

# Egypt's experience in reporting for SDG Indicator 6.5.2

Eng. Marwa Khattab

Ministry of Water resources and Irrigation

Egypt

# Background

- In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 6 which deals with water and aims to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all .

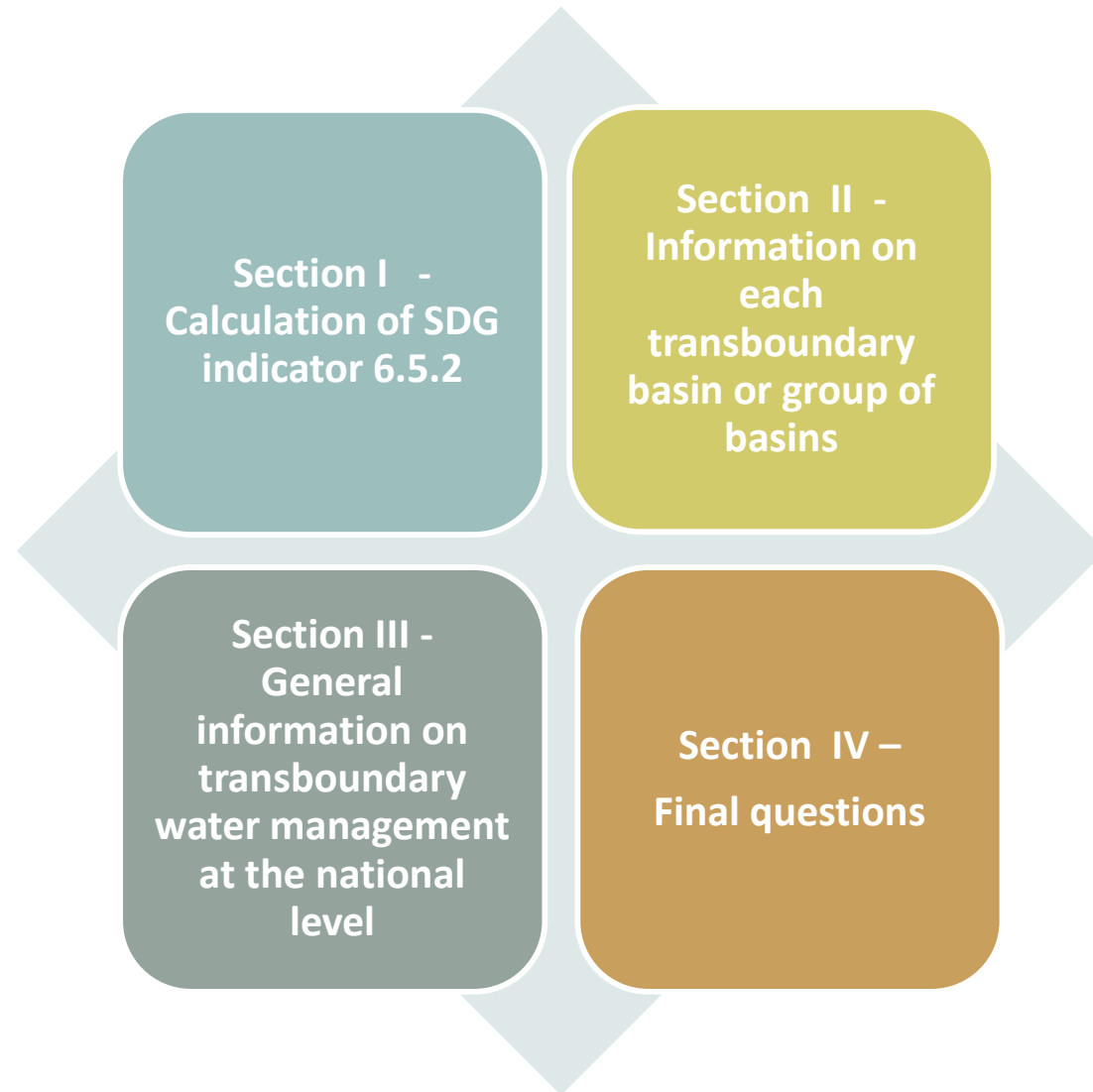
# **Goal 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**

**6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate**

**6.5.1 Degree of integrated water resources management implementation**

**6.5.2 Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation**

# The template was composed of four sections



# Reporting process in Egypt

- A working group from different sectors (Nile Water Sector, Planning sector, Ground water institute) was formed according to a ministerial Decree in order to complete the national report on the SDG (6.5.2).
- The working group held several meetings to discuss the methodology of work and to distribute the tasks between the concerned sectors, according to their respective scope of work.
- In August 2018, the questionnaire was partially filled and submitted for the Ministry of Foreign affairs for review and contribution. The Egyptian permanent mission in Geneva submitted the questionnaire.

- In September 2018, an e-mail was received from the UNECE secretariat regarding a number of inquiries about the report received from Egypt, and it was addressed to the parties who filled out the questionnaire according to their scope of work to respond to these inquiries.
- A modified version of the questionnaire have been prepared by different sectors of the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation and submitted for review.

Egypt participated in the **technical meeting on the** •  
**template of reporting on SDG indicator 6.5.2 and under**  
**the water convention** that has been held in Budapest,  
Hungary during the period (16-17) January 2018. The  
objective of the meeting was to review the first  
notification form technically, without addressing any data  
sent by States, to improve and modify the model.

# Egypt interventions in the meeting focused on the following:

- For the first part concerning the use of the percentage of the basin area within the state to the entire area of the basin, the percentages of areas do not represent any type of dependence on the shared waters or reflect cooperation between States , therefore he requested to modify this index and use another indicator which would be variable with time and has a return in finding progress or not in Cooperation between the riparian countries for each basin, or to use another indicator which shows the extent of the dependence of the state on the shared water as a proportion of renewable water, whether surface or groundwater.
- .



- UNECE reported that this indicator cannot currently be modified, and that there is a possibility to address it in the second notification of 2020.
- In the section concerning environmental impact studies, Egypt representative stated that any country located upstream any shared water resources should conduct detailed, environmental impact studies of their projects before implementation

# Calculation of SDG 6.5.2

BOX 2

## Calculation of the SDG indicator 6.5.2 value

$$\frac{A + C}{B + D} \times 100 = \text{___}\%$$

- [A] Total surface area of transboundary basins/sub-basins of rivers and lakes covered by operational arrangements within the territory of the country in km<sup>2</sup>
- [B] Total surface area of transboundary basins of rivers and lakes within the territory of the country in km<sup>2</sup>
- [C] Total surface area of transboundary aquifers covered by operational arrangements within the territory of a country in km<sup>2</sup>
- [D] Total surface area of transboundary aquifers within the territory of a country in km<sup>2</sup>

# Calculation of Surface Water:

**Surface water :** •

Percentage of surface area of transboundary basins of rivers and lakes covered by an operational arrangement: •

**A:**Total surface area of transboundary basins/sub-basins of rivers and lakes covered by operational arrangements within the territory of the country •

**B:** Total surface area of transboundary basins of rivers and lakes within the territory of the country (in km<sup>2</sup>) •

$A/B \times 100 = 100$  •

# Second Reporting 2020

Agreement or arrangement is under development

The parties (Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia) are engaged in discussions regarding an Agreement on Filling and Operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam under the auspices of the African Union

No agreement or arrangement

If there is no agreement or arrangement or it is not in force, please explain briefly why not and provide information on any plans to address the situation:

- In 1999 nine Nile basin countries established the NBI aiming to achieve the Shared Vision: "sustainable social and economic development through reasonable and equitable utilization for the water resources in the Nile Basin". Egypt played a leading role in the establishment of the NBI and requested the World Bank to chair the donors to fund the initiative and aiming to develop the transboundary water resources in the Basin.
- The concerned States agreed to work on several activities including developing institutional framework acceptable to all riparian states, as well as technical activities study and implement a number of investment and development projects in the sub-basins.
- The Drafting Committee established to develop a binding legal framework agreed on a rule of decision-making by consensus. However, consensus could not be reached due to differences between upstream and downstream States. In May 2010 six out of nine States broke the consensus rule and unilaterally signed an incomplete draft "Framework Agreement (CFA)". Accordingly, Egypt froze its participation in the NBI to preserve its legal position.
- The outstanding provisions of the "CFA" are:-
  1. Upstream and downstream States were unable to reach agreement on article "Water Security". The downstream States were concerned that existing water uses were not covered under article 14(b).
  2. Upstream and downstream States were unable to reach agreement on article notification (Planned Measures).
  3. The principle of Consensus (the agreed upon decision-making rule within the drafting committee) was not applied. The purpose of decision-making by consensus is to make sure that the views of all States are equally considered, and that these views are not overlooked simply because they represent a minority view. This is essential and related to the management of transboundary water resources.
  4. The signed text differs from the draft version of the agreement discussed during negotiations as it utilises the term "River System" throughout the text, whereas during negotiations the riparian States had agreed to use the term "Nile Basin".
- As it currently stands, the draft "CFA" is a one-sided text that does not achieve a balance between the interests of all Nile basin States, and barely includes any guarantees of interests of downstream States. All potential guarantees, such as the principle of "prior notification" and the "basin" approach are either completely dismissed or postponed to be resolved at some future date by the Nile Basin Commission.
- It is worth noting that Egypt strongly believes in regional cooperation and looks forward to the completion of the Agreement on Filling and Operation of the GERD.

bilateral or multilateral?  
Yes  No

If yes, list the bilateral and multilateral agreements or arrangements (listing for each of the countries concerned): [fill in]

Agreement	Signatories	Signature Date
<i>This list is not exhaustive.</i>		
<i>Treaty of Commerce between the Governments of Great Britain and Italy, for the Demarcation of their Respective Spheres of Influence in Eastern Africa, Protocol No. 1</i>	Great Britain, Italy	15/04/1891
<i>Treaties between Great Britain and Ethiopia, relative to the frontiers between Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Ethiopia, and Erythraea</i>	Great Britain, Ethiopia	15/05/1902
<i>1963 Tripartite Agreement respecting Abyssinia</i>		3/12/1906
<i>Treaty of Commerce between Great Britain and HM King Menelik II</i>		

The Declaration of Principles provided for the parties to carry out joint studies on the GERD. However, this has not been implemented.

After concluding the DoP, the concerned States launched two major studies; the water resources / hydropower system simulation model and transboundary environmental and socio-economic impact assessment TESIA, but the studies process was obstructed by the upper riparian. Under article 5 of the DoP these joint studies were intended to form the foundation of the Agreement on Filling and Operation.

As explained above, Egypt from its side approved the Consultant's inception report, as it was in compliance with the Contract Agreement. However, Ethiopia objected to the report based on considerations that were in breach of the Contract Agreement and the recommendations of the International Panel of Experts. Egypt exerted all efforts to resolve this impasse and to proceed with the joint studies, including through a number of parallel tracks such as the Six-party and Nine-party mechanisms. All these attempts were obstructed by the upper riparian, which proceeded to unilaterally fill the GERD's reservoir before the completion of the joint studies and the conclusion of the Agreement on Filling and Operation, in material breach of the DoP.

9. Have the riparian States agreed to use joint water quality standards?

Yes  No

If yes, what standards have been applied, e.g. international or regional standards (please specify which), or have national standards of the riparian States been applied? [fill in]

10. What are the measures implemented to prevent or limit the transboundary impact of accidental pollution?

# Challenges:

- The percentages of areas do not represent any type of dependence on the shared water or indicate cooperation between States. For example ,:
  - Egypt supports the Nile Riparians in the field of water management, water conservation and water supply through bilateral technical cooperation projects such as: Aquatic weeds control, Rainwater harvesting dams, Groundwater wells, Landing sites, Hydrological stations, Institutional Strengthening, Capacity building and training, Academic scholarships, Exchange visits and Applied research, offering a total amount that exceeds 100 million USD but all these bilateral cooperation projects could not be reflected in the current questionnaire.



# Challenges (Cont.):

- There is a difficulty to monitor cooperation in transboundary aquifers since it is hard to delineate transboundary aquifers their abstractions in order to realize commitments to coordinated or joint management.
- Lack of sufficient studies in the field of Ground Water.
- There is a need to strengthen reporting capacity by organizing regional and national workshops that aim to provide guidance to the reporting teams.

# Egypt's Remarks

## Regarding the Second Reporting Exercise on Global

### SDG indicator 6.5.2

Permanent Mission of Egypt  
to the United Nations Office, the WTO  
and other International Organizations  
Geneva



البعثة الدائمة لجمهورية مصر العربية  
لدى مكتب الأمم المتحدة ومنظمة التجارة  
العالمية والمنظمات الدولية الأخرى  
جنيف

CHAN. 2020. 010

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations Office, the World Trade Organisation and other International Organisations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (SDG 6.5.2 team), and has the honour to enclose herewith:

- 1- The national report of the Arab Republic of Egypt on SDG indicator 6.5.2 for the 2020 reporting exercise.
- 2- Egypt's remarks on the methodology of the report, which should be read in conjunction with the report and as an integral part thereof.

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations Office, the World Trade Organisation and other International Organisations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (SDG 6.5.2 team) the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021



Secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (SDG 6.5.2 team)

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE, THE WTO & OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS  
261 Route de Lausanne, 1292 Chambésy  
Fax: +41-22-738.4415 TEL: +41-22-731.6530  
Mission.egypt@blnwin.ch

#### Egypt's Remarks

##### Regarding the Second Reporting Exercise on Global SDG indicator 6.5.2

With reference to the 2020 reporting cycle of SDG indicator 6.5.2 and Egyptian national report submitted on 29 January 2021, Egypt would like to make the following remarks which should be read in conjunction with its submission as an integral part thereof:

- 1- As an extremely water scarce country that is highly dependent on one source of water (the River Nile), originating outside its territory, Egypt attaches great importance to transboundary water cooperation that is based on principles and rules of international law. Egypt was therefore keen to submit its national report during the 2020 reporting cycle on SDG 6.5.2 on transboundary water cooperation, an exercise which we hope will contribute to achieving SDG 6 on ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- 2- While Egypt has endeavoured to complete the report as accurately as possible, a number of methodological flaws have complicated the reporting exercise. These include the following:
  - a. A number of questions were vague and unclear. For example, in completing Table 1, it was not clear whether the table should include only agreements and arrangements that involve *all* riparian States within a transboundary basin, or agreements and arrangements covering the part of the transboundary basin falling within the national territory. This confusion should be clarified in future reporting exercises to guarantee more accurate results.
  - b. A large number of questions in the report admit only a "yes or no" answer. This is unfortunate as some answers do not fit neatly into either of the two categories. Relatedly, many questions provide no opportunity for further explanation. As a result, the report presents an incomplete picture of the status of relevant arrangements and agreements and does not adequately capture the complexity of the matter.
  - c. The criteria for an agreement or arrangement to be considered "operational" is inadequate for the following reasons:

- ii. They also fail to recognise that some arrangements and agreements address very specific projects and therefore communications, meetings and information exchange are only necessary on a needs basis. In some cases, such exchanges may be intermittent or unevenly spread out (such as conducting a large number of meetings and exchanges during the beginning of the project, and then fewer meetings and exchanges at later stages). Under the definition provided, such agreements and arrangements are not considered "operational", which is inaccurate.
- iii. There is no definition of "data and information exchange" or clarification of its scope. It is therefore assumed that this term is not limited to hydrological data and information, but rather includes any type of information exchanged between the parties.

- 3- Egypt looks forward to continuing its engagement with a view to refining the reporting exercise in the future.



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE, THE WTO & OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS  
261 Route de Lausanne, 1292 Chambésy  
Fax: +41-22-738.4415 TEL: +41-22-731.6530  
Mission.egypt@blnwin.ch

# Lessons learned:

- The importance of monitoring transboundary water cooperation
- The importance of enhancing future reporting through, e.g, harmonization and improved response rate
- Sharing knowledge and experience to reach common ground regarding SDG6.5.2 indicator methodology and template



# Recommendations:

- During the preparation of the Third reporting cycle, there is a need to organize regional workshops & meetings for countries sharing transboundary basins (specially in Africa) in order to reach common ground and agree on a more reliable indicator that measures transboundary cooperation in a more realistic way.