

## News from the Nile Basin Development Challenge

Water scarcity and land degradation strongly affect the livelihoods of millions of households in the Nile basin. Agriculture is predominantly subsistence, low-yielding and rain-fed. To meet the needs of the growing populations and restore the landscapes, we need to reverse the land degradation and improve productivity.

The Nile Basin Development Challenge (Nile BDC) is funded by the CGIAR Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF) to improve the resilience of rural livelihoods in the Ethiopian highlands through a landscape (watershed) approach to rainwater management.

This news sheet provides information on some key events in the life of the project.

### National platform on land and water management

In April 2012, the NBDC and some key national players initiated a National Platform on Land and Water Management as a mechanism to mobilize collaboration among actors and across sectors for improved land and water management in Ethiopia.

On 19 December 2011, the second national Platform meeting established four thematic working groups to focus on specific issues: Institutional innovation, technological innovation, policy support, resilient ecosystems and climate change. Participants developed action plans for each of these groups and identified champions to lead them. The third national platform meeting in July 2012 joined with the Africa RISING program to discuss 'sustainable tree-crop-livestock intensification as a pillar for the Ethiopian climate resilient green economy initiative.

Download:

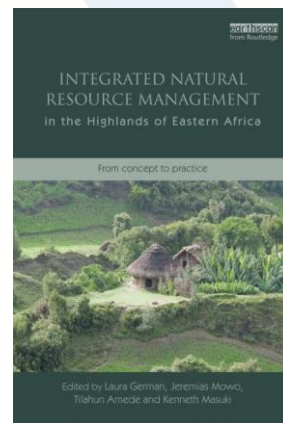
<http://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/21089> and  
<http://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/27656>

The third national platform meeting, organized on 23–24 July 2012 with the project 'Sustainable tree-crop-livestock intensification as a pillar for the Ethiopian climate resilient green economy initiative' (an early win project of the Africa RISING programme on sustainable intensification), gave opportunities to inform a wider audience about the national platform, introduce the four thematic working groups and their agenda for the coming months and gather feedback on their rationale and activities, reflect on the sustainability of the platform.

The question of the possible duplication or overlap with GIZ's Sustainable Land Management project and platform was raised and remains an issue to clarify in the final year of the NBDC project.

Read the second and third national platform meeting reports at: <http://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/21089> and <http://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/27656>

### Integrated natural resource management in the Highlands of Eastern Africa



In January 2012, Tilahun Amede co-edited a new book 'Integrated Natural Resource Management in the Highlands of Eastern Africa: From Concept to Practice.' Published by IDRC, it summarizes the experiences and reflections of farmers, research and development workers, policy and decision-makers who have interacted within an innovation system with the common goal of

implementing an integrated approach to natural resource management (NRM) in the humid highlands.

Download:

<http://idl-bnc.idrc.ca/dspace/handle/10625/47831>

### Participatory video to express community voices on livestock, water and soil management

In 2011, CPWF awarded the NBDC an innovation fund grant to investigate and document the effectiveness of participatory video (PV) as a tool to bring local issues to the attention of planners and implementers of rainwater management interventions in Ethiopia. PV offers a way of feeding views from farmers to researchers and decision makers, after which the intended audience can formulate a response thereby establishing a two-way communication channel. But this process alone is not enough. Opportunities and spaces need to be created whereby farmers can identify and determine solutions to their own problems as well as seek external assistance and access outsider knowledge. It has been shown that research and development approaches which actively involve farmers have a much greater chance of success.



### Water management modeling symposium paves the way for longer term collaboration

On 12 November 2012, NBDC convened a 'symposium on modeling in the Blue Nile/Abay Basin.' Building on recent results, representatives from Nile Basin Authorities, the Ministry of Water and Energy and the Nile Basin Initiative Decision Support System Office mapped existing modeling work and identified priorities for water resource and agricultural water management modeling in the Blue Nile Basin. Participants discussed scaling issues (integrating small scale practices and large scale impacts in planning and management), data needs as well as uptake and acceptance of model outputs

Read about PV:

<http://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/10684>

Watch the video 'a rope to tie a lion':

<http://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/24442>

### Similarity analysis for the Ethiopian highlands

To promote rainwater management more successfully, a paradigm change is needed towards promotion of location-specific interventions and farmers' willingness to adopt a practice. 'Similarity analysis' presents and matches geospatial and other data so successful interventions in a location can be mapped to other locations with similar characteristics. Mapping similarities and differences can help identify promising locations for technologies and other interventions to be spilled over for wider impact. A report 'Similarity analysis for the Blue Nile Basin in the Ethiopian highlands' presents spatial data for the Blue Nile Basin in the Ethiopian highlands and develops a methodology that allows identifying locations within a landscape that have similar biophysical, infrastructure, socio-economics, and governance characteristics relevant to rainwater management. Download:

<http://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/21069>

### Stay informed ...

Everything we produce is openly accessible on the Internet.

Visit our website for news and updates:

[www.nilebdc.org](http://www.nilebdc.org)

Visit our online library for downloads:

<http://cgspace.cgiar.org/handle/10568/2296>

Sign up for news alerts:

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/nbdnews>

View research outputs hot off the press:

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/nilebcdoutputs>



RESEARCH PROGRAM ON  
Water, Land and  
Ecosystems

Led  
by:



The Nile Basin Development Challenge (NBDC) is funded by the CGIAR Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF). It aims to improve the resilience of rural livelihoods in the Ethiopian highlands through a landscape approach to rainwater management. It comprises five linked projects examining: 1) Learning from the past; 2) developing integrated rainwater management strategies; 3) targeting and scaling out of rainwater management innovations; 4) assessing and anticipating the consequences of innovation in rainwater management systems; and 5) catalyzing platforms for learning, communication and coordination across the projects.

The NBDC is implemented by a consortium comprising the International Livestock Research Institute, International Water Management Institute, World Agroforestry Centre, Overseas Development Institute, Nile Basin Initiative, Stockholm Environment Institute, Ethiopian Economic Policy Research Institute, Catholic Relief Services – Ethiopia, Oromia Regional Research Institute, Amhara Agricultural Research Institute, Bahir Dar University, Ambo University, Wollega University, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Water and Energy. More information: Alan Duncan ([a.duncan@cgiar.org](mailto:a.duncan@cgiar.org)) and Simon Langan ([s.langan@cgiar.org](mailto:s.langan@cgiar.org)) [www.nilebdc.org](http://www.nilebdc.org)



This document is licensed for use under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 Unported Licence.