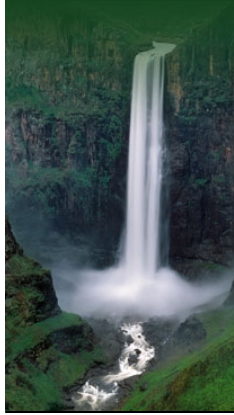




# Orange-Senqu River Awareness Kit

## Governance

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### Transboundary Water Management: Examples of River Basin Organisations: Nile Basin Initiative

The Nile River is the longest river in the world, traversing 6 700 km and draining an area of approximately 3 million km<sup>2</sup>, approximately 10% of the African continent). Ten countries share the geography and resources of the Nile River basin; five of these countries are considered among the world's poorest ten countries placing incredible pressure on the resources of the basin. The Nile River is formed from two main tributaries, the Blue Nile originating in the highlands of Ethiopia and the White Nile originating in the mountains of Rwanda and Burundi. The river flows through a variety of ecosystems and landscapes ranging from mountains to tropical forests, wetlands and deserts.

Although 15 bilateral water agreements have been signed between 1925 and 2003, there is currently no basin-wide agreement governing the Nile River. A number of cooperative efforts are described below.

From 1967 to 1981, the HYDROMET project (Hydro-meteorological Survey of the Catchments of Lakes Victoria, Kyoga and Albert) resulted in the collection of hydro-meteorological data over a 25-year period and established a trained group of regional experts. In 1992, the Ministers of Water Affairs of six of the Nile River Basin countries established the Technical Cooperation Committee for the Promotion of the Development and Environmental Protection of the Nile River Basin (TECCONILE). Member countries were brought together under TECCONILE to develop the 1996 Nile River Basin Action Plan, which helped to provide the foundation for the Nile Basin Initiative.

In February 1999, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) was launched through funding provided by the World Bank, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The Nile Basin Initiative is the first regional initiative comprising all ten riparian countries (Eritrea currently has observer status) united by an agreed basin-wide framework, and is guided by a shared vision "to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilisation of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources". The Nile Basin Initiative operational structure consists of the Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of the Nile Basin Countries (Nile-COM) as the highest decision-making body, the Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC), and the Nile Basin Secretariat (Nile-SEC).

The Nile-COM provides policy guidance and makes decisions on matters relating to the Nile Basin and the Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) provides technical advice and assistance to the Nile-COM. The secretariat (Nile-SEC) provides administrative, financial and logistical support and services to Nile-COM and Nile-TAC. Nile-SEC is responsible for coordinating the Shared Vision Programme (SVP) working groups and Subsidiary Action Programme (SAP).

The Nile River basin presents a practical example of some of the challenges inherent in transboundary water management. Achieving a basin-wide agreement governing the Nile River is complicated by the competing needs of upstream and downstream users. However, the Nile Basin riparians have been cooperating on a number of technical issues and projects, demonstrating how technical cooperation can lead to basin-wide collaboration.



**Nile Basin Initiative organisational structure.**  
Source: NBI 2009 (click to enlarge)



**The Nile River basin.**  
Source: Hatfield 2009 (click to enlarge)

More detailed information on the NBI can be found on the following web-sites: <http://www.nilebasin.org/> and <http://www.nilerak.hatfieldgroup.com/>

**Next Chapter: Southern African Development Community (SADC)**

## Interactive

**Basin Map**

Explore the sub-basins of the Orange-Senqu River

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**Principles of IWRM**

Explore the principles of Integrated Water Resource Management applied to the Orange-Senqu

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