

Dividends of Cooperation in the Nile River: (Geo?)Political Benefits

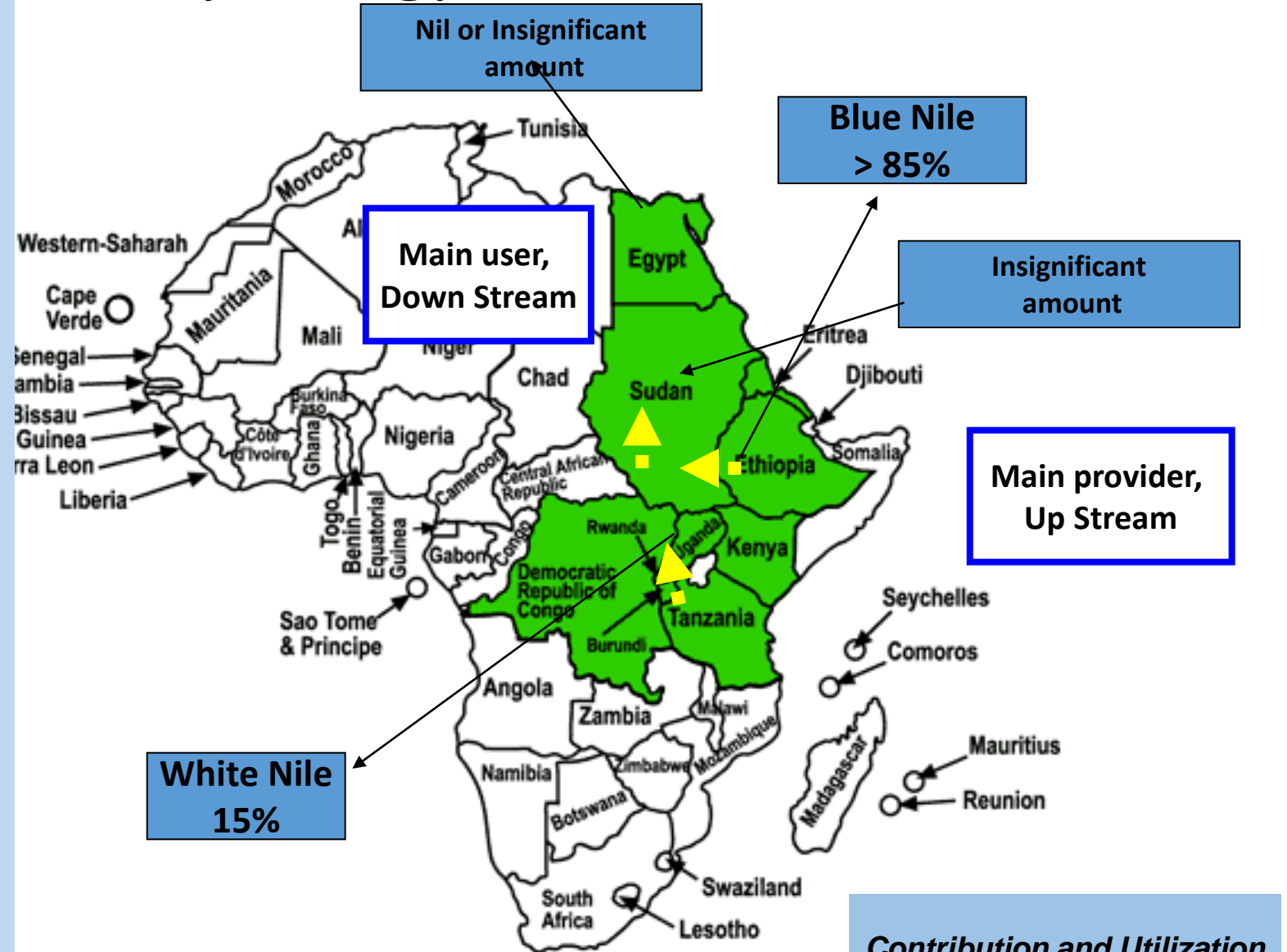
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Counting our Gains: workshop on Benefits of transboundary water cooperation
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Outline:

- Introduction
- Cooperation on the Nile
- NBI and its projects
- Political benefit of TWC
- Understanding, identifying and assessing of benefits
- Lesson Learnt
- Concluding Thoughts

The NILE – Hydrology and Politics



Contribution and Utilization Structure –Direct Opposite

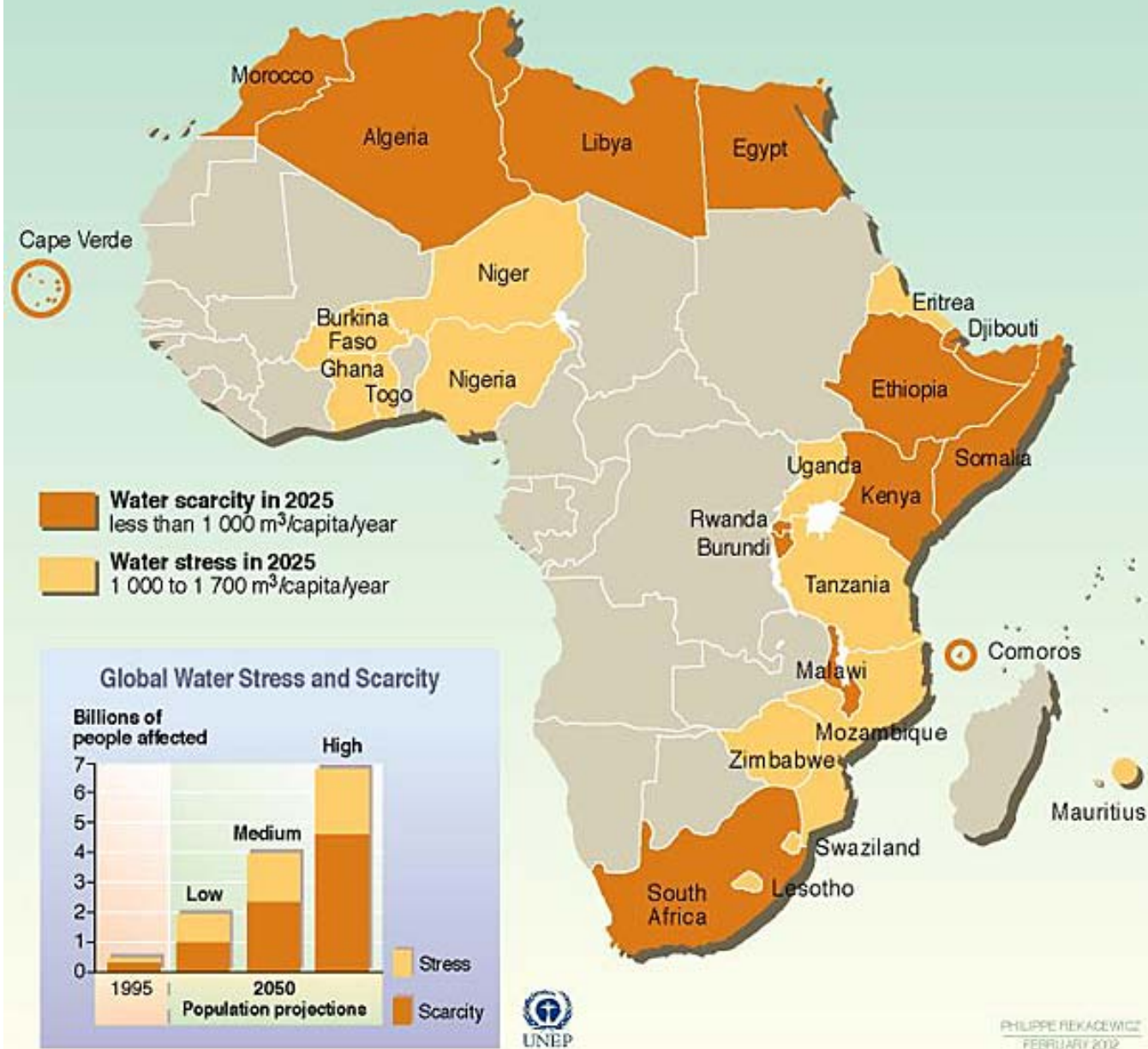
- **World's:** longest river; 2nd largest lake (Victoria); largest swamps (Sudd)
- **11 countries:** Burundi, D.R. Congo, Egypt, Eritrea¹, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan (joined recently)
- **Population:** Nile states 300m people, 600m in 2025

Region of extremes:

- poverty: 5 of world's 10 poorest
- conflict: 7 countries in 15 yrs
- v. high rainfall variability & climate change uncertainty
- **Very limited infrastructure**
 - 10% HEP potential developed
 - 15% pop. served with electricity
 - 40% of irrigable land irrigated

(Grey, 2011)

Freshwater Stress and Scarcity in Africa by 2025



Source: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Addis Ababa; Global Environment Outlook 2000 (GEO), UNEP, Earthscan, London, 1999; Population Action International.

Population pressure
(will be doubled by 2025)

Climate change
(will hit the hardest)



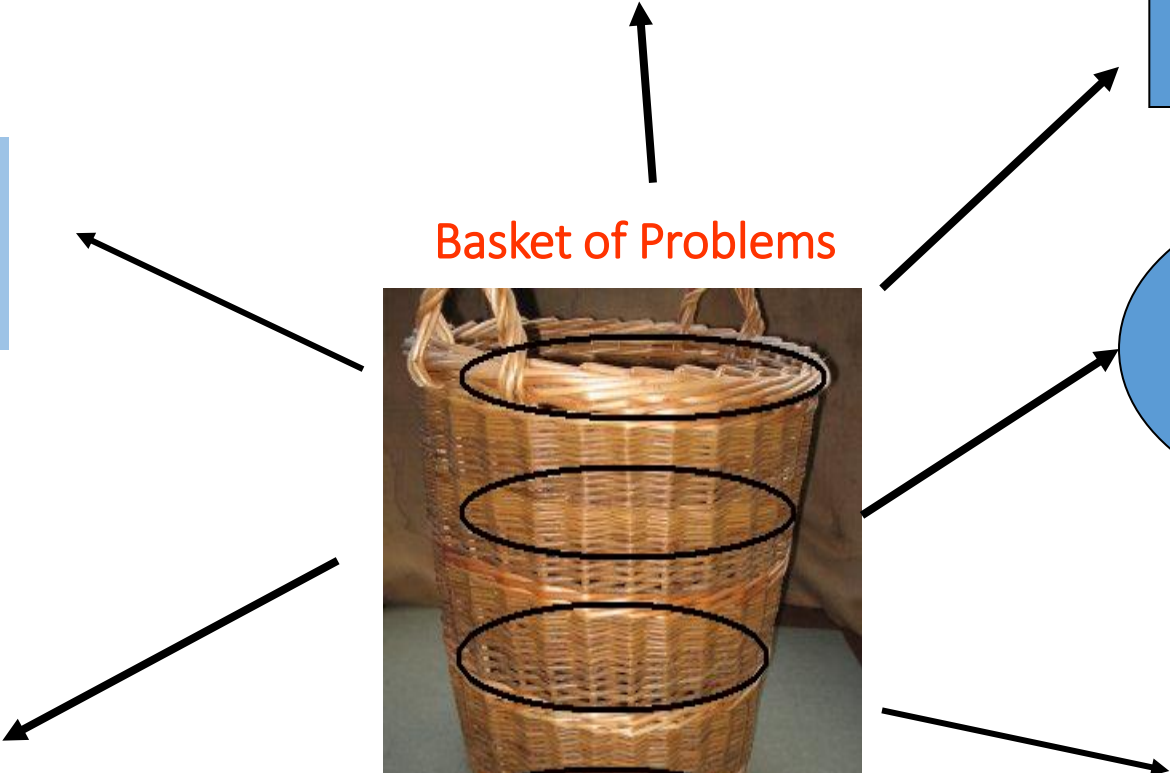
Basket of Problems

Environmental Crisis

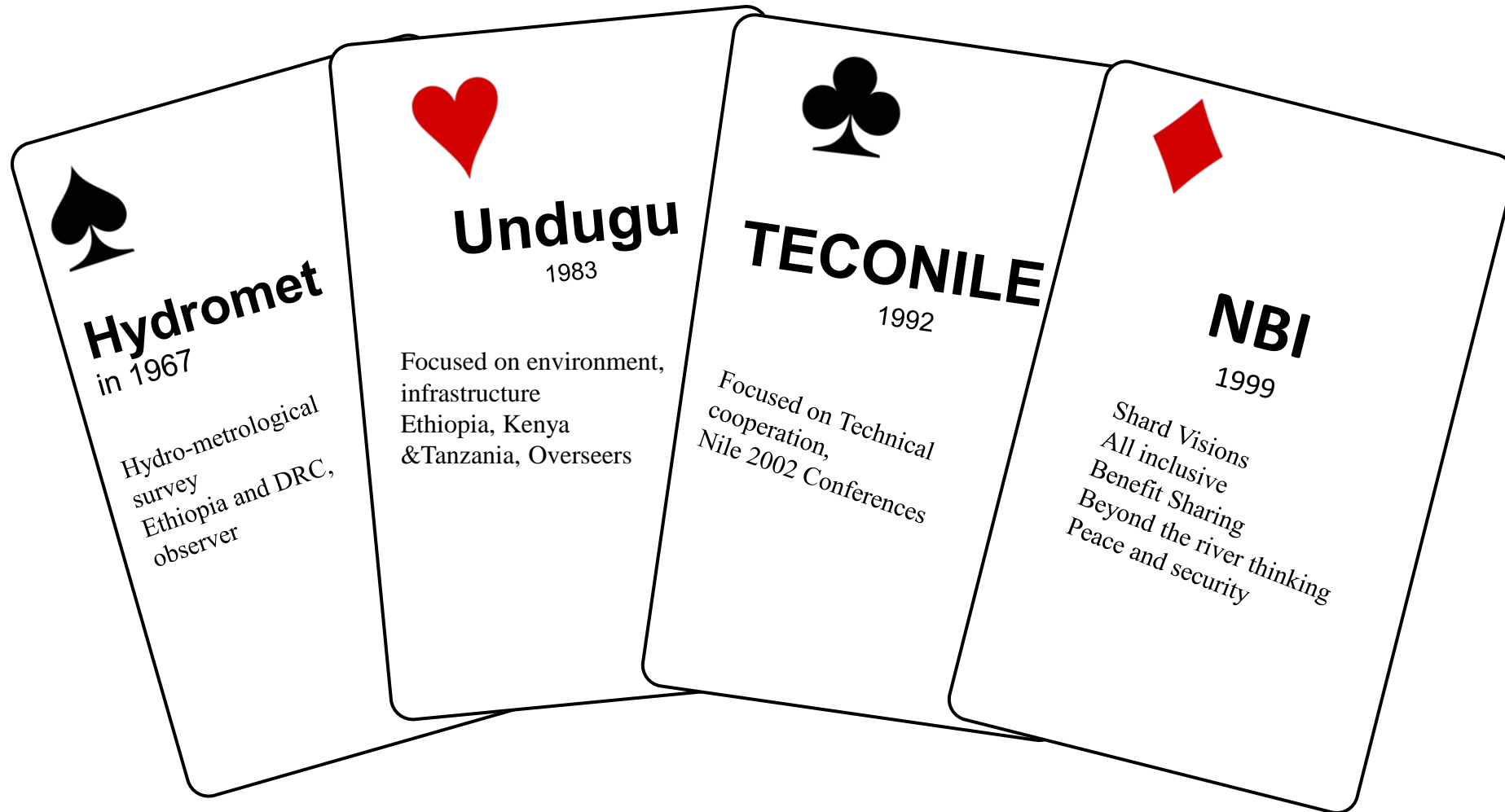
Desertification
Soil and Land degradation
Deforestation

**Conflicts
Civil Wars**
Southern-Darfur, Ethio-Eritrea, Somalia,

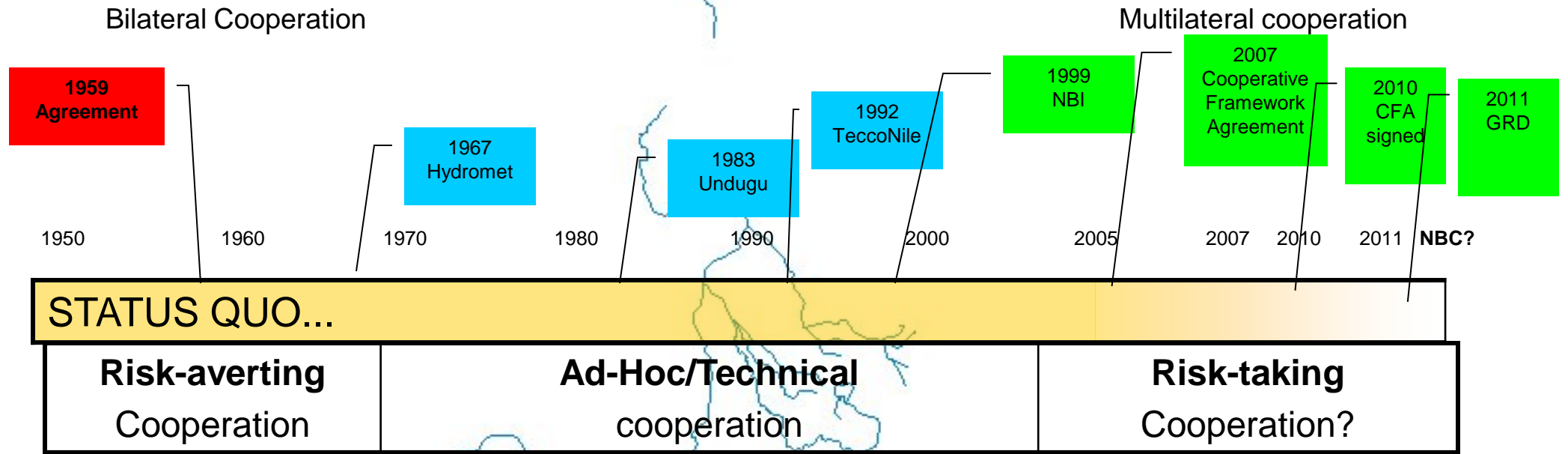
Water Stress & Scarcity



Nile Basin Cooperation



Nile Cooperation Timeline

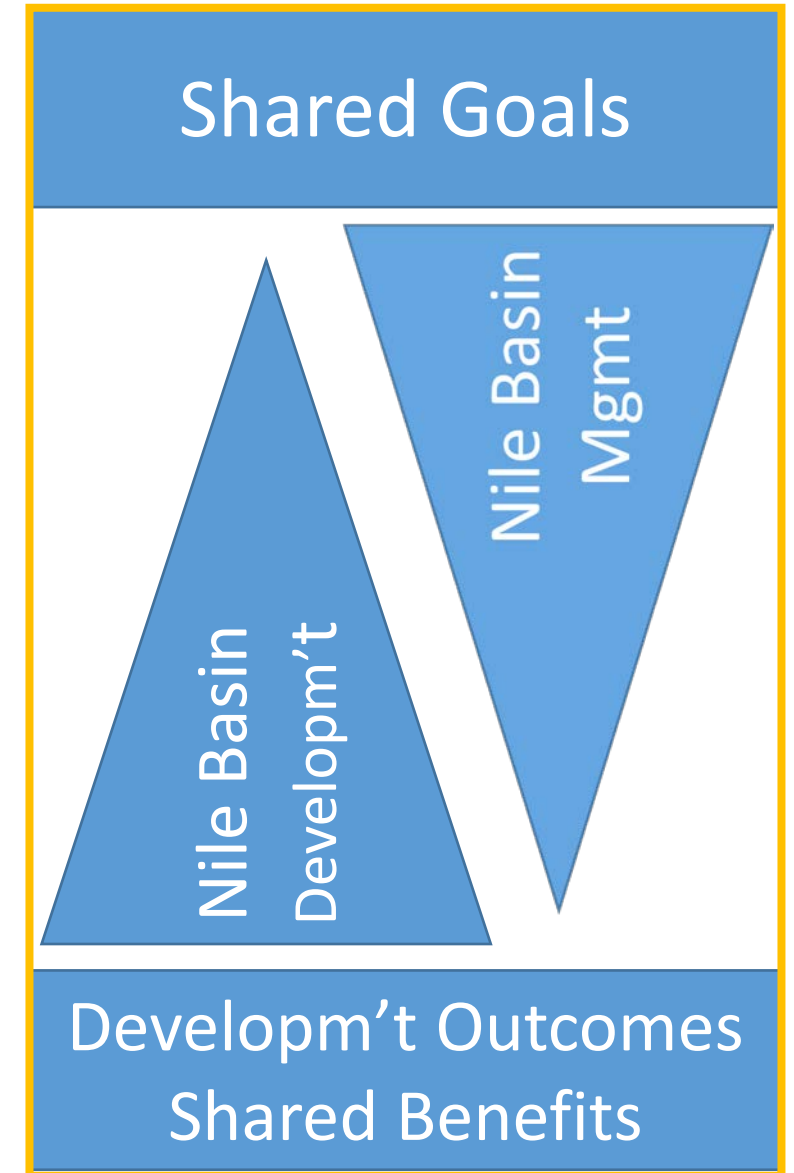
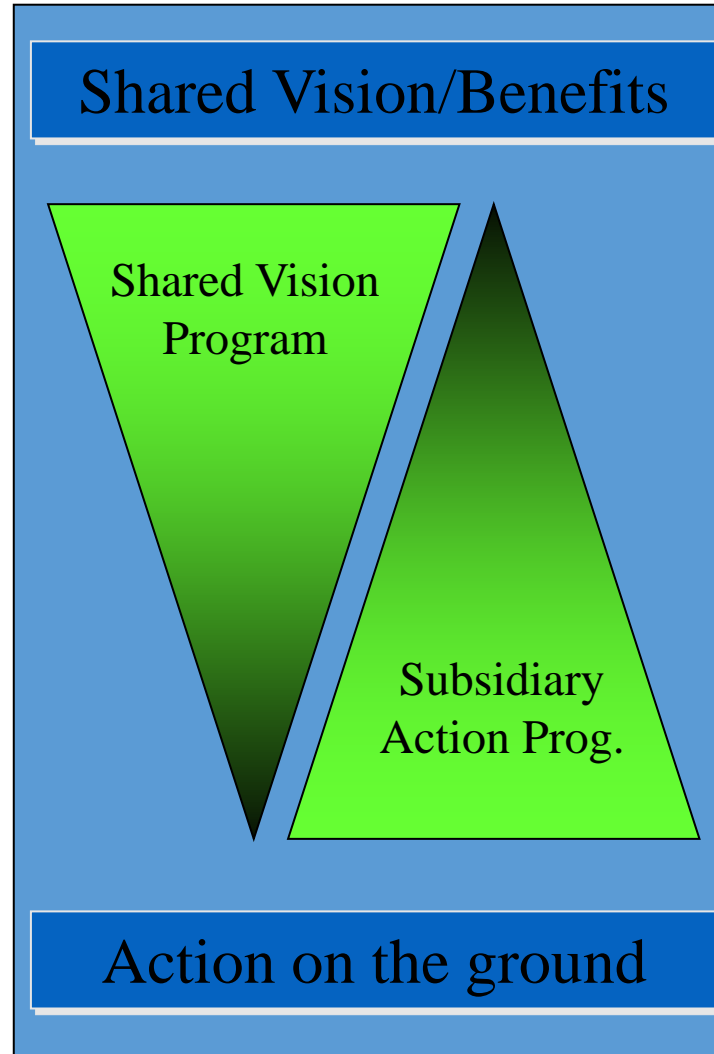


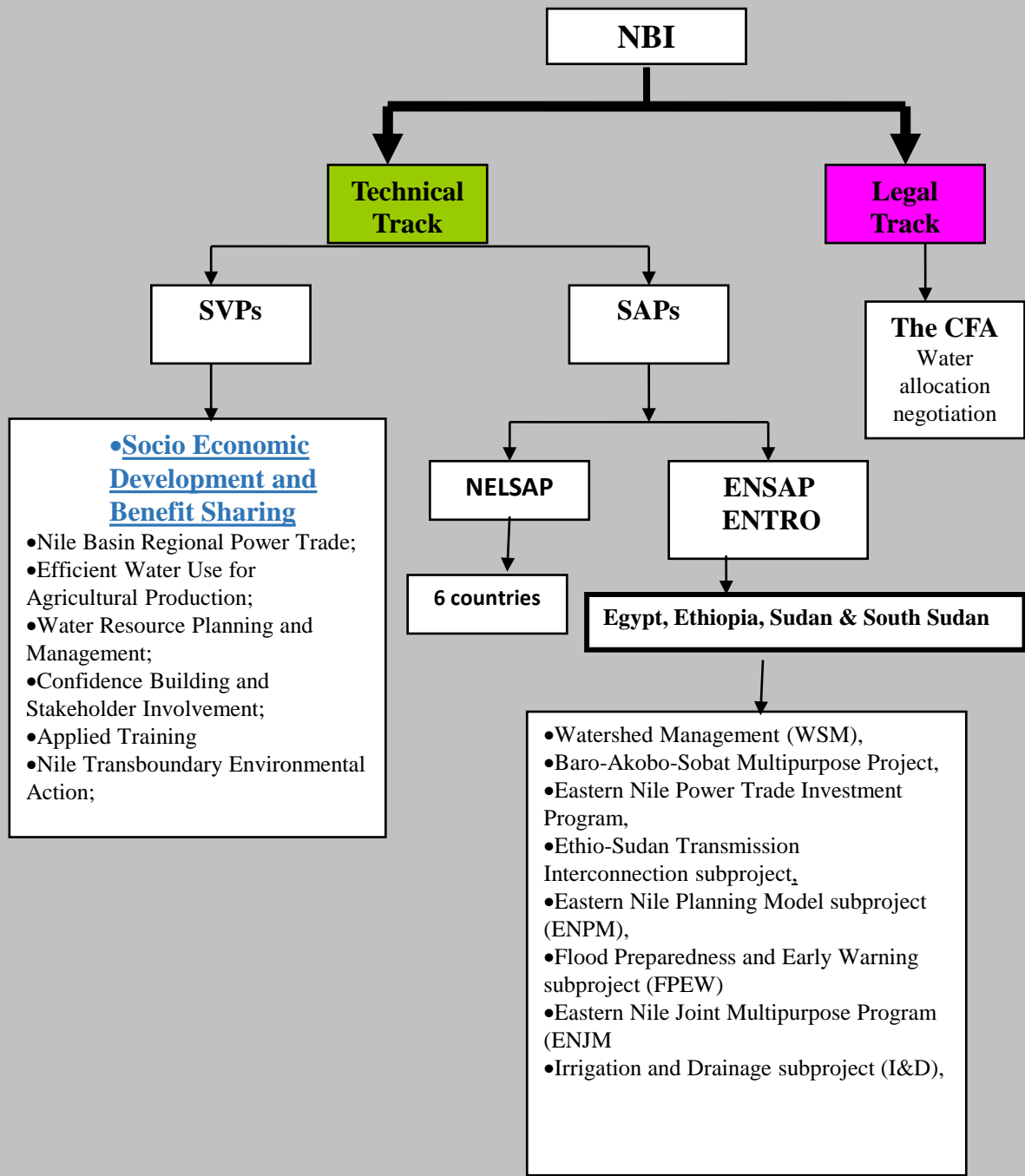
The Vision of NBI:

*to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and **benefit** from, the common Nile Basin Water Resources*

Action on the ground

- Local
- National level
- Sub-basin level
- Basin level

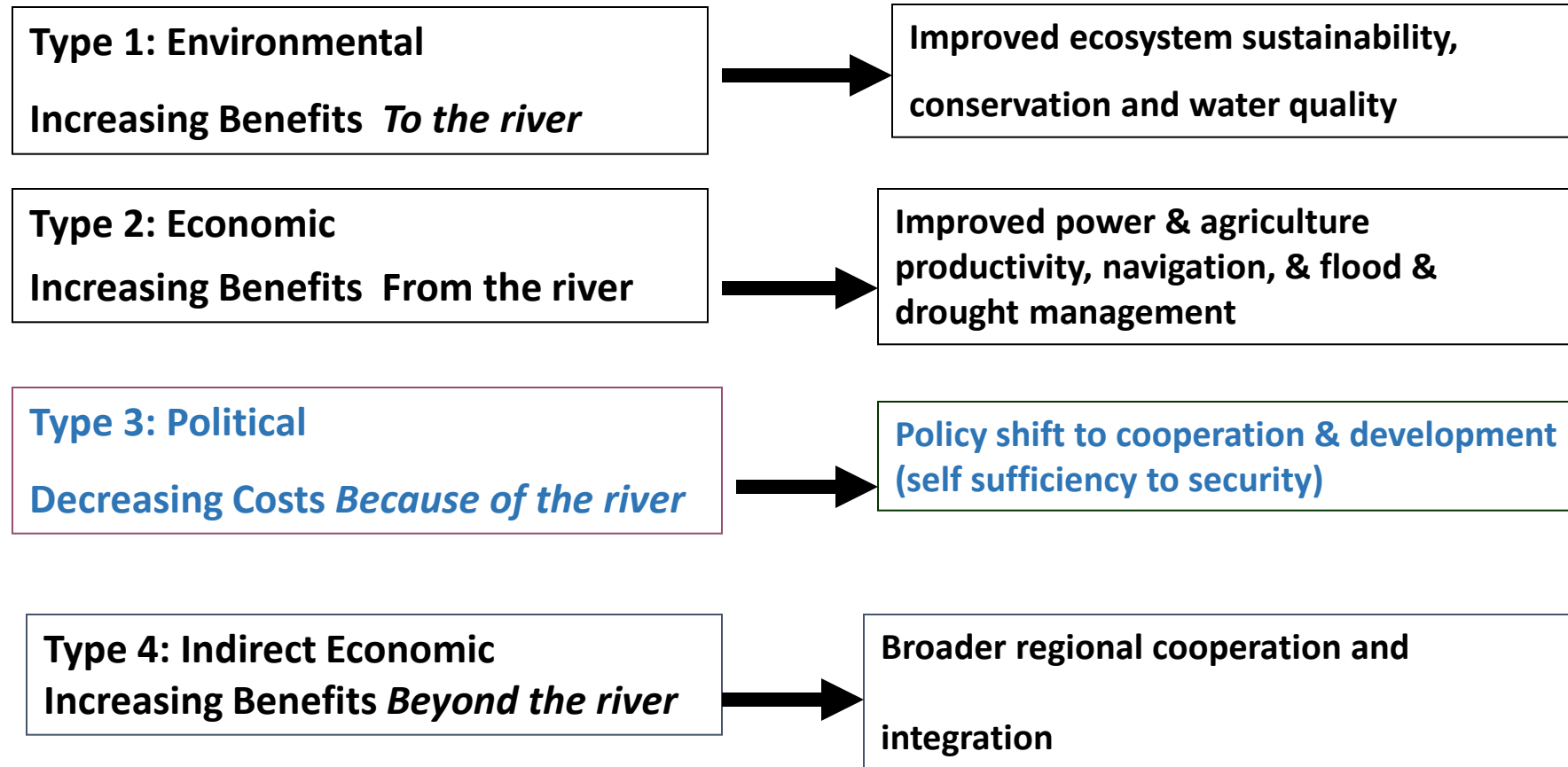




The Socio-Economic Development and Benefit Sharing (SDBS)

- The SDBS project was designed in 2001, but implementation was started in 2005 .
- The development objectives of the SDBS were to:
 - (a) **identify and assess** a range of cooperative development scenarios,
 - (b) develop **criteria, methods, and frameworks** for sharing the benefits and costs of cooperative development scenarios, and for managing attendant risks, and
 - (c) strengthen national and regional capacities for policy and macro-economic analysis, which can support further cooperation opportunities identified through the scenario development process.

Four Types of Benefits Identified for the Nile Basin.



- Why cooperate?
 - Nile does not respect boundaries!
 - Geography is “destiny”
 - To garner political benefits (at regional, national and local levels)
 - Transboundary problems need transboundary approaches;
 - can not be addressed effectively by any single country, alone, no matter how rich or strong a country may be
- On what to cooperate?
 - Political, legal, institutional, governance levels
 - Socio-economic level
 - Environment and biodiversity...etc
- What happens if we do not cooperate ?
 - Costs of non-cooperation is very high
 - Unilateralism is destructive,
 - Everybody loses (lose-lose outcomes)
 - Conflict escalation
- Why cooperation is difficult ?
 - The geo-hydro-political-history of the basin;
 - International interests in the region;
 - Divergent Hydro-Mentaality!!

Main Political Benefits

- Functional and credible regional institution-NBI
 - Contribution to the cooperative process;
 - Institution building
- Improved political will to manage the basin as a Unit;
 - One river system outlook
- Forging to regional dimensions;
 - Interplay of regional-national dimensions
- Relatively, improved, Confidence;
- Trying to harmonizing Water policies;
- Knowledge base strengthened, sharing of information;
 - Mechanism for sharing of information
 - Development of Planning Tools-Nile Basin DSS

Sustaining the Gains?

- Oscillating, unsustainable, Political benefits,
 - Political Stalemate.
- Going to square One?
 - 2010 Nile Basin Cooperative Framework, CFA or Entebbe Nile Agreement;
 - 2011-Grand Renaissance dam of Ethiopia
- Sustaining the regional institutions
 - What is the fate of NBI?
 - Will the Nile Basin Commission, NBC, be established?
- Financing problems, (donors hesitation now)
- Need to up-scaling and accelerating delivery of regional projects & maintaining inclusivity in processing regional projects
- Struggle between Joint versus unilateral actions
- Ensuring wider participation (officials, not the people dominate the Nile landscape)

Communicating Benefits

- The few ‘loose and unstructured’ benefit assessments made have been communicated to the riparian countries, development partners, and other stakeholders through the Nile Conferences, the annual celebration of the Nile Day, press release, and other fora.
- In 2011, the NBI compiled a country specific benefit report under the title: “Unlocking the Nile Basin’s Development Potential, Benefits of Cooperation.”
- But even those communicated benefits have been questioned and less accepted by riparian countries.

Media and Benefits

- The main challenge in the Nile Basin is sensational reporting of the Nile issue by the media, both print and electronic. In order to get the public and politician attention, media (print, electronic and social), tend to focus on the conflict of the Nile, than on the cooperation benefits.
- To address this reporting problem the NBI under its project-Confidence Building and Stakeholder Involvement (CBSI)-established the Nile Media Network of the riparian countries.
 - Before it brings any change, this media network almost ceased to exist as the CBSI project was finalized.

What we usual don't know about the Nile !

- From a simple 'Minute Writing' in 1999 to State of the River Nile Basin Report, 2013 and Nile Basin Decision Support System, Nile-DSS;
- From three Executive Directors, 2002/03 of ENTRO to one Merit Based ED.
- From narrow/national oriented projects to broader visionary projects- Move from ENSAP , in late1990s, which was proposed by the three countries, to "no-border' projects, proposed by ENTRO (the three countries expert together) using Cooperative Regional Assessments, CRA, Joint Multi-Purpose Project, JMP, in 2006
- From government-to-government, to people-to-people interaction (Parliamentarian, Journalist, experts, etc, exchange visits)

What we usual don't know about the Nile !

- Egypt-Ethiopia 50% trade increase year-on-year 2003-07 due to Nile dialogue)
- Sudanese are the second largest investors in Ethiopia in number, next to Chinese;
- Conflict escalation reduced during the past 13 years, since NBI
 - Number of Threats and Blatant words exchange are reduced
- Even if, unfortunately, you hear/read about 'Nile War' on media, it is a less probability in the 'Nile Room' and on 'Nile Landscape'
- emerging basin-perspective among WR professionals and policy makers
- Nile Day Celebration, Feb 22 (brining all Nile stakeholders together)=Celebration not discussing any burning issues-**Simply Celebrate as Nile Family!!!**

Lesson Learnt

- The nature of cooperation determine the type, quality and intensity of political benefits; (fake, pseudo, coerced, partial, all-inclusive...etc)
- Cooperation at any expense-Not to cooperate is not an option!
 - The International community and development partners commitment to resort/advice member countries to 'Nile Room'
- A move from the 'Water Sharing' to 'Benefit Sharing'
- The two Track Approaches of NBI: the Political and Technical tracks!
- Two Office/region Approach-
 - Even in the same Basin different gains are possible, NELSAP Vs ENTRO , (more advanced benefits, as they have trust and confidence among them Vs less benefit as there are less confidence among them, respectively);
- Addressing Hydro-Mentality- 'Psychological Hurdles' is as important, if not more important, as addressing any other issues in the Nile Basin;
- Media and Benefit: The role media plays in compromising the political (and other) benefit. (negative/sensetional reporting downplay the Nile Gain)

Concluding thoughts:

*Nile Countries do cooperate and engage in Conflict-
But they do it as 'Nile Family'!*

- Generally, disagreements and conflicts among cooperating partners are NORMAL– even among couples who establish families;
- Even if Nile member countries engage in spat/conflict, they do it in the 'Nile Room'-this is the biggest political achievement and benefit the Nile Basin enjoys now.

Thanks for your attention!

