



NILE RIVER



The Nile is the doner of life to Egypt. Physically Egypt is the gift of the Nile. The first fact in Egyptian existance is that Egypt is the Nile.

The river is not only the main source of water, but also the soil which was formed through history by the precipitation of its silt.

The Nile is considered to be an international river since its waters pass through the lands of ten countries in Africa of which Egypt is the last, where the river pours its water in the Mediterranean through the Damietta and Rosetta branches. The annual share for Egypt of its water is 55,5 billion cubic meters as stated by the agreement of the Nile water between the countries of the Nile.

In spite of the steady and limited supply of water, there is also a steady increase in population growth. This means less water and food per capita since agriculture consumes more than two thirds of the Nile water for irrigation. The efficiency of the water is about 60% which means the loss of great amounts of fresh water wasted during irrigation and filters in the ground. It is possible that its water can be exposed to different pollutants. Pollution of the river water exposes man to different dangers. Studies show that the Nile is exposed from Aswan to Damietta and Rosetta to great amounts of dangerous pollutants from the various factories which were built with no planning along the banks and throw their waste without treatment in the Nile waters.

The excessive use of pesticides, and the behaviour of villagers add to the pollution. The agricultural drainage is another source of pollution besides that of the sewage

which adds very dangerous pollutants to the Nile water.

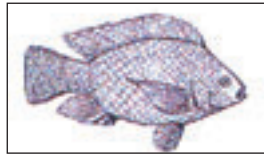
One of the dangerous pollutants of the Nile is the spread of water hyacinth in many of the canals branching from the Nile. It is also found in the main stream of the river. This causes a change in the ecosystem. Besides, it evaporates a great deal of the water, because of the spongy nature of its leaves and the large areas exposed to the sun. The government spends millions of pounds to eradicate such pollutant which is also a menace to navigation in the Nile.

Projects erected on the river as dams and barages most important of which is the high dam resulted in many environmental changes to the river and its waters.

The degradation of the environment of the river affected fish. Many which existed in Egypt has disappeared.

In 1948, a survey was made of the different Nile fish caught during that year. It counted 47 only 17 of which exist in the middle of the eighties. North of Assuit the Nile ecosystem degraded so rapidly and the kinds and amounts of fish decreased especially the favored kinds. In Assuit there is now 17 kind, *Telapia nilotica* constitutes 60%. In Cairo, there is only 13 kind 66% is *Telapia*.

In the north in Damietta branch 7 kinds only exist 83% of the catch is *Telapia*. North of the city of Zefta on the Damietta branch the amount of fish decreases and especially *Telapia*.



Do you know:

- The Nile is 1536 Kilometers in Egypt which is about one fourth of the whole river.
- The High dam keeps 130 Billion cubic meters of water. The Aswan dams keeps 5 billion only.
- The depth of water in the river is 7.5 - 10 meters.

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