

The Centre for African Studies, in collaboration with HydroAid, presents

“The Nile, water diplomacy and sustainability”

International Conference



“The Nile – Water diplomacy and sustainability” is an International conference promoted within the “Water diplomacy and culture of sustainability – The river Nile: research, cinema and music” project, devised by the Centre for African Studies, in collaboration with Hydroaid, which aim to address the delicate issue of water management in Africa. The first goal is to present the dense network of international relations that involve the countries in the Nile river basin. Water sustainability in the African continent will be the macro context of this project, because it represents one of the top drivers of social, economic and political change in the coming years. Furthermore, by bringing to the attention of the Italian public a high level case such as the one of the Nile basin, it would be possible to open a frank debate on water sustainability in Italy, too.

The Nile topic constitutes a clear example of opportunities and critical issues arising from the sharing of a crucial resource as **water**. A major north-flowing river in North-Eastern Africa, the Nile develops a drainage basin touching **eleven African countries**, being the primary water source of States such as Egypt and Sudan. It has two main tributaries in the White Nile and the Blue Nile. In addition, the Nile has a **great historical relevancy**: it was one of the most important cradles of civilization because of both its annual overflow, which made the surrounding lands extremely fertile, and its central importance as a trade route from Central Africa to the Mediterranean Sea. The river uniqueness has captured people’s imagination and inspired studies in every scientific and cultural field throughout history.

On this occasion, experts and diplomatic representatives will discuss the **contemporary water diplomacy in the Nile river basin** and the up to date results of researches in this field. In particular, during its keynote speech, **prof. Terje Tvedt** will present an overview of the history and geography of the Nile basin: it will focus on how the Nile basin has been framed as a unitary basin and how this has influenced the Nile hydro-politics, from the legacy of the British Empire up to the building of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

In the following round-table, chaired by **Emanuele Fantini**, researchers and experts will deepen the issue of water diplomacy beyond the concept of national interest. The issue will be analysed focusing on internal policy, in particular on water distribution and dam infrastructures, and on the network of international relations. This will lead to a reflection on new opportunities for international dialogue, involving culture, civil society, and common problems such as climate change.