

The Joint Authority for the Study and Development of the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer System: An Overview

Egypt and Libya initiated the mutual interest of having a regional transboundary management organization in the early 1980s. Efforts have been formalized in 1991 with the establishing of the Joint Authority for the Study and Development of the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer System, JASAD-NSAS (NSAS Agreement 1991). The agreement providing the constitution of the Joint Authority was adopted in 1992 (Salem 2007). Sudan joined the JASAD-NSAS in 1996 and Chad followed in 1999 (Khater 2003). The riparian countries have created a promising institutional environment for mutual cooperation in use of the NSAS. They have institutionalized this cooperation through the Joint Authority. Hence, all the NSAS countries are members of the Joint Authority and mutually acknowledge the significant role of having such regional transboundary management organization.

JASAD-NSAS Organogram

According to its internal code, since the full membership of the four countries has been completed in 1999, the Joint Authority for the Study and Development of the NSAS (JASAD-NSAS) has a board of directors consisting of three members for each country. JASAD-NSAS has headquarters located in Tripoli, Libya, which is run through an executive director who is appointed by the board, with administrative secretariat and technical staff. JASAD-NSAS has a focal national office and national coordinator in each of the member countries, with management and technical staff (NSASJA 2013). The JASAD-NSAS organogram is illustrated in Figure below.

Mission and Mandate

From the standpoint of governance, the mission of the Joint Authority for the Study and Development of the NSAS is to provide regional legal and institutional mechanisms necessary to formalize NSAS regional cooperation. Therefore, the Joint Authority mandate is to collaborate and develop co-operative activities for the sustainable mutual development of the NSAS, including monitoring the status of utilization of the Aquifer, and evaluation of the progress and activities enacted on the regional and national levels (Khater, 2005).

According to the internal Regulation, the Joint Authority is responsible for collecting, analyzing and updating data, conducting supplementary studies, formulating plans and programs for water resources development and utilization, suggesting necessary frameworks for implementation of common groundwater management policies, pursuing

of scientific based water management approaches, training technical personnel and habitation activities concerning water resources, rationing the aquifer water in the Member States, studying the environmental aspects of water resources development, organizing symposiums and disseminating relevant information, and consolidating relationships with relevant regional and international organizations (Yamada 2004, Salem 2007, and Joint Authority Agreement 1992).

Functioning and Management

The Joint Authority for the Study and Development of the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer System (JASAD-NSAS) is managed through a Board of directors; where each country appoints three ministerial-level members to the Board. Each member state chairs the board of directors on rotational basis. Meetings of the Board of Directors are held on regular basis, and extraordinary meetings may be held at the request of a Member State. Attendance by two-thirds of the members from each country constitutes a quorum for the purposes of holding a Board meeting. The Board takes decisions by a majority vote. The Chairman of the Board represents the Joint Authority in its relationships with third parties and before courts, and, upon the recommendations of the Board of Directors, can sign contracts on behalf of the Joint Authority. The Chairman of the Board of Directors is also authorized to invite representatives of international organizations and donor institutions to attend the Board of Directors' meetings as observers (Joint Authority Agreement 1992).

The Joint Authority headquarters, located in Tripoli, Libya, has been officially approved by the Agreement on Domicile signed between the Libyan Government and the Joint Authority in 2006. The official approval is based on the original 1991 Joint Authority Agreement (NSAS Agreement 1991). The headquarters is run through an executive director who is appointed by the board, assisted by administrative secretariat and technical staff. Duties undertaken by the executive director include arrangement for Board meetings, preparation of annual budget, meeting minutes and progress reports; follow up on Implementation of Board decisions; and direct supervision of and reporting on the technical, administrative and financial aspects.

On the national level, the Joint Authority works through focal national offices, and national coordinators in each of the Member States who are appointed by the relevant ministries in each country. The focal institutions are: the Research Institute for Groundwater (Egypt), the General Water Authority (Libya), the Non-Nile Waters Directorate (Sudan), and the Directorate de l'Hudraulique, le Ministère de l'Environnement et de l'Eau (Chad). The heads of these institutions function as the national coordinators who are assisted by national management and technical staff.

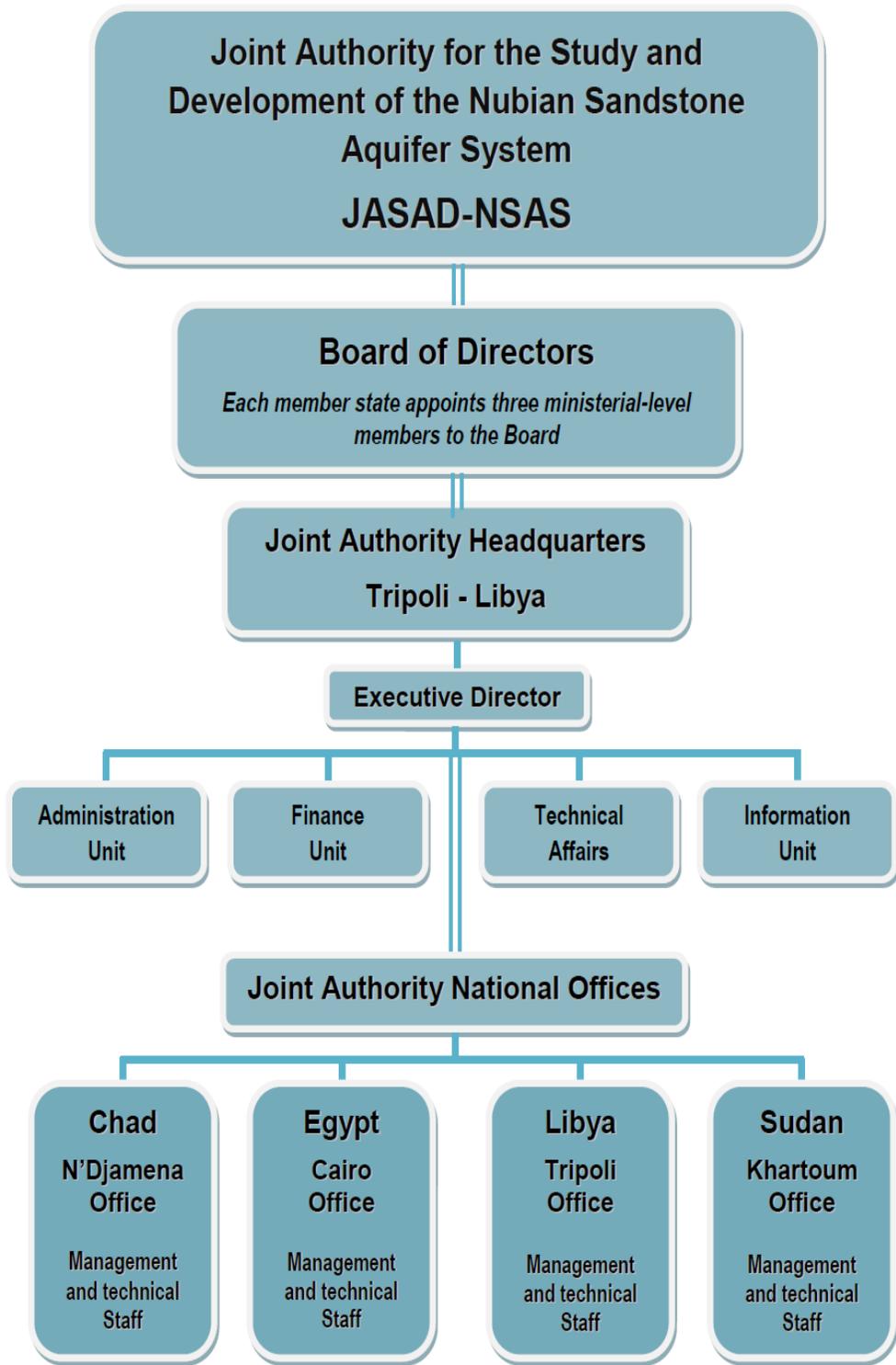


Figure 8 JASAD-NSAS Organogram

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