

This document was negotiated at length by the Nile Basin Council of Ministers and agreed as the basis for the Nile Basin Initiative.

Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin States
Policy Guidelines for the Nile River Basin Strategic Action Program

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1. Introduction

The Nile is one of the world's greatest riches and is of inestimable value for its peoples – a resource which needs to be held in trust for future generations. Sustainable development and management of the Nile Basin presents a great challenge and there remain many opportunities for growth and development for the future, bringing the promise of regional harmony and economic development. At the heart of this challenge is the imperative to eradicate poverty. Without action today, the riparian countries will face many problems including famine, extreme poverty, environmental degradation and rapid population growth. This is a clear challenge for the peoples of the Basin and calls for vision and leadership.

The purpose of this brief document is to set out policy guidelines for taking the strategic action which is necessary to realize the potential of the Nile for the good of all. The time has come to move from planning to action.

2. Objectives

The objectives are:

- To develop the water resources of the Nile Basin in a sustainable and equitable way to ensure prosperity, security and peace for all its peoples.
- To ensure efficient water management and the optimal use of the resources.
- To ensure cooperation and joint action between the riparian countries, seeking win-win gains.
- To target poverty eradication and promote economic integration.
- To ensure that the program results in a move from planning to action.

3. The Shared Vision

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

Cooperative action:

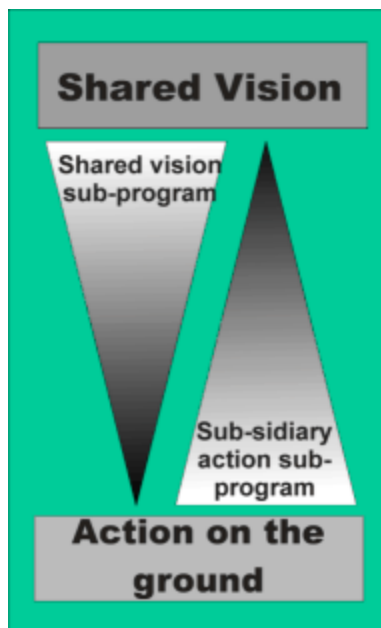
An important approach to cooperative action within a basin-wide framework is the principle of subsidiarity: to take decisions at the lowest appropriate level, to facilitate the development of real action on the ground.

4. The Strategic Action Program

The strategic action program comprises two complementary sub-programs. These promote the Shared Vision and realize the vision through action on the ground – see Figure 1.

While the Shared Vision is being developed and promoted at the basin-wide level, building commitment and clear goals, it needs to filter down to the country and local level. However, the Shared Vision cannot stand alone; it has to be nourished and fed by actions on the ground - actions which meet the needs of the people and build trust and confidence amongst the riparian countries. Action on the ground will take place at local, national and sub basin levels, and will integrate upwards within a basin-wide framework.

Figure 1: Strategic Action



Program for the Nile

1. *The "Shared Vision Program"* comprises a limited range of essential but effective activities to create a coordination mechanism and an "enabling environment" for the implementation of the shared vision through action on the ground.
2. *"Subsidiary Action Programs"* plan and implement action on the ground at the lowest appropriate level,

taking into account benefits and effects of planned activities on other countries.

5. Shared Vision Program

The main task of the shared-vision program will be the creation of an *enabling environment* for investments and action on the ground, within a basin-wide framework. This program will promote the shared vision through a limited, but effective, set of basin-wide activities and projects.

The "Shared Vision Program" illustrated in Figure 2 (and further explained in Annex 1), comprises 5 broad themes, as follows:

- Cooperative Framework (Project D3, ongoing) [B]
- Confidence building and stakeholder involvement [C]
- Socio-economic, environmental and sectoral analyses [D]
- Development and investment planning [E]
- Applied training [F]

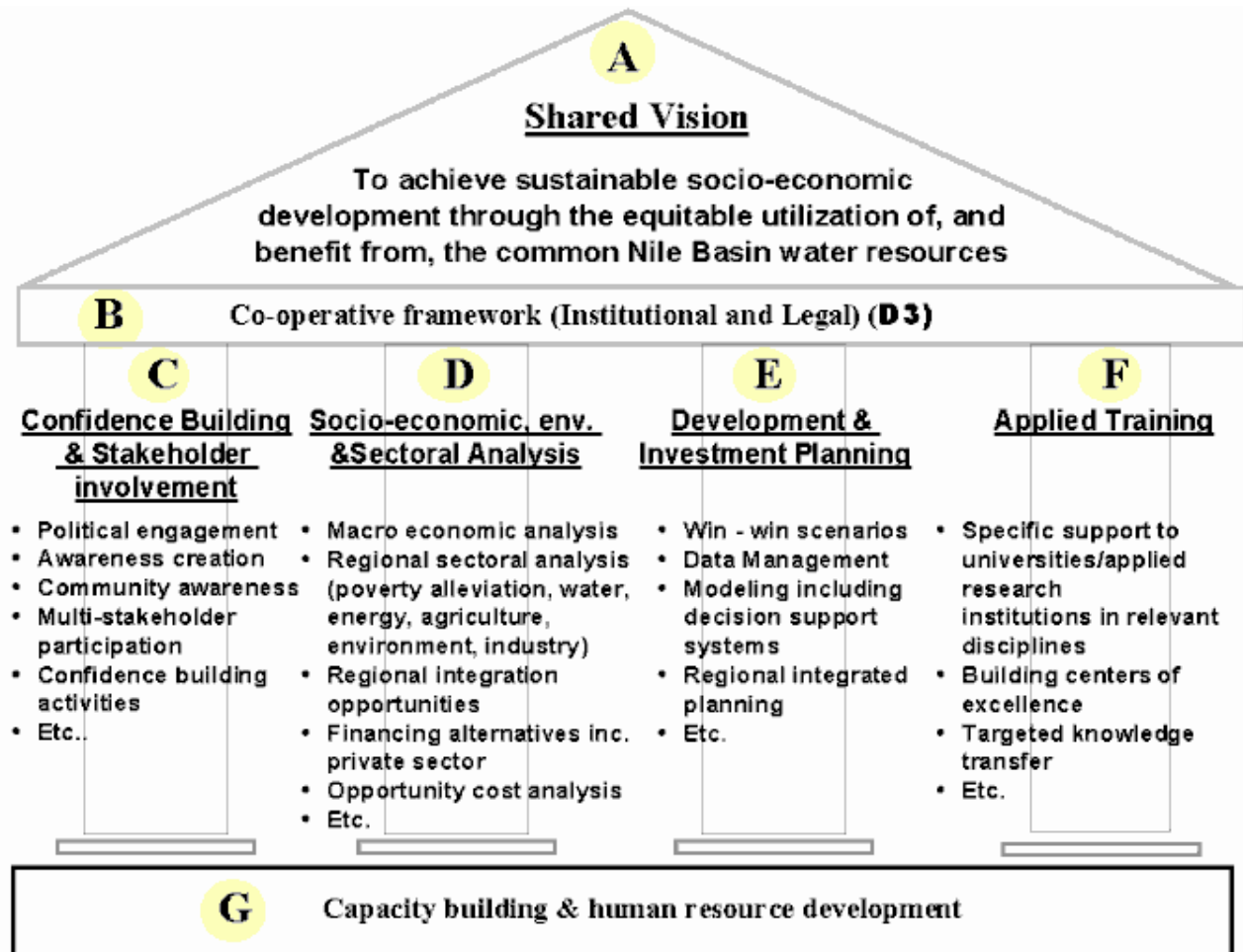
The Shared Vision (A) will be underpinned by a cooperative framework (B). The ongoing Cooperative Framework Project D3, supported by UNDP, is building such a regional framework. Supporting this 'roof,' are four major basin-wide tasks (C-F) which are the 'pillars' of a basin-wide shared vision program. Other activities will be added as they are needed and agreed upon. All activities within these tasks have a major capacity building component and contribute to human resources development within the basin - this provides the 'foundation' of the proposed program (G)

Figure 3 outlines the project cycle for the Shared Vision Program.

Figure 3: Shared Vision Program Project Cycle

Establishment of working groups by Nile-TAC
β
Preparation of consultant TORs
β
Detailed project preparation
β
Preparation of CG documentation
β
CG process: information to NILE-COM & mobilization of funding
β
Implementation

Figure 2: A Basin-wide Shared Vision Program



6. Subsidiary Action Programs

Within the basin-wide framework, subsidiary action programs will comprise actual development projects at sub-basin level, involving two or more countries. This will allow the move from planning to action. While local and national governments will address what needs to be done at the local and national levels, the challenge of regional cooperation is to address development opportunities with transboundary implications.

Guidelines for subsidiary action programs

Common understanding has been reached on the following guidelines for the implementation of subsidiary action programs, pending the establishment of the Cooperative Framework.

1. Action on the ground needs to be planned at the lowest appropriate level (the principle of subsidiarity). Given the hydrological conditions of the Nile Basin, action on the ground will mainly be planned and implemented at a sub-basin level.
2. The appropriate planning level needs to involve all those who will be affected. Countries involved will be a function of the location, type, and scale of activity, as well as potential upstream and downstream impacts.
3. The role of the overall (basin-wide) framework is to ensure appropriate consultation and involvement of those affected on the one hand, and subsidiarity on the other.
4. Subsidiary action programs will build on principles of equitable utilization, no significant harm and cooperation.
5. The range of development project options (see below) will vary depending on the nature of the needs and opportunities in the different geographical areas.
6. Investigations will seek solutions both that have benefits for all involved and distribute benefits, costs, and risks equitably as well as use resources efficiently and protect the environment.

7. Bundling several projects into a program provides the opportunity to counterbalance the positive and negative impacts of different projects, such that the cumulative sum of impacts within the program optimizes benefits for all parties involved.

Some of the types of projects which could be bundled into subsidiary action programs are as follows (more information is provided in Annex 2):

I. Generic Water Resources Management Project Possibilities

- **Water Supply & Sanitation**
- **Irrigation & Drainage Development**
- **Fisheries Development**
- **Hydropower Development & Pooling**
- **Watershed Management**
- **Sustainable Management of Wetlands & Biodiversity Conservation**
- **Sustainable Management of Lakes & linked Wetland Systems**
- **River Regulation**
- **Flood Management**
- **Desertification Control**
- **Water Hyacinth & Weeds Control**
- **Pollution Control & Water Quality Management**
- **Water Use Efficiency Improvements**

II. Other Related Joint Development Project Possibilities

Infrastructure:

- Regional energy networks, including power interconnection and gas pipelines
- Telecommunication development
- Regional transport, including: railway and road networks; river and marine navigation; aviation

Trade and Industry:

- Promotion of trade (including border trade)
- Industrial development
- Regional tourism development
- Promotion of private investment and joint ventures
- Marketing and storage of agricultural products
- Forest crop harvesting

Health, environment, other:

- Malaria and other endemic diseases control
- Protection of wildlife
- Environmental management
- Disaster forecasting and management

The program cycle for subsidiary action program development is outlined in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Subsidiary Action Program Cycle

Establishment of working groups
β
Facilitated prioritization process & formulation of priority subsidiary action programs (TOR)
β
Preliminary analysis (project fiches)
β
CG process, information to NILE-COM through Nile-TAC & mobilization of funding
β
Pre-feasibility
β
Feasibility/final design
β
Funding & implementation

7. Riparian Consultation Process

Maintaining riparian dialogue

The Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin (NILE-COM) is the main policy and guidance forum for Nile Basin cooperation. The NILE-COM has established a Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) as an inclusive, transitional institutional mechanism to coordinate joint activities, pending the successful completion of the Cooperative Framework Project D3. The Nile-TAC will establish working groups to undertake specific tasks (see below). High priority will continue to be placed on strengthening the process of consultation in order to build trust and confidence. Other fora, such as the Nile 2002 series of conferences (supported by CIDA) will continue to be valuable mechanisms for the exchange of views.

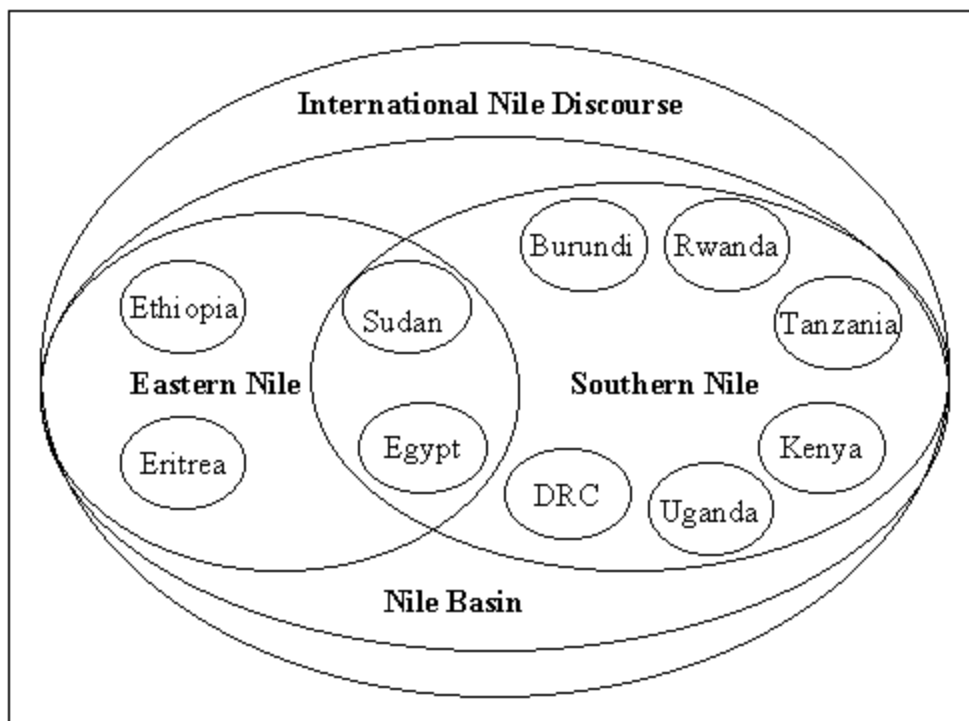
Shared Vision Program preparation

The Nile-TAC will be responsible to the NILE-COM for the preparation of the shared vision program, which will be coordinated and implemented at the basin-wide level.

Subsidiary Action Program identification

To help with identifying subsidiary action programs, Nile-TAC will promote the establishment of working groups of concerned countries. The Subsidiary Action Programs that will evolve will be within the Shared Vision and its framework developed at the basin-wide level. The sole responsibility for these programs will then rest with the involved riparians - with all affected countries being able to participate. Figure 5 illustrates how country activities will take place within possible sub-basin frameworks (with many smaller sub-basins within the two larger sub-basins illustrated), which themselves will be within a basin-wide framework. This basin-wide framework will itself be within an 'international discourse' to promote international support for sustainable Nile water development and management.

Figure 5: An Illustration of Possible Levels of Nile Cooperation



8. Consultative group (CG)

The NILE -COM has requested the World Bank and its partners to organize and host a consultative group - the International Consortium for Cooperation on the Nile (ICCON). The objective of the ICCON is to seek coordinated and transparent support for cooperative water resources development and management and other related projects in the Nile Basin. Within this forum, Nile riparian countries will seek funding pledges for projects from bilateral, multilateral and possibly private funding agencies.

9. Conclusions

On the basis of the Shared Vision for the Nile Basin and the arrangements outlined in this document, the Council of Ministers is committed to foster cooperation and *sustainable development of the River Nile for the benefit of all*.