions and engagement of stakeholders according to the principles of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).

## RESULTS: PROCESS

**INDICATOR #1:** Regional and national institutions strengthened in addressing transboundary threats to Nile ecosystem resources [*Target: Policy recommendations on NRB environmental protection formulated and submitted for consideration in at least two countries; over 200 regional and national capacity building events; the environment function of NBI defined; environmental issues and priorities defined at the 2008 Nile Basin Development Forum.*]

At least 44 regional workshops and trainings (with over 1,200 participants) were delivered to government, NGOs, NGO networks and civil society professional staff. Likewise, at least 240 national workshops/trainings were attended by over 3,500 participants. Over 100 national and local stakeholder workshops/trainings were convened to discuss national and transboundary plans on Environmental Education and Awareness (EEA), Water Quality Monitoring (WQM) and Micro-grants (MG), and eight regional working groups on these topics were established and functioning. One regional and three national workshops were conducted to review soil erosion studies and develop pilot mitigation techniques using micro-grants as capital inputs. NTEAP undertook annual regional and national planning processes, and funded 37 national eligible projects totaling over USD 1.4 million.

Macro policy and environment studies with policy reform recommendations were completed in all NBI countries. An aggregated regional Macro Policy and Environment report was produced and final recommendations were discussed in a regional workshop. At NBDF 2008 a non binding declaration was signed by seven ministers and representatives declaring cooperation in the management of the NRB environment and also endorsing the drafted environment functions of the NBI.

**INDICATOR #2:** Enhanced environmental education and public awareness targeting NRB transboundary environmental issues. [*Target: Environmental education and public awareness improved through environmental campaigns, school award programs, and development of environmental training modules.*]

Environmental training modules were produced and disseminated for primary schools and universities. School award schemes at national and regional levels were implemented, and at least 38 students received awards from the Nile Council of Ministers for excellence in arts, photography and writing on Nile environmental threats. Ten schools from each of the nine NBI countries participated in a project based learning program, culminating in over 70 school projects demonstrating mitigation measures for soil erosion, water and land management and wetlands protection. 19 issues and over 1000 copies and

electronic versions per issue of the NTEAP quarterly news letter were disseminated in English, French, Swahili, Arabic and Amharic. All nine countries participated in celebration of the World Environment Day and Nile Day. A Strategy for Environmental Education was produced in Burundi and DRC. At least 77 best practices documents and brochures and booklets were under finalization. National forums were conducted in all NBI countries to ensure sustainability of environmental education and awareness networks.

**INDICATOR #3:** Enhanced conservation and management of Nile basin wetlands and their biodiversity in accordance with the principles of IWRM. [*Target: Development and approval of a basin-wide strategy on wetlands management; management plans for at least three selected wetlands developed and under implementation.*]

A draft regional strategy was approved by the regional working group, and baseline studies were completed in 7 countries. The Sio-Sitko draft management plan was completed, and discussions on and preparations for the Dinder-Aletash plan were in an advanced stage. A Nile Wetlands Group was established and linked to the Ramsar Secretariat.

**INDICATOR #4:** Increased capacity and awareness on water quality monitoring in the NRB countries. [*Target: Transboundary water quality monitoring network and data sharing protocol established and approved.*]

The project financed the regional modeling component of the Decision Support System (DSS), which supports the assessment of transboundary opportunities for cooperative action based on commonly shared information and analysis tools. The baseline situation of water quality monitoring has been determined and targeted training was carried out to catalyze action on harmonized monitoring of key water quality parameters. Water quality manuals were piloted in 5 countries, and water quality data sharing procedures were integrated in the overall NBI data sharing protocol.

## **RESULTS: STRESS REDUCTION**

**INDICATOR #1:** Pilot projects demonstrate stress reduction measures on improving water characteristics through mitigation of human impacts, and reduced soil erosion and water run-off. [*Target: Over 250 pilot projects to improve capacities in land and water management implemented; best practices documented and replicated.*]

Over 340 micro-grants and national eligible projects with a total commitment of USD 6.5 million were approved in all NBI countries. Areas of focus included: soil erosion mitigation; afforestation; tree planting; small scale irrigation; invasive water weed control; and water pollution control. 44 pilots were selected for review and possible documentation as best practices.

**INDICATOR #2:** Conservation and rehabilitation of key wetland areas along the NRB. [*Target: Demonstration of the significant contribution of wetlands ecosystems and biodiversity to sustainable development in the NRB.*]

Ecological and economic studies to explain the role of wetlands and biodiversity in supporting sustainable development in the Lake Cyohoha and Lake Tana sub-basins were completed. Over 30 community/NGO pilots on wetlands management using micro-grants and national eligible projects were approved and being implemented.

## KEY LESSONS LEARNED

- 1) The success of basin-wide programmes of a magnitude such as NTEAP requires a robust results-based management system as well as measures for ensuring partners' and stakeholder's participation at all levels.
- 2) Sustainability of project supported activities requires their integration into host institutional mandates and programmes.
- 3) Designing and implementing project sustainability plans and phasing out strategies should distinguish between project activities and institutional process, and provide for phase out plans and actions that take into account the uniqueness of an activity and/or process. For example, the closure of NTEAP offices could have been left as the responsibility/discretion of the hosting institutions.
- 4) Ensuring national ownership and leadership should be a prerequisite from project formulation, inception and implementation.

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