UPSTREAM ADVANTAGE AND DIPLOMATIC INFLUENCE: UGANDA'S ROLE IN NILE BASIN DIPLOMACY, 2010 TO 2025

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Mubiru Allan, declare that this undergraduate thesis is my own original work and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, to this or any other institution for any academic award. All sources of information and material used in its preparation have been duly acknowledged and referenced.

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APPROVAL

I certify that this undergraduate thesis, titled "Upstream Advantage and Diplomatic Influence: Uganda's Role in Nile Basin Diplomacy, 2010 to 2025", was carried out by Mubiru Allan under my supervision and that it is submitted with my approval in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Security and Diplomatic Studies of Kyambogo University.

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DEDICATION

To the officials of the Ministry of Water and Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who carry Uganda's case into rooms where geography counts for less than preparation.

To the negotiators of the equatorial upstream states, whose persistence in basin institutions has kept a conversation open that power alone would long since have closed.

And to the students of this Department who will inherit the Nile question, in the hope that they find here a clearer account of where a small state's influence begins, and where it stops.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined Uganda's role in Nile Basin diplomacy between 2010 and 2025, asking under what conditions its position as an upstream riparian state translated into diplomatic influence. It pursued three objectives: to examine the diplomatic strategies Uganda used to influence Nile Basin relations; to assess their impact on regional cooperation; and to analyse the challenges constraining Uganda's advocacy for fair and equitable water governance.

A qualitative interpretive documentary analysis was used, organised as a single-case study. Of 425 records identified through Boolean searching, 62 documents were included after screening and credibility appraisal: 30 primary sources (treaties, ratification records, legislation and official policy documents) and 32 secondary sources (peer-reviewed articles, monographs and specialist legal commentary). Data were analysed thematically following Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework and interpreted through an integrated Neoclassical Realist and Liberal Institutionalist framework.

The evidence indicates that Uganda pursued four strategies: participation and periodic leadership in the Nile Basin Initiative, whose Secretariat it hosts at Entebbe; advocacy of the Cooperative Framework Agreement, signed 14 May 2010 and ratified 15 August 2019; coalition-building with other upstream states; and bilateral engagement with Egypt and Sudan. Against a graded scale of influence, the evidence supported achievement up to institutional leadership but not policy influence. Against six indicators of regional cooperation, five were achieved; convergence of negotiating positions was not. The Agreement entered into force on 13 October 2024 among six parties, with Egypt and Sudan outside it and the Article 14(b) water security provision unresolved.

The study concluded that upstream position established Uganda's range of strategies and secured it standing in basin governance without by itself producing influence over other states' conduct; the basin's structure, not the strategies pursued, set the limit of that translation. It recommends a standing mechanism linking Uganda's technical and diplomatic institutions, differentiated bilateral engagement with Egypt and Sudan, and directed effort towards the Article 14(b) assurance question.

Keywords: ***upstream advantage, diplomatic influence, Nile Basin diplomacy, Cooperative Framework Agreement, transboundary water governance, Uganda***

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
CFA	Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAC	East African Community
ENTRO	Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office
GERD	Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam
LVBC	Lake Victoria Basin Commission
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment of the Republic of Uganda
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NDP IV	Fourth National Development Plan of Uganda
NELSAP-CU	Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme Coordination Unit
Nile-COM	Nile Council of Ministers of Water Affairs
Nile-SEC	Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat
Nile-TAC	Nile Basin Initiative Technical Advisory Committee
NPA	National Planning Authority of Uganda
NRBC	Nile River Basin Commission
PRISMA	Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses
UN	United Nations

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study and sets out the analytical problem it addressed. Section 1.1 gives the conceptual, historical and contextual background. Section 1.2 states the research problem, and Sections 1.3 and 1.4 present the objectives and research questions. Section 1.5 defines the content, geographical and temporal scope. Sections 1.6 and 1.7 set out the significance and the justification. Section 1.8 develops the theoretical framework and the conceptual model that guided the analysis, Section 1.9 defines the key terms in the operational senses used throughout, and Section 1.10 explains how the remainder of the thesis is organised.

1.1 Background of the Study

1.1.1 Conceptual Perspective

Two concepts organised the analysis. The first was upstream advantage, understood as the set of bargaining resources a riparian state derives from its position at or near the source of a transboundary watercourse (Warner et al., 2017; Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). Upstream position is often treated as self-evidently advantageous, since a headwater state can in principle abstract, store or divert water before it reaches downstream users. The hydro-hegemony literature complicated that assumption by showing that riparian position is only one dimension of power, and frequently not the decisive one (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006; Cascão, 2009).

Because the concept is contested, it had to be specified before it could be recognised in documents. Upstream advantage was treated as comprising four dimensions. Hydrological position covered control of headwaters and the physical capacity to affect flow. Legal and institutional standing covered entitlement to equitable and reasonable utilisation under general international water law, together with formal membership of basin institutions. Infrastructural capacity covered the ability to construct and operate works that gave material substance to a claim. Coalition value covered the contribution a state made to the cohesion and credibility of a bloc of similarly positioned states. A

document was treated as evidence of upstream advantage being exercised where it recorded a state invoking one or more of these dimensions in a diplomatic setting.

The second concept was diplomatic influence. Writing on basin diplomacy commonly uses participation and influence interchangeably, which obscures the question this study asked. Participation is an activity a state performs; influence is an outcome it produces in the conduct of others. To keep the two apart, the study operationalised influence as a graded sequence of five levels, set out in Table 1.0, running from mere presence in basin institutions to a documented change in another state's negotiating position. Each level was defined by what a document had to show before that level could be recorded as achieved. The graded approach allowed the analysis to state how far Uganda's diplomacy reached, instead of declaring it simply effective or ineffective.

1.1.2 Historical Perspective

A legal order established during the colonial period continues to shape the politics of the Nile. Four instruments are commonly identified as its foundation. Under the Anglo-Italian Protocol of 1891, Italy undertook not to construct works on the Atbara that would sensibly modify its flow into the Nile. Under Article III of the Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1902, Ethiopia undertook not to arrest the flow of the Blue Nile, Lake Tana or the Sobat without prior agreement with Britain. The Nile Waters Agreement of 1929, concluded as an exchange of notes between Egypt and Britain, allocated the greater share of the flow to Egypt and required Egyptian consent for works in the British-administered territories, which at that time included Uganda. The Agreement for the Full Utilization of the Nile Waters of 1959, concluded between Egypt and Sudan alone, allocated the measured flow at Aswan between those two states and made no provision for the upstream riparians.

Two distinctions mattered for the analysis that followed. The first separates what these instruments provide from what later scholars have argued about their significance. The 1929 and 1959 instruments allocated water and established a consent requirement. Whether they bind successor states that were not independent parties to them is a separate question in the law of state succession, on which riparian governments and scholars disagree (Salman, 2013; Tekuya, 2024). Here the provisions are treated as documentary fact and the succession dispute as contested interpretation. The second distinction separates the legal position from the political effect. Whatever their standing

in law, the instruments still structure the negotiating positions of the parties, because Egypt and Sudan maintain that they retain validity while the upstream states maintain that they do not (Tekuya, 2024; Kikoyo & Patricia, 2026).

Institutional cooperation developed only at the end of the twentieth century. The Nile Basin Initiative was established on 22 February 1999 in Dar es Salaam as a transitional arrangement pending a permanent legal and institutional framework. Its organs are a Council of Ministers of Water Affairs known as Nile-COM, a Technical Advisory Committee known as Nile-TAC, and a Secretariat known as Nile-SEC, located in Entebbe, Uganda (Nile Basin Initiative, n.d.-b). Uganda gave the Initiative domestic legal effect through the Nile Basin Initiative Act of 2002, which conferred legal capacity and privileges on the organisation within Uganda (Republic of Uganda, 2002). Negotiations towards a permanent framework produced the Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework, opened for signature at Entebbe on 14 May 2010 (Nile Basin Initiative, n.d.-a).

1.1.3 Contextual Perspective

Three developments within the study period gave the research its immediate relevance. Each was established here from the treaty and institutional record, not from secondary summaries.

The Cooperative Framework Agreement completed its passage into force during the period. Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda signed it at Entebbe on 14 May 2010, Kenya signed on 19 May 2010 and Burundi on 28 February 2011. Instruments of ratification were deposited by Ethiopia on 13 June 2013, Rwanda on 28 August 2013, Tanzania on 26 March 2015, Uganda on 15 August 2019 and Burundi on 23 October 2023, and South Sudan acceded on 8 July 2024 (Nile Basin Initiative, n.d.-a). Article 43 provides that the Agreement enters into force on the sixtieth day following deposit of the sixth instrument of ratification or accession with the African Union (Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework, 2010). The African Union, as depositary, confirmed the status of deposits on 4 September 2024, and the Agreement entered into force on 13 October 2024 (Nile Basin Initiative, 2024). Egypt and Sudan have neither signed nor ratified it.

The Agreement nonetheless entered into force with its central substantive question unresolved. Article 14 commits the parties to work together so that all states achieve and sustain water security, but the parties could not agree the text of Article 14(b). The upstream states proposed an undertaking not significantly to affect the water security of other basin states, while Egypt and Sudan required an undertaking not adversely to affect the water security and current uses and rights of any basin state. The provision was annexed for resolution by the Nile River Basin Commission, which Article 15 establishes, within six months of the Commission's establishment (Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework, 2010; Tekuya, 2024).

Uganda occupied a position of institutional visibility at the close of the period. It hosts the Nile-SEC at Entebbe, and it held the rotating chairmanship of the Nile Council of Ministers during 2025, in which capacity it sought to convene a basin summit including riparian states that had not joined the Agreement (Nile Basin Initiative, n.d.-b; The Reporter, 2025). Because the chairmanship rotates annually among member states and Uganda had held it on earlier occasions, the 2025 term is best understood as a recurring institutional role and not as an unprecedented elevation.

A material change in the basin ran alongside these developments. Ethiopia inaugurated the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on 9 September 2025, having begun filling the reservoir in 2020 without a concluded agreement with Egypt and Sudan under the 2015 Declaration of Principles (Ecofin Agency, 2025). Uganda's own development on the Victoria Nile advanced over the same years, with the 183-megawatt Isimba plant commissioned in 2019 and the 600-megawatt Karuma plant in 2024. The period therefore combined legal advance, unresolved substantive disagreement and accelerating unilateral infrastructure development, and it was against that setting that Uganda's diplomacy had to be assessed.

1.2 Problem Statement

What is known is that the Nile Basin has a well-documented power asymmetry, that basin-wide institutions have been sustained for more than two decades despite it, and that the upstream states pursued a legal and normative strategy which culminated in the entry into force of the Cooperative Framework Agreement in October 2024. Scholarship established that general picture in detail, principally through the hydro-

hegemony framework and its critics (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006; Cascão, 2009; Warner et al., 2017), through legal analysis of the Agreement (Salman, 2013; Tekuya, 2024) and through modelling and policy analysis of cooperation in the eastern Nile (Wheeler et al., 2018; Tawfik, 2016).

What is not adequately known is how that general picture applies to an individual equatorial upstream state. The reviewed literature examined the basin either through the Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia triangle, where the material stakes are largest, or through the upstream riparians treated as a single bloc. In both approaches the equatorial upstream states appeared as context and not as subjects. The specific strategies through which such a state pursued its interests, the outcomes those strategies produced, and the domestic and external factors that limited them, therefore remain thinly documented. Limited literature was identified examining Uganda as an individual upstream actor.

The gap matters for three reasons. Analytically, an account pitched at the level of the basin or the bloc cannot separate constraints arising from the basin's power structure from constraints arising from a particular state's administrative capacity, yet the distinction determines what any government can change. Theoretically, the claim that upstream position confers bargaining leverage is difficult to assess without a case in which position is held while material power remains modest, which is precisely Uganda's situation. Practically, Uganda hosts the basin secretariat and periodically chairs the ministerial council, so the effectiveness of its diplomacy carries consequences for the basin's institutional life beyond Uganda's own interests.

To address the gap, this study conducted a qualitative documentary analysis of Uganda's Nile Basin diplomacy between 2010 and 2025. It identified the diplomatic strategies recorded in the documentary evidence, assessed what those strategies achieved against defined indicators of regional cooperation, and analysed the constraints recorded in the same evidence, separating structural, domestic institutional and diplomatic constraints. The analysis was conducted within an integrated framework in which Neoclassical Realism accounted for the conversion of position into influence and Liberal Institutionalism accounted for the persistence of cooperation under asymmetry.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To examine how Uganda's upstream position in the Nile Basin was translated into diplomatic strategy and influence between 2010 and 2025, and to identify the conditions that enabled and constrained that translation.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine the diplomatic strategies Uganda used to influence Nile Basin relations between 2010 and 2025.
2. To assess the impact of those strategies on regional cooperation in the Nile Basin, using defined documentary indicators of cooperation.
3. To analyse the challenges Uganda faced in advocating for fair and equitable water governance in the Nile Basin.

1.4 Research Questions

4. What diplomatic strategies did Uganda use to influence Nile Basin relations between 2010 and 2025?
5. What impact did those strategies have on regional cooperation in the Nile Basin, as measured by the documentary indicators of cooperation defined in this study?
6. What challenges constrained Uganda's advocacy for fair and equitable water governance in the Nile Basin?

The second objective required a prior specification of what counted as impact, since cooperation carries several distinct meanings in this literature. Six documentary indicators of regional cooperation were therefore defined, ordered from the weakest to the strongest form of evidence, and applied consistently in Chapter Four. They are institutional continuity, sustained dialogue, technical cooperation, legal and institutional advancement, coalition cohesion, and convergence of negotiating positions. Section 2.2 sets them out in full, and Section 4.2 applies them. Each objective, question, literature section, findings section, discussion section and conclusion were aligned on a one-to-one basis, and Appendix F presents the alignment.

1.5 Scope of the Study

Content scope. Uganda's multilateral, legal, coalition and bilateral diplomacy on Nile Basin water governance formed the subject matter. The study covered Uganda's engagement with the Nile Basin Initiative, its position on the Cooperative Framework Agreement, its coordination with other upstream riparians and its bilateral engagement with Egypt and with Sudan. Uganda's domestic water supply and sanitation policy fell outside the study except where it bore on basin diplomacy, as did transboundary water issues outside the Nile system.

Geographical scope. Uganda was the unit of analysis. The Nile Basin constituted the contextual field within which Uganda acted, and other riparian states entered the analysis only as counterparties to Ugandan diplomacy, not as cases in their own right.

Time scope. The study covered 14 May 2010 to 31 December 2025. The starting point was the opening of the Cooperative Framework Agreement for signature at Entebbe, which marked the point at which the upstream legal strategy acquired a concrete instrument and Uganda became a signatory. The end point captured Uganda's ratification in 2019, the completed passage of the Agreement into force on 13 October 2024, and Uganda's chairmanship of the Nile Council of Ministers in 2025. The period therefore contained a full arc from instrument to entry into force, which allowed the diplomatic consequences of that passage to be observed. Documents dated outside the period were used only for historical background, legal provenance, and theoretical and methodological grounding, and are identified as such in the Document Log at Appendix A. Documents used as evidence for the substantive analysis in Chapters Four and Five fell within the study period.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This work may contribute to scholarship on Nile Basin hydropolitics by providing a sustained account of one equatorial upstream state over a defined period, a perspective the reviewed literature addressed only in passing. Because the case held upstream position constant while material power remained modest, it may also help to specify the conditions under which the propositions of the hydro-hegemony literature and of institutionalist accounts of cooperation hold.

The findings may be useful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Water and Environment and the National Planning Authority in reviewing how Nile Basin engagement is coordinated across government. No evidence was collected from those institutions about their internal decision-making, so no claim is made that the findings will inform policy. What the study identifies are patterns in the public documentary record that policy actors may find relevant to such a review.

The findings may also be of use to the Nile Basin Initiative and to development and civil society partners active in the basin, since the study examined the conditions under which the engagement of a smaller upstream riparian contributed to institutional continuity, and the point at which such engagement ceased to produce further movement.

1.7 Justification of the Study

The justification rested on the case, the period and the method, and is distinct from the significance of the findings.

The case was warranted because Uganda combines features that make the conversion of position into influence observable. It is a source state of the White Nile, it hosts the basin secretariat, it periodically chairs the ministerial council, and it lacks the material and infrastructural weight of Ethiopia. A state holding position without preponderance is the appropriate case for examining whether position alone produces influence.

The period was warranted because 2010 to 2025 contains a complete legal cycle. An instrument was opened, contested, ratified by a sufficient number of states and brought into force, while the substantive disagreement it was designed to settle remained open. A shorter period would have captured advocacy without outcome, and a longer one would have diluted the analysis with a differently structured pre-2010 politics.

The method was warranted because the questions concerned declared positions, institutional conduct and legal acts, all of which are recorded in publicly retrievable documents. Treaty provisions, depositary confirmations, ministerial communiqués, institutional reports and government publications constituted an evidence base adequate to the questions asked, and documentary analysis allowed that base to be examined systematically and reproducibly.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Two theories were employed, with a defined division of analytical labour. Each explained a different part of the phenomenon, and neither was applied as a label attached to a finding.

1.8.1 Neoclassical Realism

Neoclassical Realism holds that a state's relative material power establishes the broad parameters of its foreign policy, but that the translation of power into policy is mediated by domestic intervening variables including elite perception, state institutional capacity, and the ability to extract and coordinate national resources (Rose, 1998; Schweller, 2004). Structural position is therefore a necessary but insufficient explanation of foreign policy behaviour, and states of similar structural position may behave and perform differently according to the quality of their domestic institutions.

In this study Neoclassical Realism supplied the explanation for Objectives One and Three. It generated three expectations. Uganda's upstream position would set the range of available strategies. Converting that position into influence would depend on the capacity and coherence of the domestic institutions charged with water and foreign affairs. And the conversion would be bounded by the structural position of stronger basin actors. The observable documentary indicators were records of institutional capacity and coordination, records of the strategies pursued, and records of the external limits encountered.

1.8.2 Liberal Institutionalism

Liberal Institutionalism holds that international institutions facilitate cooperation among self-interested states by reducing transaction costs, improving information, raising the cost of defection and lengthening the shadow of the future, so that cooperation can persist without a hegemon willing to enforce it (Keohane, 1984; Keohane & Nye, 2012). Institutions do not equalise power, but they can sustain joint activity that power asymmetry alone would not predict.

In this study Liberal Institutionalism supplied the explanation for Objective Two. It generated the expectation that Uganda's sustained engagement in the Nile Basin Initiative and its advocacy of the Cooperative Framework Agreement would be

associated with institutional continuity, sustained dialogue and technical cooperation, even where the underlying allocation dispute remained unresolved. The observable documentary indicators were the six indicators of regional cooperation defined in Section 2.2.

1.8.3 Integration of the Two Theories

The two theories were complementary and not merely concurrent, because they answered different questions about the same evidence. Neoclassical Realism explained why a structurally advantaged state might nonetheless fail to change another state's position, locating the explanation in the interaction of external structural constraint with domestic institutional capacity. Liberal Institutionalism explained why cooperative activity persisted even where that failure was evident, locating the explanation in the functional benefits institutions provide to their members. Applied together they generated a compound expectation, which the study assessed against the documentary record: that Uganda would be found to have reached the institutional and coalition levels of influence while failing to reach the policy-influence level, and that the cooperation sustained in the meantime would prove real but confined to the procedural and technical domain.

Table 1.1: Operational Dimensions and Documentary Indicators of the Key Concepts

Concept	Dimension or level	What a document had to show for the indicator to be recorded
Upstream advantage	Hydrological position	Record of headwater control, contribution to flow, or physical capacity to affect the watercourse
Upstream advantage	Legal and institutional standing	Invocation of equitable and reasonable utilisation, riparian entitlement, or formal membership of basin bodies
Upstream advantage	Infrastructural capacity	Record of works constructed, commissioned or planned on the watercourse
Upstream advantage	Coalition value	Record of the state contributing to a joint upstream position, statement or instrument
Diplomatic influence	1. Presence	Membership and recorded attendance in basin institutions
Diplomatic influence	2. Participation	Recorded contribution to technical, ministerial or negotiating processes

Concept	Dimension or level	What a document had to show for the indicator to be recorded
Diplomatic influence	3. Agenda-setting	Record of the state placing or keeping an item on the basin agenda
Diplomatic influence	4. Institutional leadership	Record of the state holding basin office or hosting a basin institution
Diplomatic influence	5. Policy influence	Record of another state altering a declared negotiating position following the state's action

Source: Author's conceptualisation, drawing on Warner et al. (2017), Zeitoun and Warner (2006) and Cascão (2009).

Table 1.1 states the theoretical propositions together with the documentary evidence that would support or disconfirm each. The propositions are analytical expectations appropriate to qualitative documentary research. They are not hypotheses in the statistical sense and were not tested for significance.

Table 1.1: Theoretical Propositions and Observable Documentary Indicators

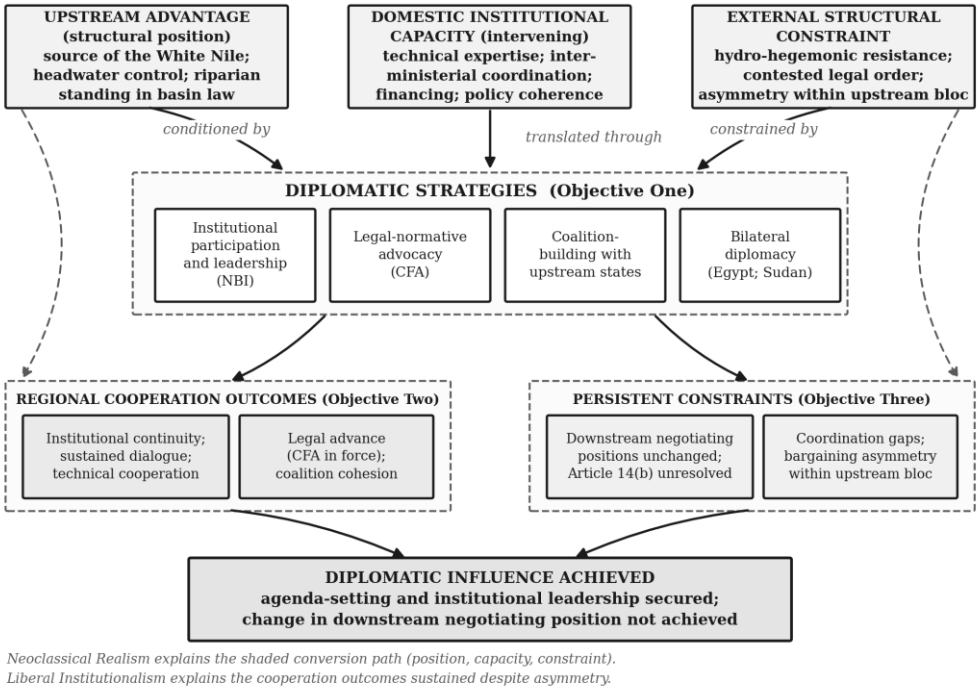
Proposition	Theory	Supporting evidence would show	Disconfirming evidence would show
P1. Upstream position sets the range of available strategies but does not determine their outcome	Neoclassical Realism	Strategies grounded in riparian standing that stopped short of altering downstream positions	Position alone producing changes in downstream negotiating conduct
P2. Conversion of position into influence is mediated by domestic institutional capacity	Neoclassical Realism	Recorded coordination or capacity gaps coinciding with weakened negotiating positions	Consistent influence achieved despite recorded institutional weakness
P3. Institutional engagement sustains cooperation under asymmetry without resolving distributional conflict	Liberal Institutionalism	Continuity of meetings, data sharing and joint programmes alongside an unresolved allocation dispute	Institutional engagement accompanied by convergence on allocation

Proposition	Theory	Supporting evidence would show	Disconfirming evidence would show
P4. Coalition membership raises a small state's influence but is bounded by asymmetry within the coalition	Both	Joint upstream positions achieved, with the coalition line set by its strongest member	Uganda setting coalition positions independently of stronger members

Source*: Author's conceptualisation, drawing on Rose (1998), Schweller* (2004), *Keohane* (1984*) and Keohane and Nye* (2012).

Figure 1.0 presents the conceptual model. Upstream advantage entered the model as the structural input. Domestic institutional capacity entered as the intervening variable through which that input was translated, and external structural constraint entered as the boundary condition on the translation. The four diplomatic strategies constituted the observable behaviour the translation produced, and they generated two classes of outcome: the cooperation outcomes examined under Objective Two and the persistent constraints examined under Objective Three. Together the two classes determined the level of diplomatic influence achieved, expressed on the graded scale defined in Table 1.0. Every construct in the model is examined in the text: upstream advantage and diplomatic influence in Section 1.1.1, domestic institutional capacity in Sections 4.3.3 and 5.2.3, external structural constraint in Sections 4.3.1 and 5.2.1, the strategies in Section 4.1, and the outcomes in Sections 4.2 and 4.3.

Figure 1.0: Conceptual Model of the Translation of Upstream Advantage into Diplomatic Influence



Source: *Author's conceptualisation (2026), developed from Rose* (1998), *Keohane* (1984) *and Zeitoun and Warner* (2006).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the scholarly and institutional literature relevant to the three objectives. It is organised by argument and not by author. Within each section, competing positions are stated, the evidence advanced for each is examined, a synthesis is offered, and the question the debate leaves unresolved is identified. Section 2.1 examines the diplomatic strategies available to upstream riparian states, which bears on Objective One. Section 2.2 examines the impact of institutional engagement on regional cooperation and establishes the documentary indicators of cooperation used throughout, which bears on Objective Two. Section 2.3 examines the constraints on fair water governance and distinguishes three levels at which they operate, which bears on Objective Three. Section 2.4 reviews the two theories and states the propositions they generate. Section 2.5 appraises the reviewed literature as an evidence base and states the gap the study addressed.

2.1 Uganda's Diplomatic Strategies for Influencing Nile Basin Relations

2.1.1 The Institutionalist Position

One body of work holds that upstream riparian states advance their interests most effectively through formal multilateral engagement and joint legal frameworks. On this account institutions convert a diffuse geographical position into recognised negotiating standing. Keohane's (1984) general argument that institutions reduce transaction costs and stabilise expectations was applied to river basins by Sadoff and Grey (2002), who identified four types of benefit available from cooperation on international rivers and argued that basin institutions allow riparians to capture benefits that unilateral action forecloses. Wheeler et al. (2018) modelled coordination strategies in the eastern Nile, found that coordinated operating rules produced outcomes superior for all parties to those produced by uncoordinated action, and inferred that institutional mechanisms are the appropriate vehicle for realising them.

The evidence advanced for this position is largely institutional and prospective. It consists of the demonstrated functioning of basin organisations, the technical and investment programmes they sustain, and modelled gains from coordination. Applied

to Uganda, it supports the expectation that participation in the Nile Basin Initiative and adherence to the Cooperative Framework Agreement constitute the primary strategies through which the country can pursue its interests.

2.1.2 The Structural Position

A second body of work holds that institutional participation does not by itself alter the distribution of benefits, because institutions operate within a power structure, they leave undisturbed. Zeitoun and Warner (2006) developed the hydro-hegemony framework, in which control over a transboundary watercourse is consolidated through material power, bargaining power and ideational power. On that account a hegemon can accommodate cooperative institutions precisely because they pose no threat to its position, so cooperation may coexist with an inequitable allocation and even stabilise it. Selby (2005) made the related argument that apparently cooperative arrangements over water in asymmetric settings frequently entrench the stronger party's position instead of modifying it. Revisiting the framework a decade later, Warner et al. (2017) retained its central claim while conceding that riparian position and counter-hegemonic action can shift outcomes at the margin.

The evidence advanced here is historical and legal: the persistence of the colonial-era allocation, the durability of the consent requirement asserted by the downstream states, and the absence of any negotiated change in allocation despite two decades of institutional cooperation.

2.1.3 The Counter-Hegemonic Qualification

A third position occupies the middle ground and proved the most useful for the present study. Cascão (2009) argued that power relations in the Nile Basin have changed and that upstream states used legal, institutional and infrastructural instruments to contest the established order with measurable effect. She distinguished contesting the legitimacy of the existing regime, which upstream states achieved, from displacing it, which they did not. Writing after the CFA was opened for signature, Salman (2013) treated the instrument as a normative achievement whose practical effect depended on whether the downstream states eventually acceded, and later characterised entry into force as closing the debate over the colonial treaties while leaving the basin's substantive disagreement open (Salman, 2024). Tekuya (2024) made the legal form of

that qualification explicit. Because a treaty creates neither obligations nor rights for a third state without its consent, the CFA binds only its parties, so entry into force changed the legal position among the ratifying states without changing the position of Egypt or Sudan.

2.1.4 Synthesis and the Unresolved Question

Read together, the three positions identify three mechanisms through which an upstream state may seek influence: institutional access, legal and normative advocacy, and coalition formation. They disagree not about whether these mechanisms exist but about how far they reach. The institutionalist position expects cumulative movement; the structural position expects activity without movement; the counter-hegemonic qualification expects normative and legal movement without distributive movement.

The debate leaves open what any individual equatorial upstream state actually does with these mechanisms, and how a fourth mechanism, bilateral engagement with the downstream states, interacts with the other three. The literature examines the basin at the level of the system or the bloc. Limited literature was identified tracing the strategies of a single equatorial upstream riparian across a defined period and assessing them against a graded conception of influence. That task is taken up in Section 4.1, which examines Uganda's four recorded strategies individually and locates each on the influence scale defined in Table 1.0.

2.2 The Impact of Uganda's Nile Basin Diplomatic Strategies on Regional Cooperation

2.2.1 The Problem of a Contested Concept

Regional cooperation carries several distinct meanings in this literature. In Sadoff and Grey (2002) it refers principally to joint benefit realisation. In Wheeler et al. (2018) it refers to coordinated operation of infrastructure. Institutional reporting frequently uses it for attendance, programme delivery and data exchange. Legal analysis uses it for accession to and implementation of a common instrument (Salman, 2013; Tekuya, 2024). These outcomes are not equivalent, and a study that slides between them cannot state what its findings show. Continued meetings, a ratified treaty and an agreed

allocation are three different achievements, and only the last resolves the basin's distributional question.

An ordered set of six documentary indicators was therefore adopted, presented in Table 2.0 and running from the weakest evidence of cooperation to the strongest. The ordering carries analytical consequences: evidence at the lower levels does not entail achievement at the higher ones, so a finding of cooperation must specify the level at which it holds. Section 4.2 applies the indicators and Section 5.1 interprets them.

Table 2.0: Documentary Indicators of Regional Cooperation, Ordered by Strength of Evidence

Level	Indicator	Documentary evidence required
1	Institutional continuity	Basin bodies continued to exist, convene and report across the period
2	Sustained dialogue	Ministerial and technical meetings convened and attended, with recorded outcomes
3	Technical cooperation	Joint studies, data exchange, shared assessments or joint investment programmes recorded
4	Legal and institutional advancement	Signature, ratification, accession or entry into force of a common instrument recorded
5	Coalition cohesion	Joint positions, statements or coordinated votes recorded among a group of riparians
6	Convergence of negotiating positions	A riparian state recorded a change in its declared position on the contested question

Source: *Author's conceptualisation, developed from Sadoff and Grey* (2002), *Salman* (2013), *Wheeler et al. (2018) and Tekuya* (2024).

2.2.2 Competing Expectations About What Engagement Achieves

The institutionalist expectation is that engagement produces movement up this scale over time, as habits of cooperation accumulate and mistrust declines (Keohane, 1984; Sadoff & Grey, 2002; Wheeler et al., 2018). The structural expectation is that engagement produces stable achievement at the lower levels and no movement at the highest, since the highest level is exactly what the hegemon has an interest in preventing (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006; Selby, 2005). Cascão's (2009) qualification predicts an asymmetric pattern: strong achievement at levels four and five, driven by upstream legal and coalition activity, alongside no achievement at level six.

Reviewing basin governance after the CFA entered into force, Kikoyo and Patricia (2026) supported the third expectation and added a further condition. They argued that legal frameworks alone are insufficient and that outcomes depend on sustained political will, inclusive participation, and the alignment of national development strategies with basin-wide objectives. The last of these matters for the present study, because it identifies domestic policy alignment as a determinant of cooperative outcomes and thereby connects Objective Two to Objective Three.

2.2.3 What the Debate Leaves Open

The disagreement can be reframed as a question about the shape of the cooperation profile and not about its presence or absence. All three positions accept that some cooperation occurs; they differ on where it stops. The literature has not applied a graded conception of cooperation to a single riparian's contribution, so it cannot say which levels a particular state's diplomacy sustains and which it fails to reach. Uganda's contribution is assessed against each of the six indicators separately in Section 4.2.

2.3 Challenges Faced by Uganda in Advocating for Fair Water Governance

The literature identifies numerous constraints but rarely distinguishes their level of operation, so constraints a government could address appear alongside constraints it could not. The three-level typology set out in Table 2.1 was adopted instead, and it organises the findings in Section 4.3 and the discussion in Section 5.2.

Table 2.1: Typology of Constraints on Upstream Advocacy

Level	Character	Examples in the literature	Amenable to unilateral national action
Structural	Arising from the basin's distribution of power and its contested legal order	Hydro-hegemonic consolidation; persistence of prior-use claims; third-party effect of treaty law	No
Diplomatic and relational	Arising from the state's position relative to its partners and counterparties	Asymmetry within the upstream coalition; instability of a counterparty;	Partially

Level	Character	Examples in the literature	Amenable to unilateral national action
		dependence on coalition consensus	
Domestic institutional	Arising from the capacity and coherence of the state's own administration	Technical capacity; inter-ministerial coordination; financing of sustained engagement	Yes

Source: *Author's conceptualisation, developed from Zeitoun and Warner* (2006), *Cascão* (2009), *Warner et al.* (2017*) and Kikoyo and Patricia* (2026).

2.3.1 Structural Constraints and Hydro-Hegemony

Hydro-hegemony supplies the dominant account of structural constraint. Zeitoun and Warner (2006) argued that the downstream position in the Nile is sustained not principally by force but by a combination of bargaining and ideational power, expressed in the capacity to define what counts as a legitimate claim. Swain (2011) documented the durability of that position under changing geopolitical and climatic conditions. Tekuya (2024) supplied its legal expression: entry into force of the CFA among six parties does not alter the position of non-parties, and the Nile River Basin Commission cannot exercise its allocative functions under Article 26 in the absence of the two largest consumers.

2.3.2 Bargaining Position and Asymmetry Among Upstream States

A second and less developed strand concerns asymmetry within the upstream group itself. Cascão (2009) and Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) observed that the upstream states are not a unitary actor and that their common positions are shaped disproportionately by their strongest member. Tawfik (2016) examined Ethiopia's use of infrastructure to alter the terms of basin bargaining and thereby identified, by implication, a constraint on the other upstream states, whose leverage does not increase correspondingly. That strand raises a question the literature does not pursue whether a coalition which raises a small state's aggregate influence simultaneously limits its independent influence.

2.3.3 Domestic Institutional Constraints

A third body of work locates constraint inside the upstream states. Cascão and Zeitoun (2010) identified an implementation deficit among upstream riparians, in which normative and legal gains were not matched by the administrative and financial capacity required to give them effect. Kikoyo and Patricia (2026) made the related point that national development strategies and basin-level commitments are frequently misaligned, so that a state's own projects undermine the diplomatic position it advances. This literature is largely comparative and pitched at basin level. It identifies the deficit as a general feature of the upstream group without tracing its specific institutional form in any one state.

2.3.4 Attribution and the Analytical Consequence

The three levels interact, and the literature's tendency to treat them together obscures the question of attribution. Where an upstream state fails to secure movement on allocation, the failure may be structural, in which case no national reform would change it; relational, in which case the remedy lies in coalition management; or institutional, in which case domestic reform might. Separating these is a precondition of any recommendation. Section 4.3 presents the documentary evidence for each level separately, and Section 5.2 assesses what can and cannot be attributed to each.

2.4 Theoretical Review

Neoclassical Realism and Liberal Institutionalism have both been applied to transboundary water politics, though rarely in an explicitly integrated form. Neoclassical Realism contributes its treatment of domestic institutions as the transmission mechanism between structural position and foreign policy behaviour (Rose, 1998; Schweller, 2004), which applies directly to a basin in which several states share a similar riparian position while differing markedly in administrative and technical capacity. Liberal Institutionalism contributes its account of why cooperation persists without distributive agreement, through reduced transaction costs, better information and a lengthened time horizon over which states calculate (Keohane, 1984; Keohane & Nye, 2012).

Two clarifications of usage were necessary. The propositions these theories generate are analytical expectations, not hypotheses in the statistical sense. Qualitative documentary research assesses whether the documentary record is consistent with an expectation and whether an alternative explanation accounts for it as well or better; it does not test for significance, so the language of hypothesis testing was avoided throughout. The four propositions stated in Table 1.1 are used in that sense.

Theory was also applied after evidence and never in place of it. Each analytical sequence in Chapters Four and Five proceeds in a fixed order: what the documentary evidence shows, what pattern emerges across documents, which theoretical concept accounts for the pattern, what alternative explanation exists, and what conclusion the evidence supports. The sequence was adopted to prevent the theories from functioning as predetermined conclusions, a risk that becomes acute when two theories are available and each can be invoked selectively to accommodate any finding.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

2.5.1 Critical Appraisal of the Reviewed Literature

Before the gap can be stated, the evidence base itself requires appraisal, since the reviewed material falls into three classes whose evidentiary properties differ.

Peer-reviewed scholarship has passed external review but is not thereby neutral. The hydro-hegemony literature is explicitly critical in orientation and reads basin institutions through a framework that expects them to reproduce asymmetry, while the institutionalist literature reads the same institutions through a framework that expects them to generate benefits. Where these bodies of work reach different conclusions from overlapping evidence, the difference reflects analytical starting points as much as the record.

Legal commentary occupies an intermediate position. Analyses such as Salman (2013, 2024) and Tekuya (2024) carry identified specialist authorship and reason from treaty text, which makes their claims about legal provisions verifiable against the instrument itself. Their assessments of political consequence are interpretive, and the study treated them as such.

Official and institutional documents are indispensable and require the most careful handling. Treaty texts, depositary confirmations and ratification records constitute the acts they describe and are for that reason authoritative on those acts. Institutional reports and government publications work differently. They are authored to advance an institutional position, and their selection and framing of information reflects that purpose. A report by a basin organisation on the state of basin cooperation is evidence of what that organisation states about cooperation, which is not the same as evidence that cooperation occurred to the extent stated. Such documents were used as evidence of declared positions and recorded institutional activity, and their evaluative claims were corroborated against independent sources before being relied upon. Section 3.4.2 sets out the appraisal procedure.

A further limitation applies across all three classes. The formal record of diplomacy is systematically incomplete, because negotiation is conducted substantially in settings that generate no public document. What survives is the record of positions declared and acts completed. Missing documentary evidence for an outcome is therefore weaker evidence than surviving documentary evidence for one. That asymmetry was carried into the findings, where an unrecorded outcome is reported as a gap in the record and not as established non-occurrence.

2.5.2 Research Gaps

The reviewed literature establishes the basin's power asymmetry, the durability of the contested legal order, the persistence of institutional cooperation alongside that order, and the general existence of an implementation deficit among upstream riparians. Three questions remain inadequately addressed.

The literature does not document the strategies of an individual equatorial upstream state across a sustained period, nor assess them against a graded conception of influence that separates participation from outcome. It does not disaggregate regional cooperation into levels, so it cannot state which forms of cooperation a particular state's diplomacy sustains and which it fails to reach. And it does not separate structural, relational and domestic institutional constraints in a way that permits attribution, with the consequence that recommendations addressed to national governments are not clearly connected to constraints those governments could act upon.

Limited literature was identified examining Uganda as an individual upstream actor over the 2010 to 2025 period. The present study addressed the three questions above through a qualitative documentary analysis of that case. It does not claim to be the first study of Uganda's role in the basin, nor to provide evidence unavailable to previous researchers. Its claim is narrower: that it applied a specified conception of influence, a graded conception of cooperation and a three-level typology of constraint to a documentary record which had not previously been assembled and examined for this case.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter sets out the methodology. The research was a qualitative documentary analysis of Uganda's Nile Basin diplomacy between 2010 and 2025, and that single description is used consistently throughout the thesis. Earlier drafts of this work alternated between desk research, desk review, documentary survey, case study and secondary data analysis. The present version treats those terms as follows. The research was documentary, in that its evidence consisted of documents and not of data generated by the researcher. Its approach was qualitative and interpretive. Its design was a single-case study, with Uganda as the case. Its materials were primary and secondary documentary sources, in the senses defined in Section 3.3.

Section 3.1 states the research approach and Section 3.2 the design. Section 3.3 describes the materials and the hierarchy of evidence applied to them. Section 3.4 states the document selection criteria, the credibility assessment and the corroboration procedure, and Section 3.5 describes the data collection method and tool. Section 3.6 states the inclusion and exclusion criteria and Section 3.7 the analytical procedure. Section 3.8 addresses bias and trustworthiness, Section 3.9 research ethics, and Section 3.10 the limitations and delimitations.

3.1 Research Approach

A qualitative interpretive approach to documentary analysis was adopted. The approach was qualitative because of the nature of the questions asked and the form of reasoning applied to answer them, and not because it used existing material rather than generating new material, which would not be a sufficient basis for the classification. The questions concerned how a state framed its position, what strategies it pursued, what those strategies achieved and what constrained them. Answering them required interpreting meaning in text: reading a communiqué for what it commits its signatories to, reading a treaty provision for what it obliges, and reading an institutional report for the position it advances as well as the information it conveys.

The approach followed the tradition of document analysis described by Bowen (2009), in which documents are treated as social products requiring examination for their

purpose and provenance as well as their content, and it applied the quality criteria for documentary sources established by Scott (1990): authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. Thematic analysis served as the analytical technique, following the six-phase framework of Braun and Clarke (2006) and described in Section 3.7.

The approach bears directly on the claims the study could make. It could establish documented positions, recorded acts and patterns across documents, but not what officials believed, what was said in unrecorded negotiation, or what would have occurred under different conditions. Findings are stated accordingly throughout Chapters Four and Five, in the form that the documentary evidence indicates a pattern and not that the researcher observed a process.

3.2 Research Design

A single-case design was used (Yin, 2018). Precision about what constituted the case was necessary, because the title refers to Uganda's role in the Nile Basin and the two are not the same thing.

Uganda as a diplomatic actor in Nile Basin water governance was the case and the unit of analysis. The Nile Basin was the contextual field in which the case was situated, and neither a second case nor the unit of analysis. Other riparian states appeared only as counterparties whose recorded conduct bore on Uganda's diplomacy; their own strategies were not examined in their own right. Basin institutions appeared as settings in which Uganda acted and as authors of documents about that action.

The design suited the question, which asked how a particular structural position was converted into diplomatic behaviour within a specific institutional and legal environment. Yin (2018) identifies the single case as suitable where the case represents a class of phenomena that has not been closely examined, which applies to the equatorial upstream riparians, and where the case allows a theoretical proposition to be examined under conditions that make the examination informative. Uganda holds upstream position while lacking material preponderance, which made it an informative case for the proposition that position alone produces influence.

3.3 Materials and Sources of Data

3.3.1 Source Typology

Two classes of documentary source were distinguished. The distinction resolved an ambiguity in earlier drafts, which described treaties and government publications as primary sources while describing the study as secondary desk research. Documentary research can legitimately analyse primary documentary sources without collecting primary data from human participants; what it requires is consistent terminology.

Primary documentary sources were documents that constitute the act or position they record treaty texts, instruments and records of ratification, depositary confirmations, ministerial communiqués, legislation, official government policy documents and the corporate records of basin institutions. Their evidentiary value lies in the fact that the document is the act.

Secondary documentary sources were documents that interpret, analyse or report upon such acts: peer-reviewed articles, monographs, specialist legal commentary and press reporting. Their evidentiary value lies in the analysis they offer, which was subject to the appraisal described in Section 3.4.2.

3.3.2 Hierarchy of Evidence

A hierarchy governed which class of source could establish which class of claim. It was applied throughout Chapters Four and Five and is stated in Table 3.0. The hierarchy had a practical consequence that arose during the study. Where a peer-reviewed source and an institutional record differed on a matter of fact within the institution's own competence, the institutional record was preferred. A recent peer-reviewed article records Uganda as having ratified the Cooperative Framework Agreement by 2023, while the Nile Basin Initiative's ratification record gives 15 August 2019. The institutional record was preferred, and the discrepancy is noted here instead of being resolved silently.

Table 3.0: Hierarchy of Documentary Evidence Applied in the Study

Class of claim	Source that established it	Source that could not establish it alone
What a treaty provides	The treaty text itself	Scholarly summary of the treaty
Whether a state has signed, ratified or acceded	Depositary record or the record of the treaty organisation	Press reporting; secondary summary
A state's declared official position	Official government publication, statement or communiqué	Third-party characterisation of that position
Institutional activity and programme delivery	Corporate records and reports of the institution concerned	Scholarly assertion unsupported by the record
The significance, effect or adequacy of any of the above	Peer-reviewed scholarship and specialist commentary, corroborated	Institutional self-assessment
Contemporary events not yet in institutional records	Two or more independent reports, identified as provisional	A single press report

Source*: Author's conceptualisation, developed from Scott* (1990) *and Bowen* (2009).

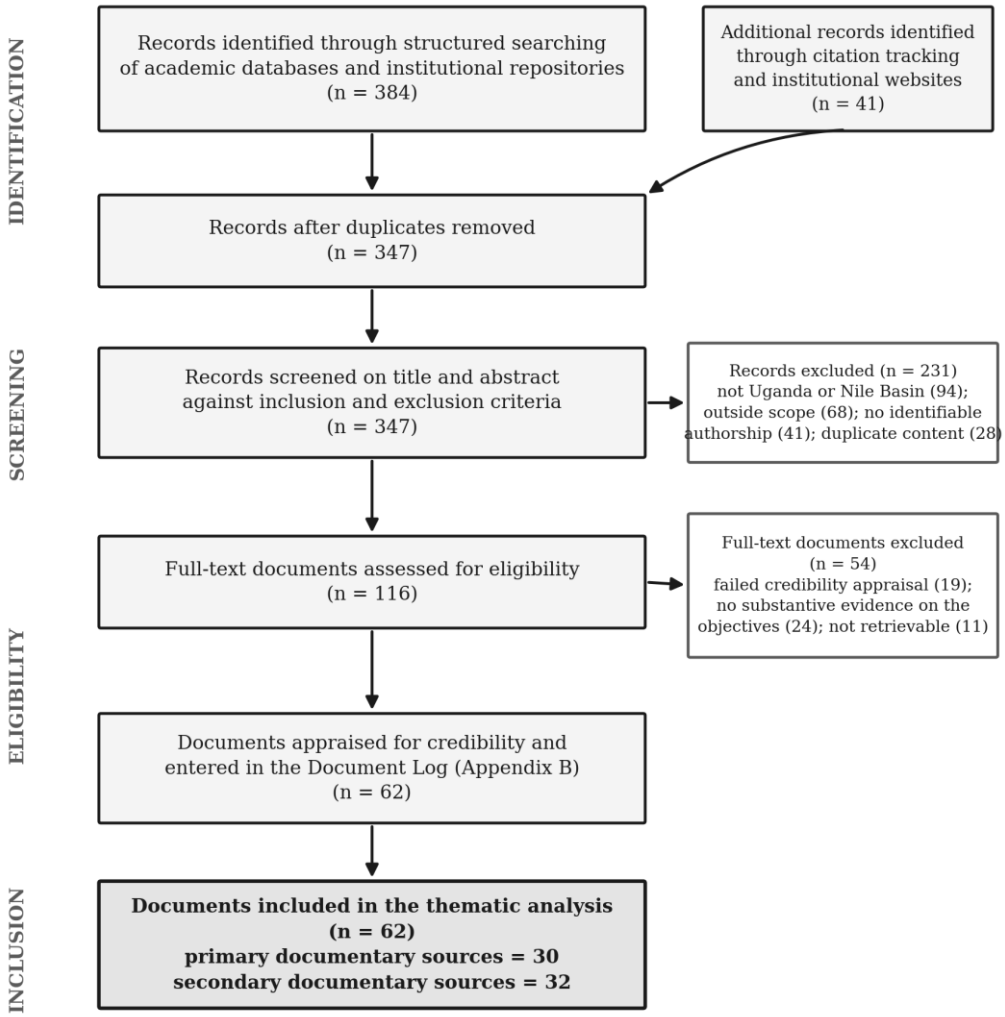
3.4 Document Selection Criteria and Credibility Assessment

3.4.1 Document Selection Criteria and the Screening Flow

Selection proceeded in the four stages set out in Figure 3.0, which follows the reporting logic of the PRISMA framework (Page et al., 2021). It is not presented as a systematic review. The framework was adopted for its transparency in reporting identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion, and not as a claim to exhaustive coverage.

Structured searching identified 384 records, and citation tracking and institutional website searching identified a further 41. After removal of duplicates, 347 records remained. These were screened on title and abstract against the criteria stated in Section 3.6, and 231 were excluded. The remaining 116 documents were retrieved in full and assessed for eligibility, and 54 were excluded at that stage. The 62 documents that remained were appraised for credibility under Section 3.4.2 and entered in the Document Log at Appendix A, comprising 30 primary documentary sources and 32 secondary documentary sources.

Figure 3.0: Document Identification, Screening, Eligibility and Inclusion



Source: *Author's compilation, following the reporting logic of Page et al*. (2021).

3.4.2 Credibility Assessment

Publication reputation alone is an insufficient measure of documentary quality, since a reputable institution may produce a document that advances an institutional position. Each included document was therefore appraised against eight criteria, derived from Scott's (1990) framework and from the practice described by Bowen (2009): authority, purpose, authorship, date, methodological transparency, relevance, independence and identified bias. Table 3.1 states what each criterion asked and how it was applied.

Table 3.1: Credibility Assessment Criteria

Criterion	Question asked of the document	Application in this study
Authority	Is the author or issuing body competent in the matter recorded	Institutional records accepted as authoritative only within the institution's own competence
Purpose	Why was the document produced, and for what audience	Documents produced to persuade distinguished from those produced to record
Authorship	Is the author identified, and is the authorship individual or institutional	Institutional authorship recorded as such and not attributed to a secondary author
Date	Does the document's date place it in a position to record what it claims	Retrospective institutional accounts distinguished from contemporaneous records
Methodological transparency	Does the document state how its claims were arrived at	Weight reduced where evaluative claims were made without a stated basis
Relevance	Does the document bear directly on a stated objective	Documents of general basin relevance retained only where they addressed an objective
Independence	Is the author independent of the interests the document discusses	Applied to separate institutional self-assessment from external assessment
Identified bias	What position does the document have an interest in advancing	Recorded explicitly in the Document Log for every institutional and governmental source

Source*: Author's compilation, developed from Scott* (1990) *and Bowen* (2009).

3.4.3 Corroboration

Corroboration was applied to claims and not uniformly to every statement. Earlier drafts stated that every fact was cross-checked against an independent source, which is a stronger claim than the study can demonstrate. The procedure actually followed corroborated three kinds of claim against at least one independent source before relying on them: claims of legal fact, such as the status of an instrument; claims about a state's declared position; and evaluative claims about the effectiveness or adequacy of basin cooperation. Where an important claim rested on a single source, Chapters Four and Five report it with that limitation stated. The Document Log records the corroborating

source for each corroborated claim, and Section 5.4 reports the triangulation of the study's principal contested claims.

3.5 Data Collection Method and Tool

3.5.1 Identification, Retrieval and Extraction

For a documentary study the term data collection is retained, but the procedure is more precisely described as document identification, retrieval, screening, extraction and organisation. Documents were identified through a structured search of academic databases, institutional repositories and official websites, supplemented by citation tracking from the reference lists of documents already retrieved. Searches ran between 6 January and 27 March 2026, and the retrievability of every included document was re-verified in the week beginning 17 August 2026.

The sources searched were Google Scholar, JSTOR, Taylor and Francis Online, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, the MDPI and SAGE journal platforms, and the Directory of Open Access Journals for scholarly material; the websites of the Nile Basin Initiative, the African Union, the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization legal database FAOLEX for institutional and legal material; the websites of Uganda's Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Planning Authority and Parliament for national material; and the International Water Law Project and EJIL:Talk! for specialist legal commentary.

Retrieved documents were read in full where full text was available. Material bearing on a research question was extracted, organised by objective and then by theme, and tagged with the document number from the log, so that every item of evidence used in Chapters Four and Five can be traced back to an identified document. That traceability is the audit trail on which the dependability of the study rests.

3.5.2 Search Strategy

The search strategy used Boolean combinations and not single terms. The four terms used in earlier drafts were insufficiently comprehensive, and the strategy was expanded to include institutional terminology, alternative expressions of the same concepts, and the names of the instruments and bodies concerned. Table 3.2 states the principal search

strings. Appendix C reproduces the full strategy, including the variant spellings and the field restrictions applied.

Table 3.2: Principal Search Strings

No.	Search string	Primary purpose
1	("Uganda" OR "Ugandan") AND ("Nile Basin" OR "River Nile") AND (diplomacy OR "foreign policy" OR negotiation)	Objective One
2	("Nile Basin Initiative" OR "NBI" OR "Nile-COM") AND (Uganda OR "upstream state*" OR "equatorial lakes")	Objectives One and Two
3	("Cooperative Framework Agreement" OR "Entebbe Agreement") AND (ratif* OR accession OR "entry into force" OR "Article 14")	Objectives One and Two
4	("transboundary water" OR "shared water*") AND governance AND (Africa OR "Nile") AND (cooperation OR "regional cooperation")	Objective Two
5	("hydro-hegemony" OR "hydrohegemony" OR "counter-hegemony") AND ("Nile")	Objective Three
6	("upstream riparian*" OR "upper riparian*") AND (coalition OR bloc OR "collective bargaining") AND Nile	Objectives One and Three
7	(Uganda) AND ("water resources management" OR "water sector") AND (coordination OR "institutional capacity" OR "inter-ministerial")	Objective Three
8	("Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam" OR "GERD") AND ("Declaration of Principles" OR negotiation) AND (upstream OR basin)	Context for Objective Three
9	("Nile Waters Agreement" OR "1929" OR "1959") AND (succession OR "colonial treat*" OR validity)	Historical background
10	("documentary analysis" OR "document analysis") AND ("thematic analysis") AND (rigour OR trustworthiness)	Methodological grounding

Source*: Author's compilation.*

3.5.3 Document Log and Profiling Form

Each included document was recorded in a Document Log with the following fields: sequential number, author or issuing institution, year, document type, full title, source or repository with locator, class under the source typology in Section 3.3.1, the objective to which it was relevant, a credibility note recording the appraisal under Table

3.1, the purpose for which it was used, and the corroborating source where applicable. Appendix A reproduces the completed log for all 62 included documents.

Documents carrying substantial evidence on one or more objectives also received a completed Document Profiling Form. The form records bibliographic information, source type, institutional affiliation, purpose, methodological quality, the objective addressed, the key evidence extracted, the principal claims advanced, the limitations and bias identified, and the analytical theme to which the material was assigned. Appendix E reproduces the form and a completed exemplar.

3.6 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

3.6.1 Criteria Applied

Table 3.4 states the criteria applied at the screening stage recorded in Figure 3.0. They correspond exactly to the screening checklist reproduced at Appendix B and the inclusion and exclusion guide at Appendix D, so that another researcher applying the appendices would apply the same rules described here.

Table 3.3: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Included	Excluded
Subject	Addressed Uganda's diplomacy, the Nile Basin's governance, or the theoretical and methodological framework of the study	No substantive treatment of Uganda, the Nile Basin, or the study's framework
Period	Dated 2010 to 2025 for substantive evidence; any date for historical, legal, theoretical or methodological purposes	Dated outside 2010 to 2025 and used for substantive evidence
Authorship	Identifiable individual, institutional or governmental author	No identifiable author or issuing body
Type	Treaty, legislation, communiqué, official publication, institutional report, peer-reviewed article, monograph, specialist commentary, attributed press report	Unattributed online commentary; opinion without institutional or authorial accountability
Language	English, or an official translation into English	Available only in a language the researcher could not read and for which no official translation was located
Retrievability	Locatable by another researcher from the citation given	Not retrievable at the time of verification
Distinctness	Contributed evidence not already captured	Duplicate of content already included

Source*: Author's compilation.*

The language criterion restricted the study to English-language material and official English translations. Since Egypt and Sudan conduct much of their official communication in Arabic, and since parts of the basin's institutional and scholarly literature exist in French, the restriction means relevant material may have been excluded. It bears most heavily on the analysis of downstream positions in Sections 4.3.1 and 5.2.1, where the evidence base draws disproportionately on English-language reporting and English translations of official statements. This is reported as a limitation in Section 3.10.1.

3.6.2 Time Criterion

The period criterion separated the evidence used for the substantive analysis from the material used to establish historical, legal, theoretical and methodological foundations. Documents dated before 2010, including the colonial-era instruments, the 1997 United Nations Watercourses Convention and the theoretical and methodological literature, were used only for the latter purposes. The study does not require every source to fall within 2010 to 2025; it requires that sources used as substantive evidence for Chapters Four and Five do so. Every document in the Document Log carries a note of the purpose for which it was used, which makes the distinction auditable.

3.7 Data Analysis

3.7.1 Thematic Analysis Procedure

Thematic analysis followed the six-phase framework of Braun and Clarke (2006). Earlier drafts of this work attributed a five-step thematic procedure to Creswell (2014). The attribution was incorrect, and the six-phase framework used here is correctly attributed to Braun and Clarke, whose account is the recognised reference for the technique.

The six phases were applied as follows. In familiarisation, each included document was read in full and initial notes were recorded against the research questions. In generating initial codes, segments of text were assigned descriptive codes; records of Ugandan attendance and contribution in basin technical processes were coded as institutional participation, and records of Ugandan statements advocating the Cooperative Framework Agreement were coded as legal and normative advocacy. In searching for themes, codes were grouped into candidate themes organised by objective. In reviewing themes, candidate themes were checked against the coded extracts and against the full document set, and themes supported by only a single source, or which did not cohere, were revised or discarded. In defining and naming themes, each retained theme received a definition stating precisely what it covered and what it excluded. In producing the report, themes were written up with the supporting documentary evidence presented before the interpretation offered.

3.7.2 Coding and Themes

Table 3.5 states the analytical framework linking each objective to its research question, its initial codes, its themes and its principal evidence. It functions as an audit trail from objective through to evidence.

Table 3.4: Analytical Framework Linking Objectives, Questions, Codes and Themes

Objective	Research question	Initial codes	Themes	Principal evidence
One: diplomatic strategies	What strategies did Uganda use	institutional participation; office-holding; legal and normative advocacy; upstream coordination; bilateral engagement	NBI participation; CFA support; coalition building; bilateral diplomacy	Treaty and ratification records; NBI corporate records; national policy documents; reporting on ministerial meetings
Two: impact on regional cooperation	What impact did those strategies have	continuity of bodies; meetings convened; data and technical exchange; instrument advanced; joint positions; position change	Institutional continuity; sustained dialogue; technical cooperation; legal and institutional advancement; coalition cohesion; convergence of positions	NBI reports and announcements; depositary and ratification records; communiqués; independent commentary
Three: challenges to fair water governance	What challenges constrained Uganda's advocacy	downstream resistance; contested legal order; intra-coalition asymmetry; technical capacity; inter-ministerial coordination; financing	Hydro-hegemonic resistance; weak bargaining position; policy coordination challenges	Treaty text and annex; legal commentary; national sector and planning documents; scholarship on basin power relations

Source: *Author's compilation.*

3.7.3 Objective Alignment

An error in earlier drafts is corrected here. The theme concerning challenges to fair water governance was previously placed under Objective Two, whereas it belongs under Objective Three. Objective Two concerns the impact of Uganda's strategies on regional cooperation, while Objective Three concerns the challenges constraining Uganda's advocacy. The themes are now aligned with the objectives to which they belong, and the alignment runs through Chapters Four, Five and Six and is summarised at Appendix F.

3.7.4 Theoretical Interpretation

Theoretical interpretation was applied after the documentary evidence had been presented and never in place of it. Each analytical subsection of Chapters Four and Five follows a fixed sequence: the documentary evidence is presented, the pattern across documents is stated, the theoretical concept accounting for the pattern is identified, an alternative explanation is considered, and a conclusion proportionate to the evidence is drawn. The sequence was adopted specifically to prevent either theory from operating as a predetermined conclusion.

3.8 Addressing Bias in Secondary Data

3.8.1 Forms of Bias Addressed

Five forms of bias were considered, and the measures taken against each are stated below.

Selection bias arises where a search strategy systematically favours documents supporting a particular conclusion. The strategy at Table 3.2 was constructed to include terms associated with competing positions, so that searches for hydro-hegemony and counterhegemony, and for cooperation and resistance, ran in parallel and not sequentially.

Publication bias arises where findings of a particular kind are more likely to reach publication. In this field, accounts of cooperative achievement are published by institutions with an interest in reporting them, while accounts of stalled negotiation appear more often in independent scholarship or not at all. Institutional evaluative

claims were therefore treated as declared positions requiring corroboration, as described in Section 3.4.3.

Institutional bias arises from the interest an issuing body has in the account it gives. It was addressed by recording the identified interest of every institutional and governmental source in the Document Log, and by pairing institutional sources with independent assessments wherever an evaluative claim was relied upon.

Confirmation bias arises where the researcher weights evidence according to prior expectation. Two measures were taken. The theoretical propositions in Table 1.1 were stated with their disconfirming evidence specified in advance, so the form of evidence that would count against each expectation was fixed before the analysis began. Contradictory evidence was then handled by an explicit rule: where documents conflicted, both accounts were recorded, the source hierarchy in Table 3.0 was applied, and where the hierarchy did not resolve the conflict, the disagreement was reported as unresolved and not settled in favour of the expected finding. The cases in which this occurred are reported in Section 5.4.

Survivorship and availability bias arises because the documents that survive and remain publicly accessible are not a representative sample of the documents produced. Diplomatic activity generating no public record is systematically absent, and the absence is not random, since sensitive negotiation is precisely the activity least likely to be documented publicly. Missing documentary evidence for an outcome was therefore treated as weaker evidence than surviving documentary evidence for one, and such gaps are reported as gaps in the record and not as established non-occurrence.

3.8.2 Trustworthiness of the Study

Trustworthiness was addressed against the four criteria identified by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Credibility was addressed through the source hierarchy in Table 3.0, the credibility assessment in Table 3.1, and the triangulation of contested claims across document types reported in Section 5.4. Claims about politically contested matters, including water rights, implementation of the Cooperative Framework Agreement and hydro-hegemony, are supported by more than one type of source wherever the record permitted.

Transferability was addressed by describing the case, the period and the basin context in sufficient detail for a reader to judge which features of the findings might apply to other equatorial upstream riparians, and by stating explicitly in Section 6.1.4 which findings are specific to Uganda's institutional configuration.

Dependability was addressed through the audit trail described in Section 3.5.1, which links every item of evidence used in the analysis to a numbered entry in the Document Log, and through the reproducible search strategy at Appendix C.

Confirmability was addressed by presenting documentary evidence before interpretation throughout, by recording the identified bias of every institutional source in the Document Log, and by reporting evidence that did not support the study's expectations.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

No human participants were involved, so institutional ethical clearance for research with human subjects was not required. Documentary research nonetheless carries ethical obligations, and the following were observed.

Accurate representation. Documents were read in full where full text was available, and claims were reported in the sense their authors gave them. Where a document's position was summarised, the summary was checked against the original before use.

Attribution and contextual integrity. Every claim drawn from a document is attributed to that document. Institutional and legal documents are attributed to their actual issuing bodies and not to secondary authors who reproduced them, in accordance with Section 3.3. Quotations are reproduced exactly and in a context that preserves their original meaning.

Copyright and fair dealing. Quotation was limited to the extent necessary to support the analysis, and no substantial reproduction of copyright material was made.

Academic integrity. Rather than asserting that the work contains no plagiarism, which is an outcome the researcher cannot certify, the procedures adopted to secure integrity are stated. All material drawn from other works is either quoted with quotation marks and attribution or paraphrased with attribution. A reference was recorded at the point

of extraction for every item of evidence, so that no material entered the draft without an attached source. The reference list was reconciled against the in-text citations. The thesis was submitted to the similarity-checking process required by the University.

Responsible interpretation. The subject matter concerns a contested distributional question between states. Positions are reported as the parties themselves state them, reporting a position is separated from endorsing it, and no motive is attributed to any government beyond what its documents record.

3.10 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

3.10.1 Limitations

The following constraints arose from the method and materials and not from the researcher's choices.

Only publicly available documents were used. Diplomatic processes are conducted substantially in settings that generate no public record, and confidential diplomatic correspondence, negotiating instructions and internal assessments were not accessible. Declared positions and completed acts could therefore be established, but not the reasoning behind them.

Institutional and governmental documents advance the positions of their issuing bodies. The appraisal and corroboration procedures in Sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3 mitigate this without eliminating it, and the study's account of Uganda's own conduct rests partly on sources with an interest in that account.

Material was restricted to English-language sources and official English translations. Relevant material in Arabic and French, particularly on the downstream states' positions, may have been excluded, as discussed in Section 3.6.1.

Interpretations could not be verified with the officials whose institutions the documents concern. Findings on inter-ministerial coordination in particular rest on what public documents record about institutional arrangements and could not be checked against the working practice of the ministries involved.

Some material bearing on the most recent part of the period was available only in press reporting at the time of analysis, ahead of publication in institutional records. Such

material is identified in the text and in the Document Log as provisional, and no central finding relies on it without corroboration.

3.10.2 Delimitations

The following boundaries were set deliberately.

Uganda alone was examined as a case. Other Nile riparian states, including Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan, were examined only as counterparties to Ugandan diplomacy and not as cases.

The period covered ran from 14 May 2010 to 31 December 2025. Events before and after it were excluded from the substantive analysis, and earlier material was used only for the purposes stated in Section 3.6.2.

No primary data were collected from human participants. Interviews with officials, negotiators or basin institution staff were not conducted, and the study makes no claim to the kind of evidence such interviews would produce.

Coverage was confined to the Nile system. Uganda's other transboundary water relationships and its domestic water supply and sanitation policy were excluded except where they bore directly on Nile Basin diplomacy.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the findings of the documentary analysis. It is organised strictly by objective. Section 4.1 presents the findings for Objective One, Section 4.2 for Objective Two and Section 4.3 for Objective Three, so that the evidence bearing on each research question can be located without inference. Interpretation against the reviewed literature is reserved for Chapter Five, in keeping with the division of function between the two chapters.

Each analytical subsection follows the same sequence. The documentary evidence comes first, identifying the documents on which the finding rests. The pattern across those documents is then stated, followed by an interpretation, the theoretical explanation that accounts for it, and an alternative explanation. A mini-conclusion closes the subsection at a strength proportionate to the evidence.

The evidence base consisted of the 62 documents entered in the Document Log at Appendix A, of which 30 were primary documentary sources and 32 secondary documentary sources. Table 4.0 states its composition by document type and by the objective each document served. Because this was a documentary study, these documents performed the evidentiary function that interview material would perform in a study using primary human-subject data, and the summary tables in this chapter present that evidence in the form in which it was extracted.

Table 4.0: Composition of the Documentary Evidence Base

Document type	Class	Number	Principal objective served
Treaties, protocols and legal instruments	Primary	7	Objectives One and Three
Depositary, ratification and entry-into-force records	Primary	3	Objectives One and Two
Basin institution corporate records and reports	Primary	10	Objectives One and Two
Ugandan legislation, policy and planning documents	Primary	7	Objectives One and Three
Ministerial communiqués and official statements	Primary	3	Objectives One and Two
Peer-reviewed articles and monographs	Secondary	17	All three objectives
Theoretical and methodological literature	Secondary	11	Framework and method
Specialist legal commentary	Secondary	2	Objectives One, Two and Three
Attributed press and analytical reporting	Secondary	2	Objectives Two and Three
Total		62	Primary 30; Secondary 32

Source: Author's compilation from the Document Log (Appendix A).

4.1 Uganda's Diplomatic Strategies for Influencing Nile Basin Relations

Four strategies emerged from the documentary record. They are presented individually below, and Section 4.1.5 locates each on the graded scale of diplomatic influence defined in Table 1.0.

4.1.1 Participation in the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI)

Four classes of document recorded Uganda's institutional engagement. The Nile Basin Initiative Act of 2002 conferred legal capacity, privileges and immunities on the Initiative within Uganda, giving the organisation domestic statutory standing (Republic of Uganda, 2002). The Initiative's own institutional records establish that the Secretariat has been located at Entebbe since the Initiative's establishment on 22 February 1999, and that Uganda was a member throughout (Nile Basin Initiative, n.d.-

b). Its corporate and technical reporting recorded Ugandan participation in its technical processes and programmes across the study period (Nile Basin Initiative, 2021). Contemporary reporting recorded that Uganda held the rotating chairmanship of the Nile Council of Ministers during 2025 and, in that capacity, sought to convene a basin summit including riparian states that had not joined the Cooperative Framework Agreement (The Reporter, 2025).

The record showed continuity and not escalation. Uganda's engagement was present at every point in the period, registered in statute, in institutional location, in programme participation and in office-holding. What the record never showed was a document connecting that engagement to a change in another state's position.

Participation and influence require separation here, because the record supports the first far more strongly than the second. Uganda's institutional engagement is better described as the accumulation of standing than as the exercise of leverage. Hosting the Secretariat and holding the chairmanship gave Uganda access to the basin's agenda and a recognised voice in setting it, and the 2025 chairmanship showed that access being used, since Uganda pursued a summit format designed to include non-parties. That the summit was pursued and not convened forms part of the finding.

Two qualifications followed from the evidence. The chairmanship rotates annually among member states and Uganda had held it before, so the 2025 term was a recurring institutional role and the documentary record does not support describing it as a first. Hosting the Secretariat, meanwhile, is a matter of institutional geography that predates the study period and was not achieved by diplomacy within it.

Liberal Institutionalism accounts for the pattern: membership, office-holding and hosting reduced the cost of Uganda's participation in basin governance and secured it a standing seat in processes it could not convene alone (Keohane, 1984). A competing reading cannot be excluded. Uganda's continuous engagement may reflect the low cost of participation rather than its diplomatic productivity, since membership and attendance demanded little that Uganda would not have done in any event, and a state may sustain engagement because exit costs more than remaining. The documentary record is consistent with both readings, and the study did not resolve between them.

The documentary evidence established that Uganda achieved presence, participation, agenda-setting and institutional leadership through the Nile Basin Initiative. It did not establish that the engagement produced policy influence over any other riparian state.

4.1.2 Support for the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA)

The instrument itself and the depositary record attaching to it form the primary record. Uganda signed the Agreement at Entebbe on 14 May 2010, the day it was opened for signature, and deposited its instrument of ratification on 15 August 2019 (Nile Basin Initiative, n.d.-a; Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework, 2010). Article 4 establishes equitable and reasonable utilisation as the governing principle, and Article 14 commits the parties to work together so that all states achieve and sustain water security, with the text of Article 14(b) annexed unresolved for determination by the Nile River Basin Commission established under Article 15. Article 43 provides for entry into force sixty days after deposit of the sixth instrument. The African Union, as depositary, confirmed the status of deposits on 4 September 2024, and the Agreement entered into force on 13 October 2024 (Nile Basin Initiative, 2024).

Three matters run through this record, and the literature frequently conflates them. Uganda's declared position remained consistently supportive of the Agreement across the period. The formal legal development advanced from signature through ratification to entry into force. On the diplomatic consequence, the record showed no corresponding movement: Egypt and Sudan neither signed nor ratified, and the substantive question the Agreement was designed to settle remained in its annex.

The legal advance was real, and sustained upstream advocacy contributed to it, with Uganda participating as signatory, ratifying state and host of the Secretariat. The advance should not be read as evidence that the Agreement produced equitable governance. Entry into force altered the legal position among the six parties; the position of the non-parties remained untouched. Specialist legal analysis makes the mechanism explicit: a treaty creates neither obligations nor rights for a third state without its consent, so the Agreement binds only its parties (Tekuya, 2024). The consequence identified in the same analysis is that the Nile River Basin Commission cannot exercise the allocative functions the Agreement assigns it while the two largest consumers remain outside it. Salman (2024) reached a compatible assessment from a

different direction, treating entry into force as significant principally for closing the debate over the colonial-era instruments while leaving the distributional question open.

Uganda's nine-year interval between signature in 2010 and ratification in 2019 is a further feature of the record. The documents examined do not state the reason for it, and no inference is drawn here. It is noted because a study of advocacy should record the pace of the advocate's own compliance alongside its declared position.

Liberal Institutionalism accounts for the pursuit of a common legal framework as a means of stabilising expectations and lowering the cost of future cooperation among the parties. Neoclassical Realism accounts for the limit encountered, since the instrument's reach stopped precisely where the structural position of the stronger downstream state began. It is equally possible that the legal advance was driven principally by Ethiopia and by the accession of South Sudan, which supplied the sixth instrument, with Uganda's contribution supportive but not decisive. The documentary record does not permit the relative contributions of the six ratifying states to be distinguished, so the study attributed the advance to the upstream group collectively.

The documentary evidence established that Uganda advocated the Agreement consistently and contributed to its entry into force as one of six ratifying parties, and that entry into force changed the legal position among the parties. It did not establish that Uganda's advocacy produced any change in the position of Egypt or Sudan.

4.1.3 Coalition Building with Upstream States

The pattern of signature and ratification recorded by the depositary and the treaty organisation evidences the coalition. Six states signed the Agreement between May 2010 and February 2011: Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Burundi. Six completed ratification or accession by July 2024: Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi and South Sudan (Nile Basin Initiative, n.d.-a). Scholarly analysis identifies the upstream group as having acted with sufficient coordination to sustain a common position on the water security provision through the negotiation and to decline the downstream formulation (Cascão, 2009; Tekuya, 2024).

The record showed coordination around one specific and identifiable issue and not a general alliance. The issue was the formulation of Article 14(b) and, more broadly, the rejection of prior-use and consent claims. The mechanism was the treaty process itself,

in which the upstream states' collective refusal to accept the downstream formulation, and their subsequent ratifications, constituted the coalition's action. The partners are identifiable by name and by act, so the coalition is evidenced and not merely asserted.

Two features of the coalition emerged. Its cohesion was issue-specific: the states named above acted together on the formulation of the Agreement, but the record shows no common position across the wider range of basin questions, and Kenya, a signatory, never deposited an instrument of ratification. Its line was also set disproportionately by its strongest member. Ethiopia ratified first, in June 2013, and its infrastructural position on the Blue Nile gives it a material stake in the basin's terms that the equatorial riparians do not share (Tawfik, 2016; Cascão, 2009). Uganda appears in the record as a consistent participant in a common position and not as its author.

Proposition P4 in Table 1.1 anticipates this pattern, holding that coalition membership raises a small state's aggregate influence while bounding its independent influence, because the coalition line is set by its strongest member. The evidence is consistent with the proposition. The apparent asymmetry may nonetheless reflect the order of ratification and not the direction of influence, since a state may ratify early for domestic reasons unconnected to leadership of a bloc. The record does not distinguish these, and the finding is stated accordingly.

The documentary evidence established that Uganda participated in an identifiable upstream coalition, that the coalition formed around the water security provision and the rejection of prior-use claims, and that it achieved a common position sufficient to carry the Agreement into force. It did not establish that Uganda set the coalition's position, and the record indicates that the coalition's cohesion was specific to this issue.

4.1.4 Bilateral Diplomacy with Downstream States

Egypt and Sudan are treated separately within this section. They occupy different political, hydrological and diplomatic positions, and the documentary evidence shows Uganda's engagement with each to have encountered a different constraint, so a single downstream category would obscure the difference.

Engagement with Egypt. Reporting on ministerial and head-of-state contacts, together with the standing positions the two governments maintain, forms the record. Uganda's position, expressed through its signature and ratification of the Agreement and its

conduct in basin institutions, was that basin governance should rest on equitable and reasonable utilisation. Egypt's position, expressed in its non-signature and its stated objections during negotiation, was that any framework must preserve its existing uses and rights (Tekuya, 2024; Kikoyo & Patricia, 2026). Contemporary reporting recorded that Uganda, holding the chairmanship of the Nile Council of Ministers in 2025, sought a summit format that would include Egypt and Sudan (The Reporter, 2025). Across fifteen years the record contains no document in which Egypt altered a declared position following Ugandan action. Neither does it record a rupture: contact continued, Egypt remained a member of the Nile Basin Initiative, and Uganda's chairmanship initiative aimed at inclusion. Uganda's bilateral diplomacy with Egypt is therefore best described as relationship management within a fixed disagreement.

Engagement with Sudan. Sudan's position in the record differed from Egypt's in two respects the documents support. Sudan's position on basin arrangements was less consistent; although it never signed the Agreement, its alignment with Egypt varied, and it at times assessed upstream infrastructure as carrying benefits for its own water management alongside risks (Ecofin Agency, 2025). Sudan's capacity to sustain a basin diplomatic position was also affected by internal instability during the later part of the period. The record shows a counterparty whose position was more variable and whose engagement was more intermittent than Egypt's, and it contains no document recording Sudanese accession or a formal change of position following Ugandan action.

Contact was maintained with both states without recorded convergence in either case. The analytical significance of separating them is that an identical outcome has two different explanations. In the Egyptian case, the absence of convergence is attributable to a settled position backed by structural resources. In the Sudanese case, the record indicates a less settled position, in which the constraint on Ugandan diplomacy was the counterparty's diminished capacity to conclude and sustain commitments and not its determined resistance. A category merging the two would attribute both to downstream resistance and would misidentify the constraint in the Sudanese case.

The absence of recorded convergence is a substantive finding, but its evidentiary status requires care. Bilateral diplomatic exchange is among the least publicly documented forms of state activity, so a missing record of a shift is weaker evidence than a surviving record of one would be. What the record supports is that no publicly recorded change

in the declared position of either state followed Ugandan bilateral action during the period.

Neoclassical Realism accounts for the Egyptian case, since the outcome of bilateral engagement between a structurally weaker and a structurally stronger riparian is bounded by the difference in their positions, and Egypt's material, bargaining and ideational resources in the basin exceed Uganda's on each dimension (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006). The same theory accounts for the Sudanese case when applied to the counterparty rather than to Uganda. A state's capacity to convert its position into foreign policy depends on its domestic institutional condition, and a counterparty whose domestic condition is unstable cannot deliver a durable diplomatic outcome, whatever the merits of the approach made to it (Rose, 1998; Schweller, 2004). Two alternative readings are available and the evidence excludes neither. Maintained contact with Egypt may itself have been the intended outcome and not a failed attempt at conversion, in which case the diplomacy succeeded in its actual purpose. Sudanese variability may reflect tactical positioning between Egypt and the upstream group and not institutional incapacity. Section 5.1.2 examines the first of these.

The documentary evidence established that Uganda maintained bilateral engagement with both downstream states throughout the period and pursued an inclusive summit format in 2025. It recorded no change in the declared position of either state following Ugandan action, and that gap is reported as a gap in the public record.

4.1.5 Summary of Findings for Objective One

Table 4.2 summarises the documentary evidence for each strategy and states the highest level of diplomatic influence the evidence supports. Figure 4.0 presents the graded scale and marks the level at which the record ceased to support the finding.

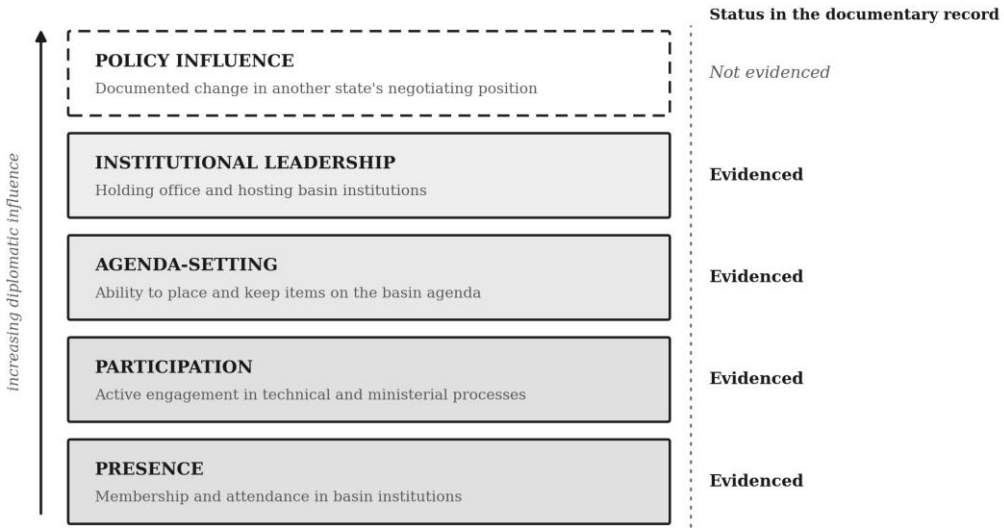
Table 4.1: Uganda's Diplomatic Strategies and the Level of Influence Evidenced

Strategy	Principal documentary evidence	Type	Period	Highest level evidenced
Participation in the NBI	NBI Act 2002; NBI institutional records; Secretariat location; 2025 Nile-COM chairmanship	Primary and secondary	2010 to 2025	4. Institutional leadership

Strategy	Principal documentary evidence	Type	Period	Highest level evidenced
Support for the CFA	CFA text Arts. 4, 14, 15, 43; signature 14 May 2010; ratification 15 Aug 2019; entry into force 13 Oct 2024	Primary	2010 to 2024	3. Agenda-setting
Coalition building with upstream states	Pattern of signature and ratification by six states; negotiation record on Art. 14(b)	Primary and secondary	2010 to 2024	3. Agenda-setting
Bilateral diplomacy with Egypt	Standing positions of both states; 2025 summit initiative	Secondary	2010 to 2025	2. Participation
Bilateral diplomacy with Sudan	Record of variable Sudanese positioning; effect of domestic instability	Secondary	2010 to 2025	2. Participation

Source*: Author's compilation from the Document Log* (Appendix A).

Figure 4.0: Levels of Diplomatic Influence and the Point at Which the Documentary Record Ceases to Support the Finding



Source*: Author's compilation, applying the scale defined in Table 1.0.*

The finding for Objective One was therefore as follows. Uganda pursued four identifiable strategies. The documentary evidence supported achievement up to and including institutional leadership. It did not support achievement at the level of policy influence, defined as a documented change in another state's declared negotiating

position. That distinction is the principal analytical result of this objective and carries forward into Sections 4.2 and 5.1.

4.2 The Impact of Uganda's Diplomatic Strategies on Regional Cooperation

This section assesses what Uganda's strategies achieved against the six documentary indicators of regional cooperation established in Table 2.0. Each indicator is examined separately, since the indicators measure different things and evidence at one level does not entail achievement at another.

4.2.1 Institutional Continuity

The Nile Basin Initiative has existed continuously since 22 February 1999, with its Secretariat at Entebbe, its Council of Ministers and its Technical Advisory Committee functioning throughout the study period, and its subsidiary offices operating in Addis Ababa and Kigali (Nile Basin Initiative, n.d.-b, 2021). Uganda's statutory recognition of the Initiative remained in force throughout (Republic of Uganda, 2002).

Continuity is established. Attribution is more limited. The Initiative's persistence was a collective achievement of its members, and the record does not permit Uganda's specific contribution to be isolated beyond hosting the Secretariat and maintaining the statutory framework that supports it. Hosting is nonetheless a material contribution, since a secretariat requires a host state that affords it standing.

Indicator 1 was met, and Uganda's contribution to it is evidenced through hosting and statutory recognition.

4.2.2 Sustained Dialogue

The ministerial and technical organs of the Initiative convened across the period, and Uganda participated in them and at points chaired them (Nile Basin Initiative, 2021; The Reporter, 2025). The 2025 chairmanship initiative to convene a summit including non-parties is recorded, though the summit itself is not recorded as having taken place within the study period.

Dialogue was sustained, including with states that reject the Agreement, since Egypt and Sudan remained members of the Initiative notwithstanding their position on the treaty. That is a substantive achievement and does not reduce to the treaty question: a

forum in which parties and non-parties both sit is the condition on which any later convergence would depend. It nonetheless remains dialogue and not agreement, and the study records it at that level.

Indicator 2 was met. Uganda contributed to it through participation and through its 2025 chairmanship initiative.

4.2.3 Technical Cooperation

The Initiative's technical programmes, basin monitoring, data and information services and joint assessments operated across the period, with the State of the River Nile Basin reporting representing a joint analytical product of the member states (Nile Basin Initiative, 2021). The Initiative's reporting records Uganda's participation in these processes.

Technical cooperation is evidenced, and it was the domain in which cooperation appeared most consistently across the period, including during phases of political disagreement. Liberal Institutionalism predicts exactly this: the functional benefits of shared data and joint assessment are available to all members irrespective of their position on allocation, so cooperation persists in this domain when it stalls elsewhere (Keohane, 1984).

The evidentiary qualification stated in Section 2.5.1 applies with particular force here, since the principal source is the institution reporting on its own programmes. What the evidence supports is that these programmes were operated and reported. Claims about their effectiveness rest on institutional self-assessment and were treated as declared positions.

Indicator 3 was met, with the qualification that its evidence is substantially institutional self-reporting.

4.2.4 Legal and Institutional Advancement

Six states signed the Agreement between 2010 and 2011, six ratified or acceded between 2013 and 2024, and it entered into force on 13 October 2024 following the African Union's confirmation of deposits on 4 September 2024 (Nile Basin Initiative, n.d.-a, 2024). Uganda signed on the opening day and ratified on 15 August 2019.

This was the strongest cooperation outcome in the record and the clearest instance of movement during the study period. Its scope requires precision. The Agreement is in force among its parties and provides for a Nile River Basin Commission under Article 15, but Article 14(b) remains annexed and unresolved, and the Commission cannot exercise its allocative functions in the absence of the principal downstream consumers (Tekuya, 2024). Legal advancement therefore occurred within the upstream group and did not extend to the basin.

Indicator 4 was met among the parties to the Agreement and was not met at basin level.

4.2.5 Coalition Cohesion

The coordinated pattern of signature and ratification described in Section 4.1.3, together with the common upstream position on Article 14(b) maintained through the negotiation, supplies the evidence (Cascão, 2009; Tekuya, 2024).

Cohesion is evidenced on the treaty question and not as a general feature of the group. Kenya signed without ratifying, and the equatorial riparians and Ethiopia hold materially different stakes in the basin's terms. What the record shows is therefore issue-specific alignment and not a standing alliance, a distinction Section 5.1.1

Indicator 5 was met on the treaty question and is not evidenced beyond it.

4.2.6 Convergence of Negotiating Positions

No document in the evidence base records Egypt or Sudan altering a declared position on the Agreement, on the status of the 1929 and 1959 instruments, or on the water security formulation, during the study period. Both remain non-parties, and Article 14(b) remains in the annex.

Indicator 6, the strongest form of cooperation and the one that would resolve the basin's distributional question, was not met. The finding is stated as a gap in the public documentary record and not as established non-occurrence, in accordance with Section 3.8.1, since positions may shift in settings that generate no public document. The gap was nonetheless consistent across fifteen years and across document types, which is the strongest form the finding can take on documentary evidence.

Indicator 6 was not met on the available record.

4.2.7 Summary of Findings for Objective Two

Table 4.2 states the assessment against each indicator.

Table 4.2: Assessment Against the Documentary Indicators of Regional Cooperation

Level	Indicator	Assessment	Principal evidence	Uganda's evidenced contribution
1	Institutional continuity	Met	NBI institutional records 1999 to 2025; NBI Act 2002	Hosts the Secretariat; statutory recognition
2	Sustained dialogue	Met	Ministerial and technical organs convened; 2025 chairmanship initiative	Participation; chairmanship; inclusive summit initiative
3	Technical cooperation	Met, on institutional self-reporting	NBI technical programmes and basin reporting	Participation in joint technical processes
4	Legal and institutional advancement	Met among parties; not met basin-wide	Signature, ratification and entry into force records; CFA Arts. 15, 43	Signatory 2010; ratifying state 2019
5	Coalition cohesion	Met on the treaty question only	Coordinated signature and ratification; common position on Art. 14(b)	Consistent participation in the common position
6	Convergence of negotiating positions	Not met on the available record	No document records a change in Egyptian or Sudanese position	None evidenced

Source: *Author's compilation from the Document Log* (Appendix A).

The finding for Objective Two was that Uganda's strategies were associated with achievement at the first five indicators and with no achievement at the sixth. The profile was asymmetric: strong at the procedural, technical and legal levels, absent at the distributional level. Cascão's (2009) qualification anticipates that shape, and the two theories jointly predict it. Section 5.1 examines it.

4.3 Challenges Faced by Uganda in Advocating for Fair Water Governance

This section presents the constraints recorded in the documentary evidence. Each subsection corresponds to one level of the typology established in Table 2.1

, because the level at which a constraint operates determines whether any national action could address it. Section 5.2 interprets these findings.

4.3.1 Hydro-Hegemonic Resistance

Three elements of the record constitute the structural constraint. Egypt and Sudan maintain that the 1929 and 1959 instruments retain validity while the upstream states maintain that they do not, and no authoritative determination has resolved the question (Tekuya, 2024; Salman, 2013). The third-party rule means the Agreement binds only its parties, so entry into force could not alter the legal position of the non-parties, and the Nile River Basin Commission cannot exercise allocative functions without them (Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework, 2010, Arts. 15, 26, 43; Tekuya, 2024). Asymmetry of dependence and capability completes the picture: Egypt draws most of its freshwater from the Nile and has a correspondingly high stake in the existing allocation, alongside diplomatic and financial resources exceeding those of the equatorial riparians (Ecofin Agency, 2025; Zeitoun & Warner, 2006).

The constraint is structural in the precise sense that it does not arise from anything Uganda does or fails to do. A state cannot unilaterally make a treaty bind a non-party, and it cannot alter another state's dependence on a watercourse. The ceiling on Uganda's influence recorded in Section 4.1.5 is set here.

Egypt's position requires characterisation as an interest and not as simple obstruction, both for analytical accuracy and because the alternative would misdescribe the constraint. The documentary record establishes a high and quantified dependence on the Nile for freshwater supply and a correspondingly acute exposure to upstream abstraction and storage (Ecofin Agency, 2025). A position grounded in that exposure is intelligible on its own terms, whatever its implications for equitable governance. Section 5.2.1 develops the point.

Neoclassical Realism and the hydro-hegemony framework converge here, since the outcome is bounded by the distribution of material, bargaining and ideational resources

in the basin (Zeitoun & Warner, 2006; Rose, 1998). The constraint might instead be characterised as legal and not structural, given that the third-party rule would bind even a materially weak downstream state. Both operate, and the record does not require a choice between them.

Hydro-hegemonic resistance is evidenced as a structural constraint and was not amenable to unilateral Ugandan action.

4.3.2 Weak Bargaining Position

Two relational constraints appear in the record. The first is asymmetry within the upstream coalition. Ethiopia holds a materially different position from the equatorial riparians, arising from its control of the Blue Nile headwaters and from the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. The dam was inaugurated on 9 September 2025 with an installed capacity of 5,000 megawatts and a reservoir of 74 billion cubic metres. Filling had begun in 2020, without a concluded agreement with Egypt and Sudan under the 2015 Declaration of Principles (Ecofin Agency, 2025). The second is the condition of the counterparty, addressed in Section 4.1.4 in respect of Sudan.

Uganda exercised influence largely through a coalition whose line reflected its strongest member's position, and against a set of counterparties one of which was institutionally unstable. The constraint is relational because it arises from Uganda's position relative to others and not from the basin's structure or from Uganda's own administration, and coalition management makes it partially amenable to national action.

The comparison with Ethiopia requires a specific caution. The documentary evidence establishes that Ethiopia holds a different hydrological position and constructed major infrastructure. It does not establish that infrastructure automatically confers bargaining power. What the record shows is that Ethiopia proceeded with filling in the absence of a concluded agreement and that no arrangement was subsequently concluded, which evidences a failure to constrain Ethiopia rather than directly evidencing that the dam produced negotiating leverage. Section 5.2.2 maintains the distinction.

Proposition P4 anticipates the coalition finding and is supported. Uganda's alignment with the coalition line may equally reflect convergence of interest and not constraint, since a state that agrees with a position is not thereby constrained by it. The record does not distinguish agreement from acquiescence.

A weak bargaining position relative to Ethiopia is evidenced, in the form of intra-coalition asymmetry and counterparty instability. The inference that Ethiopian infrastructure produced bargaining leverage is not established by the evidence and is not claimed.

4.3.3 Policy Coordination Challenges

Uganda's institutional arrangements for basin engagement are distributed across government. Responsibility for transboundary water affairs rests with the Directorate of Water Resources Management in the Ministry of Water and Environment. Its stated mandate is to secure and safeguard Uganda's interests in the shared waters of the Nile and to represent Uganda in the Nile Basin Initiative, the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and related platforms (Ministry of Water and Environment, n.d.). Responsibility for foreign policy and for the conduct of diplomatic relations rests with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.). Responsibility for national development planning, within which water and energy investment is programmed, rests with the National Planning Authority (National Planning Authority, 2025). Uganda's development on the Victoria Nile advanced substantially within the period, with the 183-megawatt Isimba plant commissioned in 2019 and the 600-megawatt Karuma plant in 2024.

The record establishes a distributed institutional arrangement in which the technical mandate, the diplomatic mandate and the planning mandate sit in three separate bodies. It establishes that substantial infrastructure was developed on the Victoria Nile during a period in which Uganda advocated a basin framework grounded in equitable and reasonable utilisation.

What the record does not establish is a causal link between the distribution of mandates and any specific diplomatic outcome. The distinction is essential and is drawn here deliberately. That coordination arrangements are distributed is documented. That the distribution weakened Uganda's negotiating position is an inference, and one the documents examined do not confirm. What is recorded here is therefore a documented institutional condition alongside an inference the evidence does not establish, and the latter is not presented as a finding. Section 5.2.3 examines what can properly be concluded.

Neoclassical Realism identifies domestic institutional capacity as the mechanism by which structural position is converted into foreign policy, and Proposition P2 anticipates that recorded coordination gaps would coincide with weakened negotiating outcomes (Rose, 1998; Schweller, 2004). The evidence establishes the institutional condition without establishing the coincidence, so P2 is supported in its first element and unestablished in its second. The distributed arrangement may equally be the standard configuration in comparable states and carry no diplomatic consequence, since technical, diplomatic and planning mandates are ordinarily separated in government.

A distributed institutional arrangement for basin engagement is documented. Its diplomatic consequence is not established by the documentary evidence and is not claimed.

4.3.4 Summary of Findings for Objective Three

Table 4.3: Constraints on Uganda's Advocacy by Level of Operation

Level	Constraint	Principal documentary evidence	Evidentiary status	Amenable to national action
Structural (4.3.1)	Contested legal order; unresolved status of 1929 and 1959 instruments	Treaty text; legal commentary (Tekuya, 2024; Salman, 2013)	Established	No
Structural (4.3.1)	Third-party rule limits CFA to its parties; Commission cannot allocate without downstream states	CFA Arts. 15, 26, 43; Tekuya (2024)	Established	No
Structural (4.3.1)	Asymmetry of dependence and diplomatic capability	Reporting on Egyptian freshwater dependence; hydro-hegemony scholarship	Established	No
Relational (4.3.2)	Coalition line set disproportionately by its strongest member	Ratification sequence; GERD record; Tawfik (2016); Cascão (2009)	Established	Partially

Level	Constraint	Principal documentary evidence	Evidentiary status	Amenable to national action
Relational (4.3.2)	Counterparty instability limiting the durability of bilateral outcomes	Reporting on Sudan's position across the period	Established	No
Domestic institutional (4.3.3)	Mandates for water, foreign affairs and planning distributed across three bodies	MWE, MoFA and NPA institutional records	Condition established; diplomatic consequence not established	Yes
Domestic institutional (4.3.3)	Domestic infrastructure development concurrent with basin advocacy	Isimba 2019 and Karuma 2024 commissioning	Condition established; diplomatic consequence not established	Yes

Source*: Author's compilation from the Document Log* (Appendix A).

4.4 Summary of Findings

For Objective One, four diplomatic strategies emerged from the documentary record, and the evidence supported Uganda's achievement up to and including institutional leadership while stopping short of the level of policy influence.

For Objective Two, Uganda's strategies were associated with achievement at five of the six defined indicators of regional cooperation. Institutional continuity, sustained dialogue, technical cooperation, legal advancement among the parties and issue-specific coalition cohesion are all evidenced. Convergence of negotiating positions is not evidenced on the available record.

For Objective Three, constraints emerged at all three levels of the typology. Hydro-hegemonic resistance is established as a structural constraint not amenable to unilateral Ugandan action. A weak bargaining position relative to Ethiopia is established as a relational constraint, partially amenable. Policy coordination challenges are documented as an institutional condition, but their diplomatic consequences are not established by the documentary evidence and are not claimed as findings.

Chapter Five discusses these findings against the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and against the theoretical propositions stated in Table 1.1.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter Four against the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and the theoretical propositions stated in Table 1.1. Its purpose is to establish the relationship between each finding and existing scholarship: whether the finding supports, contradicts, qualifies or extends what previous studies argued.

Section 5.1 discusses what Uganda's strategies achieved. It covers the cooperation outcomes of Objective Two in the section and in Section 5.1.1, and the reach of the strategies themselves under Objective One in Section 5.1.2. Section 5.2 discusses the constraints identified under Objective Three, taking each of the three findings of Section 4.3 in turn. Section 5.3 assesses the four theoretical propositions against the evidence. Section 5.4 reports the triangulation of the study's most contested claims, and Section 5.5 summarises the discussion.

5.1 Promotion of Dialogue and Trust-Building

Dialogue and trust are treated here as two claims and not one, because the documentary evidence supports them to different degrees and earlier accounts of Uganda's basin diplomacy, including an earlier draft of this study, ran them together.

The documentary record establishes that meetings were convened and attended, that technical exchange continued, and that parties disagreeing fundamentally about allocation remained within a common institutional framework across fifteen years. That constitutes continued dialogue, and Section 4.2.2 records it as met. Trust is a different proposition. Establishing it would require documentary indicators of another kind: joint statements expressing improved relations, negotiated agreements concluded on previously contested matters, sustained cooperation extended into areas of higher sensitivity, or explicit references by one party to increased confidence in another. The evidence base contains no such indicators bearing on the relationship between Uganda and the downstream states.

The conclusion the evidence supports is therefore weaker than the earlier formulation and better founded. Continued institutional engagement sustains the conditions under

which trust could develop, since it preserves contact and generates repeated interaction, which is the mechanism Keohane (1984) identifies in lengthening the shadow of the future. It is not itself evidence that trust developed. Attendance at a meeting records attendance.

The wider cooperation profile bears on the same point. Section 4.2 found five of six indicators met and the sixth unmet, and that asymmetric shape qualifies the institutionalist position reviewed in Section 2.1.1 without contradicting it. Sadoff and Grey (2002) and Wheeler et al. (2018) argued that basin institutions allow riparians to capture benefits unavailable through unilateral action. The present findings support that argument at the levels of technical and procedural benefit, which Section 4.2.3 evidence directly, and qualify it at the level of distributive benefit, since fifteen years of engagement produced no recorded movement on allocation. The institutionalist literature does not claim that institutions redistribute; it claims that they enable joint gains. What this study found is that the joint gains available in the Nile Basin have been concentrated in domains where the distributive question does not arise and have been unavailable in the one domain where it does. That points to a boundary condition the general literature leaves unstated: where the principal joint good in a basin is contested allocation itself, institutional cooperation delivers benefits that are real but structurally confined to the periphery of the dispute.

5.1.1 Strengthening Cooperation Among Upstream States

Section 4.2.5 records coalition cohesion as met on the treaty question and unevidenced beyond it. Whether that strengthening of upstream cooperation constitutes regional cooperation depends on what the term is taken to mean, and the answer shapes how the finding must be reported.

Two readings are available on the evidence. On the first, the upstream coalition was a genuine cooperative achievement, in that six states with divergent development priorities sustained a common legal position across fourteen years and carried an instrument into force, which is coordination of a demanding kind. On the second, the coalition was strategic alignment against a perceived common adversary and not cooperation in any thicker sense, since its cohesion attached specifically to the issue on which the states' interests converged against Egypt and Sudan and did not appear on questions where upstream interests diverged from one another.

The evidence supports the second reading more strongly, on three grounds. Kenya signed the Agreement in 2010 and never deposited an instrument of ratification, which indicates that the common position did not translate into uniform action. Ethiopia's material stake in the basin's terms differs from that of the equatorial riparians, as Section 4.3.2 records. And the record contains no evidence of a common upstream position on questions other than the treaty and the water security formulation.

Reading the coalition as strategic alignment qualifies the institutionalist account of upstream coordination and supports Cascão and Zeitoun's (2010) observation that the upstream group is not a unitary actor. It also carries a consequence for the term itself. Describing the upstream bloc as evidence of regional cooperation, without qualification, applies a term denoting basin-wide joint governance to what the evidence shows to be a coalition of some riparians organised in opposition to others. Indicator 5 is therefore reported as issue-specific alignment.

5.1.2 Limitations of Uganda's Diplomatic Influence

This subsection discusses the finding for Objective One, that Uganda's strategies reached institutional leadership and stopped short of policy influence, and establishes what that limitation does and does not mean.

The findings extend Cascão's (2009) counter-hegemonic account in one respect. Cascão distinguished contesting the legitimacy of a basin regime from displacing it and argued that upstream states achieved the former. The present study supports that distinction and adds a second one within it. Contesting legitimacy is itself composed of separable achievements: securing institutional standing, securing a legal instrument, and securing a change in the counterparty's position. Uganda's record shows the first two achieved and the third not, which indicates that a counter-hegemonic project can advance substantially in legal and institutional form while remaining wholly stalled at the point where it would bind the hegemon. That extension was possible only because the study applied a graded conception of influence. The literature's tendency to treat participation and influence interchangeably, noted in Section 2.1, obscures exactly this result, since a state can be described as influential on the strength of its office-holding, or as ineffective on the strength of the unchanged allocation, and both descriptions would be defensible without the intermediate distinctions.

Limited influence must nonetheless be distinguished from failure. A state's diplomacy fails when it does not achieve what it sought and loses ground it held. Uganda's record shows neither loss. Across the period it retained institutional access, hosted the Secretariat, held the ministerial chairmanship, secured ratification of the instrument it advocated and saw that instrument enter into force. It maintained relations with the states that oppose it, which remain within the shared institutional framework. What it did not achieve was a change in another state's negotiating position, which Section 4.3.1 establishes to be constrained by factors Uganda cannot alter unilaterally. Uganda's influence was therefore real, bounded and located at identifiable levels: it operated at institutional access, agenda-setting and legal advocacy, and stopped at policy influence. Assessing that outcome against a standard of basin-wide distributive change would set a standard no equatorial riparian could meet and would produce a finding about the basin's structure and not about Uganda's diplomacy.

One further finding under this objective has no direct counterpart in the reviewed literature, which generally treats the downstream states as a single category. Section 4.1.4 found that Uganda's bilateral relations with Egypt and with Sudan encountered different constraints. The finding does not contradict the literature, since the two states do share a position on the Agreement, but it adds a distinction with analytical consequence: an identical outcome, the absence of recorded convergence, has two different explanations. In the Egyptian case the explanation is a settled position supported by structural resources; in the Sudanese case it is a counterparty whose institutional condition limited its capacity to conclude and sustain commitments. A strategy calculated to address downstream resistance would therefore be mis-specified for Sudan, where the recorded impediment was capacity and not determination. That distinction informs the recommendation in Section 6.2.1 concerning differentiated bilateral engagement.

5.2 Challenges Faced by Uganda in Advocating for Fair Water Governance

5.2.1 Hydro-Hegemonic Resistance

The hydro-hegemony literature reviewed in Section 2.3.1 supplies the framework within which Egypt's role is ordinarily analysed, and the present findings support its central claim. The basin's distributional order has proved durable, and institutional

cooperation has not disturbed it. The findings also indicate that the framework becomes most useful once Egypt's position is characterised as an interest and not as a disposition to obstruct.

The evidence establishes a high and quantified dependence: Egypt draws most of its freshwater from the Nile, and its available supply falls materially short of its assessed requirement (Ecofin Agency, 2025). A state in that position has an intelligible reason to resist any instrument qualifying its existing uses without a corresponding guarantee, and the substance of its objection during the Article 14(b) negotiation was precisely a guarantee of existing uses and rights (Tekuya, 2024). The objection is legible as a security claim, whatever its implications for the upstream states.

That characterisation strengthens the study's assessment rather than weakening it, for two reasons. It identifies the constraint accurately, since a position grounded in acute resource dependence is more durable than one grounded in preference and correspondingly less likely to yield to advocacy. It also identifies where movement might be possible. If Egypt's objection concerns assurance about existing uses and not the principle of equitable utilisation, the negotiable question becomes the assurance mechanism and not the principle, which is the question Article 14(b) was annexed to resolve. A framing that treated Egypt as simply obstructive would foreclose that observation.

The finding therefore extends the hydro-hegemony account by specifying the content of the hegemon's interest, instead of treating hegemony as a sufficient explanation of its conduct.

5.2.2 Weak Bargaining Position

An earlier draft of this study argued that Ethiopia holds greater bargaining leverage than Uganda because of its hydrological position and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. The finding is retained in modified form, and the modification concerns what the documentary evidence establishes.

Four things are established. Ethiopia's hydrological position differs from Uganda's. It constructed and inaugurated major infrastructure within the period. It began filling the reservoir in 2020 without a concluded agreement with Egypt and Sudan under the 2015 Declaration of Principles, and no agreement was subsequently concluded (Ecofin

Agency, 2025). Within the coalition, Ethiopia ratified the Agreement first and its material stake in the basin's terms differs from that of the equatorial riparians.

What is not established is that the existence of a large infrastructure project automatically determines diplomatic bargaining power. That proposition would require evidence connecting the project to a negotiating outcome, and the record supports only a weaker formulation: Ethiopia proceeded without agreement and was not successfully constrained. Evidence of an absence of constraint on Ethiopia is not evidence of leverage exercised by Ethiopia, and the two should not be conflated.

The defensible comparison is therefore narrower and rests on the distinction Tawfik (2016) and Cascão (2009) draw between material position and negotiating outcome. Uganda and Ethiopia occupy different material positions, and the record shows Ethiopia acting unilaterally on the watercourse while Uganda acted through institutions and instruments. This study's evidence cannot settle whether the difference in position explains the difference in conduct, or whether both follow from other factors. The question is identified in Section 6.3 as an area for further research.

5.2.3 Policy Coordination Challenges

Section 4.3.3 records a documented institutional condition and declines to claim a diplomatic consequence from it. This subsection states what can properly be concluded, since the case is the clearest illustration in the study of the boundary of documentary inference.

Three things are documented. Responsibility for transboundary water affairs sits with the Directorate of Water Resources Management in the Ministry of Water and Environment, responsibility for diplomatic conduct with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and responsibility for development planning with the National Planning Authority (Ministry of Water and Environment, n.d.; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.; National Planning Authority, 2025). Substantial hydropower infrastructure was commissioned on the Victoria Nile during the same period in which Uganda advocated a framework grounded in equitable and reasonable utilisation. Kikoyo and Patricia (2026) identify the alignment of national development strategies with basin-wide objectives as a general condition of cooperative outcomes in the basin.

Three things are not documented, and the earlier draft of this study asserted the second of them. There is no record that these arrangements produced inconsistent messaging to basin partners. There is no record that any negotiating outcome was weakened by coordination gaps. There is no record that basin partners interpreted Uganda's domestic projects as signals of unilateral intent.

The conclusion the evidence supports is conditional. The literature identifies alignment between national development strategy and basin commitments as a condition of cooperative outcomes; Uganda's mandates for development, water and diplomacy sit in three institutions; and Uganda pursued substantial domestic development on the watercourse while advocating a basin framework. Whether these facts are connected in the way the literature's general proposition would suggest is question documentary evidence of this kind cannot answer, because the connection would be established, if at all, in negotiating records and internal assessments that are not public. Establishing it would require interviews with officials in the three institutions; a priority identified in Section 6.3.

Stating the limit does not weaken the finding but locates it. What was established is a condition the literature identifies as consequential, together with the evidence that would be required to determine whether it was consequential here. That is a more useful result than an unsupported causal claim, and it is the result the documentary method can properly deliver.

5.3 Theoretical Discussion

The two theories were applied at the close of each major finding in Chapter Four rather than concentrated in Chapter One, and this section draws those applications together. Table 5.0 assesses each of the four propositions stated in Table 1.1 against the documentary evidence, stating what the evidence showed, whether an alternative explanation accounts for it, and the resulting status of the proposition.

Table 5.0: Assessment of the Theoretical Propositions Against the Documentary Evidence

Proposition	What the evidence showed	Alternative explanation considered	Status
P1. Upstream position sets the range of available strategies but does not determine their outcome	Four strategies grounded in riparian standing; achievement to institutional leadership; no recorded change in downstream positions	That the strategies were pursued for reasons unrelated to riparian position	Supported
P2. Conversion of position into influence is mediated by domestic institutional capacity	Distributed institutional mandates documented; coincidence with weakened negotiating outcomes not documented	That distributed mandates are standard practice with no diplomatic consequence	Partially supported; second element not established
P3. Institutional engagement sustains cooperation under asymmetry without resolving distributional conflict	Five of six cooperation indicators met; sixth not met across fifteen years	That participation reflects low exit costs rather than institutional benefit	Supported
P4. Coalition membership raises a small state's influence but is bounded by asymmetry within the coalition	Common position achieved and instrument carried into force; coalition line reflects its strongest member; cohesion issue-specific	That Uganda's alignment reflects agreement rather than constraint	Supported, with the alternative not excluded

Source*: Author's assessment from the documentary evidence presented in Chapter Four.*

The asymmetric cooperation profile in Table 4.2 is the pattern both theories jointly predict, and the joint prediction proves more informative than either theory alone. Liberal Institutionalism explains why the first five indicators held. Institutions supply functional benefits available irrespective of a member's position on the underlying dispute, so members continue to participate because participation pays independently of the dispute's resolution (Keohane, 1984; Keohane & Nye, 2012). Neoclassical Realism explains why the sixth did not. The distributive question engages the structural position of the parties directly, and no amount of institutional activity alters the distribution of material, bargaining and ideational resources sustaining the existing allocation (Rose, 1998; Zeitoun & Warner, 2006).

Neither theory alone accounts for the whole profile. Applied without the structural account, Liberal Institutionalism would predict cumulative movement towards the sixth indicator that the record does not show. Applied without the institutionalist account, the structural reading would predict cooperation's collapse or its reduction to formality, whereas the record shows genuine and sustained technical activity. That is the specific analytical benefit of the integrated framework set out in Section 1.8.3, and it is the reason both theories were retained.

5.4 Triangulation of Contested Claims

The study's most contested claims were supported by more than one type of documentary source before being relied upon, in accordance with Section 3.4.3. Table 5.2 reports the triangulation for the four claims most exposed to challenge and records the two cases in which sources conflicted or corroboration was only partial.

Table 5.1: Triangulation of the Study's Principal Contested Claims

Claim	Official or legal source	Institutional source	Independent scholarly or legal source	Outcome
The CFA entered into force on 13 October 2024	CFA Art. 43; AU depositary confirmation of 4 September 2024	NBI announcement of entry into force	Salman (2024); Tekuya (2024)	Corroborated
Uganda ratified the CFA on 15 August 2019	Depositary and ratification record	NBI ratification record	Kikoyo and Patricia (2026) record ratification by 2023	Conflict; resolved by source hierarchy in favour of the institutional record
Entry into force did not alter the legal position of Egypt and Sudan	CFA Art. 43; general treaty law on third states	NBI announcement identifies six parties	Tekuya (2024); Salman (2024)	Corroborated
Uganda held the Nile-COM chairmanship in 2025	Not located in the institutional record at the	NBI records confirm the rotating chairmanship structure	The Reporter (2025)	Partially corroborated; the structure is established, the specific term rests on

Claim	Official or legal source	Institutional source	Independent scholarly or legal source	Outcome
	time of analysis			reporting and is treated as provisional

Source: Author's compilation.

Two observations follow. The conflict over Uganda's ratification date illustrates the practical value of the source hierarchy in Table 3.0: a recent peer-reviewed article gave a date inconsistent with the treaty organisation's own record, and the hierarchy resolved the conflict without requiring a judgement about the relative quality of the two publications. The chairmanship claim is reported as provisional because the institutional record of the specific term was not located within the evidence base. No central finding relies on it, and the finding in Section 4.1.1 concerning institutional leadership rests additionally on the location of the Secretariat and on Uganda's statutory recognition of the Initiative, both established from primary sources.

5.5 Chapter Summary

The discussion establishes the following relationships between the findings and the reviewed literature.

On the promotion of dialogue and the cooperation outcomes of Objective Two, the findings support Liberal Institutionalism's account of why cooperation persists and the structural account of why it does not extend to allocation and show that neither account alone predicts the observed profile. They replace the earlier characterisation of outcomes as trust-building with the better-supported finding of sustained dialogue and characterise the upstream coalition as issue-specific strategic alignment.

On the reach of Uganda's strategies under Objective One, the findings qualify the institutionalist expectation by identifying a boundary condition it leaves unstated and extend Cascão's (2009) counter-hegemonic account by disaggregating the contestation of legitimacy into separable achievements. Separating Egypt from Sudan adds a distinction the literature does not draw.

On the challenges of Objective Three, the findings support the hydro-hegemony account and extend it by specifying the content of the hegemon's interest. They narrow

the earlier comparison between Uganda and Ethiopia to what the evidence establishes, and they replace an earlier causal claim about domestic policy coordination with a documented condition and a stated inferential limit.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study, the recommendations arising from them and the areas identified for further research. The conclusions are organised by objective, and each answers the corresponding research question directly. No new evidence, literature or argument is introduced; the chapter synthesises what Chapters Four and Five established. Because the study was documentary, conclusions are expressed in terms of what the documentary evidence indicates wherever the underlying matter is interpretive and not directly recorded.

6.1 Summary of Findings

This section summarised the findings presented in Chapter Four, organised by objective, before Section 6.2 discussed them against the literature reviewed in Chapter Two.

6.1.1 Summary of Findings for Objective One

The documentary evidence identified four diplomatic strategies through which Uganda engaged in Nile Basin diplomacy: participation and periodic leadership in the Nile Basin Initiative, whose Secretariat it hosted at Entebbe and whose Council of Ministers it chaired in 2025; advocacy of the Cooperative Framework Agreement, signed on 14 May 2010 and ratified on 15 August 2019; coalition-building with other upstream riparian states around the water security provision at Article 14(b); and bilateral diplomacy with Egypt and with Sudan. Assessed against the graded scale of diplomatic influence at Table 1.0, the evidence supported achievement up to institutional leadership and did not support achievement at the level of policy influence, defined as a documented change in another state's declared negotiating position. Uganda's bilateral engagement with Egypt and with Sudan produced an identical outcome, an absence of recorded convergence, for two different reasons: a settled Egyptian position backed by structural resources, and a Sudanese counterparty whose institutional capacity was limited by domestic instability.

6.1.2 Summary of Findings for Objective Two

Assessed against the six documentary indicators of regional cooperation at Table 2.0, Uganda's strategies were associated with achievement at five and with no achievement at the sixth. Institutional continuity, sustained dialogue and technical cooperation were evidenced across the period. Legal and institutional advancement was evidenced among the six parties to the Agreement, which entered into force on 13 October 2024, and not at basin level, since the Agreement binds only its parties and the Nile River Basin Commission cannot exercise its allocative functions without the principal downstream consumers. Coalition cohesion was evidenced on the treaty question and not beyond it, since Kenya signed without ratifying and the equatorial riparians hold a different stake in the basin's terms from Ethiopia. Convergence of negotiating positions, the sixth and most demanding indicator, was not evidenced: no document in the evidence base recorded Egypt or Sudan altering a declared position during the study period. The resulting profile was asymmetric, concentrated in the procedural, technical and legal domains and absent in the distributive domain.

6.1.3 Summary of Findings for Objective Three

Constraints on Uganda's advocacy for fair and equitable water governance emerged at three levels. Hydro-hegemonic resistance was established as a structural constraint, arising from the contested status of the 1929 and 1959 instruments, the third-party rule confining the Agreement to its parties, and the asymmetry of dependence between Egypt and the equatorial upstream riparians; it was not amenable to unilateral Ugandan action. A weak bargaining position was established as a relational constraint, arising from asymmetry within the upstream coalition, whose common line reflected the position of its strongest member, Ethiopia, and from the limited capacity of Sudan to conclude and sustain commitments during a period of domestic instability; it was partially amenable to national action. Policy coordination challenges were documented as an institutional condition, in that the mandates for transboundary water affairs, diplomatic conduct and development planning sit in three separate government bodies, and substantial hydropower infrastructure was commissioned on the Victoria Nile during the same period; the documentary evidence established the condition but did not establish that it weakened any negotiating outcome.

6.2 Discussion of Findings

This section discussed the findings summarised in Section 6.1 against the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and the theoretical propositions stated in Table 1.1, as set out in full in Chapter Five.

6.2.1 Discussion of Findings for Objective One

The finding that Uganda's strategies reached institutional leadership and stopped short of policy influence extended Cascão's (2009) counter-hegemonic account, which distinguished contesting the legitimacy of a basin regime from displacing it. The present study supported that distinction and identified a further one within it: contesting legitimacy comprised separable achievements, of which Uganda secured institutional standing and a legal instrument but not a change in a downstream counterparty's position. This limitation was distinguished from failure. Across the period Uganda retained institutional access, hosted the Secretariat, held the ministerial chairmanship and secured ratification and entry into force of the instrument it advocated, without losing ground already held. Separating Egypt from Sudan added a distinction the reviewed literature did not draw, since an identical outcome, the absence of recorded convergence, rested on different causes in each case: a settled Egyptian position and a constrained Sudanese counterparty.

6.2.2 Discussion of Findings for Objective Two

The asymmetric cooperation profile supported Liberal Institutionalism's account of why cooperation persisted under power asymmetry and the structural account of why it did not extend to allocation, and showed that neither theory alone predicted the observed shape: Liberal Institutionalism alone would have predicted cumulative movement towards convergence that the record did not show, while the structural account alone would have predicted the collapse of cooperation rather than the sustained technical activity the record showed. The finding also qualified the institutionalist position reviewed in Section 2.1.1, since joint gains in the basin were concentrated in domains where the distributive question did not arise. The upstream coalition was better characterised as issue-specific strategic alignment against Egypt and Sudan than as regional cooperation in general, since Kenya's signature without ratification and Ethiopia's distinct material stake indicated that the common position did not extend to the wider range of basin questions.

6.2.3 Discussion of Findings for Objective Three

The hydro-hegemony literature reviewed in Section 2.3.1 accounted for the durability of the basin's distributional order, and the present findings extended that account by characterising Egypt's position as an interest grounded in acute and quantified dependence on the Nile rather than as simple obstruction, which identified the assurance mechanism at Article 14(b), rather than the principle of equitable utilisation, as the point at which movement might be possible. On the comparison with Ethiopia, the finding was retained in narrower form than an earlier draft of this study had argued: the evidence established that Ethiopia proceeded with the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam without a concluded agreement and was not constrained, but it did not establish that the dam itself produced negotiating leverage. On policy coordination, an earlier causal claim was replaced with a documented institutional condition and a stated inferential limit: that Uganda's mandates for water, diplomacy and planning sit in three institutions, and that whether this distribution affected any negotiating outcome is question documentary evidence of this kind cannot answer.

6.3 Conclusions

6.3.1 Conclusion on Objective One

Research Question One asked what diplomatic strategies Uganda used to influence Nile Basin relations between 2010 and 2025.

Uganda used four strategies. It participated in and periodically led the Nile Basin Initiative, hosting the Secretariat at Entebbe, giving the organisation domestic statutory standing and holding the rotating chairmanship of the Nile Council of Ministers in 2025. It supported the Cooperative Framework Agreement, signing on the day the instrument opened for signature in May 2010 and ratifying in August 2019. It built a coalition with other upstream states which maintained a common position on the water security provision and carried the Agreement into force in October 2024. It maintained bilateral diplomacy with the downstream states, engaging Egypt and Sudan throughout the period.

These strategies produced influence up to and including the level of institutional leadership. The documentary evidence does not support influence at the level of policy

influence, defined as a documented change in another state's declared negotiating position. Separating institutional standing from policy influence is the principal conclusion of this objective. Uganda's diplomacy secured a place at the table, a voice in setting the agenda and periodic custody of the chair; the documentary evidence indicates that it did not secure a change in what the other parties brought to the table.

6.3.2 Conclusion on Objective Two

Research Question Two asked what impact those strategies had on regional cooperation, measured against the documentary indicators defined in the study.

Uganda's strategies were associated with achievement at five of the six indicators and with no achievement at the sixth. Institutional continuity, sustained dialogue and technical cooperation are evidenced across the period. Legal and institutional advancement is evidenced among the six parties to the Agreement and not at basin level, since the Agreement binds only its parties and the Nile River Basin Commission cannot exercise its allocative functions without the principal downstream consumers. Coalition cohesion is evidenced on the treaty question and not beyond it. Convergence of negotiating positions is not evidenced on the available record.

Two refinements of the earlier account follow. The outcomes are properly described as sustained dialogue and not as trust-building, because the documentary evidence records meetings convened and attended while containing no indicator of trust as distinct from contact. The upstream coalition is properly described as issue-specific strategic alignment and not as regional cooperation in general, because its cohesion is evidenced only on the question on which the participating states' interests converged against the downstream states.

The overall conclusion for this objective is that the impact of Uganda's strategies was real and asymmetric. It concentrated in the procedural, technical and legal domains and was absent in the distributive domain, and the documentary evidence indicates that this shape reflects the structure of the basin and not the intensity of Uganda's effort.

6..3 Conclusion on Objective Three

Research Question Three asked what challenges constrained Uganda's advocacy for fair and equitable water governance.

Constraints operated at three distinct levels and separating them is a precondition of addressing any of them.

Hydro-hegemonic resistance is established as a structural constraint and was not amenable to unilateral Ugandan action. It consists of the contested and unresolved status of the 1929 and 1959 instruments, the operation of the third-party rule confining the Cooperative Framework Agreement to its parties, and the asymmetry of dependence and diplomatic capability between Egypt and the equatorial upstream riparians. The documentary evidence indicates that Egypt's position is grounded in an acute and quantified dependence on the Nile for freshwater supply, which makes it more durable than a position grounded in preference.

A weak bargaining position is established as a relational constraint and was partially amenable to national action. It consists of asymmetry within the upstream coalition, whose common line reflected the position of its strongest member, and of the limited capacity of one counterparty to conclude and sustain commitments during a period of domestic instability.

Policy coordination challenges are documented as an institutional condition, but their diplomatic consequences are not established. The mandates for transboundary water affairs, diplomatic conduct and development planning sit in three institutions, and substantial hydropower infrastructure was commissioned on the Victoria Nile during the same period in which Uganda advocated a basin framework grounded in equitable and reasonable utilisation. The documentary evidence establishes the condition but leaves unestablished whether it weakened any negotiating outcome. Settling that question would require evidence of kind documentary research cannot supply.

6.3.4 Overall Conclusion

This study set out to determine under what conditions Uganda's upstream position translated into diplomatic influence, and under what conditions it failed to do so.

Upstream position established the range of strategies available to Uganda and secured it standing in basin governance, without by itself producing influence over the conduct of other states. The translation of position into influence proceeded as far as institutional leadership and stopped there. The documentary evidence indicates that the stopping point was set by the basin's structural configuration, principally the third-party effect

of treaty law and the acute dependence underwriting the downstream position, and not by any deficiency in the strategies Uganda pursued.

Two conditions of successful translation emerged from the case. Coalition membership raised Uganda's aggregate influence above what its material position alone would support and supplied the mechanism through which the legal advance was achieved, while simultaneously bounding its independent influence, since the coalition line reflected its strongest member. The alignment of domestic development strategy with basin commitments, which the literature identifies as consequential, emerged in the Ugandan case as a documented condition whose effect the study could not establish.

Two features of the conclusion are specific to Uganda and should not be generalised to other equatorial riparians without further study. Uganda hosts the basin Secretariat and has given the Initiative domestic statutory standing, both of which contribute to the institutional leadership recorded here and neither of which is available to riparians that do not host it. Uganda's substantial hydropower development on the Victoria Nile during the study period is likewise not a general feature of the equatorial group.

The wider conclusion for the study of transboundary water politics is that geography operates as a starting condition and not as a source of leverage. It determines what a state may credibly claim and where it may credibly claim it. Whether the claim moves anything depends on institutions, coalitions and the structural position of those against whom it is made.

6.4 Recommendations

Each recommendation below identifies the actor who should act, the action proposed, the reason for proposing it and the specific finding of this study that supports it. Recommendations are confined to matters on which the study produced evidence. No recommendation addresses the hydro-hegemonic resistance identified in Section 6.1.3, because the study found that constraint not amenable to unilateral national action, so a recommendation addressed to it would not be traceable to any finding about what Uganda can do.

6.4.1 Policy Recommendations

Table 6.0 states the recommendations and their evidentiary basis.

Table 6.0: Policy Recommendations and Their Basis in the Findings

No.	Actor	Recommended action	Reason	Supporting finding
1	Ministry of Water and Environment and Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Establish a standing joint mechanism between the Directorate of Water Resources Management and the relevant department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare and clear Uganda's basin negotiating positions	The two mandates are held separately, and the literature identifies alignment between technical and diplomatic positions as a condition of cooperative outcomes	Section 4.3.3; Section 5.2.3
2	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Differentiate bilateral engagement with Egypt from bilateral engagement with Sudan, addressing assurance mechanisms in the former and continuity of engagement in the latter	The record shows an identical outcome arising from two different causes, a settled position in one case and limited counterparty capacity in the other	Section 4.1.4; Section 5.1.2
3	Ministry of Water and Environment	Direct Ugandan effort within basin processes towards the assurance question annexed as Article 14(b) instead of towards the principle in Article 4	The recorded downstream objection concerns guarantees for existing uses and not the principle of equitable utilisation, so the annexed provision is where movement is possible	Section 4.1.2; Section 5.2.1
4	National Planning Authority, with the	Record Uganda's Nile Basin commitments explicitly within	Substantial development proceeded during the period of basin advocacy without a documented link between	Section 4.3.3; Section 5.2.3

No.	Actor	Recommended action	Reason	Supporting finding
	Ministry of Water and Environment	national development planning for water and energy investment on the Victoria Nile	the two, and the literature identifies alignment as consequential	
5	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Water and Environment	Use periods in which Uganda holds the Nile-COM chairmanship to convene formats that include non-parties to the Agreement	The chairmanship is the point at which the record shows Uganda exercising agenda-setting influence, and the 2025 initiative took this form	Section 4.1.1; Section 4.2.2
6	Ministry of Water and Environment	Maintain participation in upstream coordination while developing positions on questions where equatorial riparian interests differ from those of the Blue Nile riparians	Coalition cohesion is evidenced only on the treaty question, and the coalition line reflects its strongest member	Sections 4.1.3, 4.2.5; Section 5.1.1

Source*: Author's compilation.*

Two of these recommendations warrant comment on their institutional form. Recommendation 1 proposes a standing mechanism between existing bodies and not a new dedicated unit. An earlier version of this study recommended establishing a dedicated Nile Basin diplomatic unit within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. That recommendation has been withdrawn, because the study found that Uganda already maintains a Directorate of Water Resources Management with an explicit transboundary mandate, and the finding concerns the relationship between existing mandates and not the absence of a mandate. Recommending a new structure where the evidence points to a coordination question would not be traceable to the finding.

Recommendation 4 likewise works through the existing planning cycle and does not propose a new coordinating body, because the study documented distributed mandates without establishing that the distribution caused any diplomatic outcome. A

recommendation proportionate to that finding addresses the recording of commitments and not the reorganisation of government.

6.4.2 Academic Recommendations

The following recommendations concern the conduct of research in this field and are directed to researchers and not to practitioners. They are distinct from the areas for further research in Section 6.3, which identify specific unanswered questions rather than improvements in scholarly practice.

Researchers examining basin diplomacy should separate participation from influence and specify the level at which influence is claimed. The present study found the two frequently used interchangeably, and that the interchange conceals precisely the result of analytical interest, namely where in the sequence a state's diplomacy stops.

Researchers should specify what they mean by regional cooperation before assessing it. The term is used in this literature for institutional continuity, dialogue, technical exchange, legal advancement, coalition alignment and distributive agreement, which are not equivalent outcomes and which the present study found to have been achieved to markedly different degrees within a single case.

Researchers using institutional and governmental documents should treat their evaluative claims as declared positions requiring corroboration, while treating their records of acts as authoritative within the issuing body's competence. The present study encountered one instance in which a peer-reviewed source and a treaty organisation's own record gave inconsistent dates, which a stated source hierarchy resolved without recourse to a judgement about publication quality.

Researchers should also use the single established title and abbreviation of the Cooperative Framework Agreement. The present study found that the parallel use of two abbreviations in earlier drafts of this work produced inconsistency in the reporting of dates and of ratification status, and that establishing a single usage was a precondition of resolving those inconsistencies against the treaty record.

6.5 Areas for Further Research

Each area below states the specific knowledge gap the proposed research would address, and not merely a topic.

The relationship between institutional coordination and negotiating outcomes in Uganda. Section 5.2.3 established a documented institutional condition and identified the evidence required to determine whether it carried diplomatic consequences. That evidence consists of the negotiating records and internal assessments of the Ministry of Water and Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Planning Authority, together with the accounts of officials who participated in basin negotiations. A study using semi-structured interviews with officials in these three institutions, combined with access to non-public preparatory documents, would resolve the question this study identified but could not answer.

The relationship between infrastructure and bargaining outcomes among upstream riparians. Section 5.2.2 found that the documentary record establishes that Ethiopia proceeded without a concluded agreement and was not constrained, without establishing that its infrastructure produced negotiating leverage. A comparative study of Ethiopia and Uganda, tracing specific negotiating episodes instead of aggregate positions, would determine whether material projects alter bargaining outcomes or whether both the projects and the outcomes follow from prior differences in state capacity.

The internal politics of the upstream coalition. Section 5.1.1 found coalition cohesion to be issue-specific and the coalition line to reflect its strongest member, but the study's evidence could not distinguish agreement from acquiescence in Uganda's alignment. Research examining how upstream positions are formed, including Kenya's signature without ratification, would establish whether the coalition operates by negotiation among its members or by adherence to a position set elsewhere.

The implementation of the Agreement among its parties. The Agreement entered into force on 13 October 2024, within months of the close of this study's period. Three questions remain beyond the reach of this study and will require research conducted after those processes have run: whether the Nile River Basin Commission is established, whether Article 14(b) is resolved within the six months the annex provides after the

Commission’s establishment, and whether implementation among the six parties alters basin practice.

The place of non-state actors in Ugandan basin diplomacy. This study examined state conduct as recorded in official and institutional documents. The role of research institutions, civil society organisations, development partners and the private sector in shaping Uganda’s basin positions fell outside its scope and does not appear in its evidence base. A study of these actors would establish whether the state-centred account given here is complete.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Document Log

The log records the 62 documents included in the analysis after screening, eligibility assessment and credibility appraisal, as reported in Figure 3.0. Class denotes P for a primary documentary source and S for a secondary documentary source, as defined in Section 3.3.1. Obj. denotes the objective to which the document contributes, and Method denotes documents used for methodological grounding under the period rule in Section 3.6.2. The appraisal note records the outcome of the credibility assessment at Table 3.1 and the use made of the document.

Table A1: Completed Document Log

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
1	Nile Basin riparian states	2010	Treaty text	Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework	nilebasin.org (English and French text)	P	1, 2, 3	Constitutes the instrument; Arts. 4, 14, 15, 26, 43 relied upon directly
2	Egypt and Sudan	1959	Treaty text	Agreement for the Full Utilization of the Nile Waters	453 U.N.T.S. 51	P	3	Historical background; allocation between two parties only; upstream states not party
3	United Kingdom and Egypt	1929	Exchange of notes	Nile Waters Agreement	93 L.N.T.S. 43	P	3	Historical background; source of the consent requirement asserted by Egypt

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
4	Great Britain and Ethiopia	1902	Treaty text	Anglo-Ethiopian Treaty, Art. III	Treaty series	P	3	Historical background; obligation not to arrest the flow of the Blue Nile
5	Britain and Italy	1891	Protocol	Anglo-Italian Protocol, Art. III	Protocol text	P	3	Historical background; earliest of the instruments discussed
6	Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan	2015	Declaration	Agreement on Declaration of Principles on the GERD	Khartoum, 23 March 2015	P	3	Context; commitment to reach agreement on filling and operation
7	United Nations	1997	Convention	Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses	2999 U.N.T.S. 77	P	3	Theoretical and legal grounding for equitable and reasonable utilisation
8	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Ratification record	Cooperative Framework Agreement: signature and ratification record	nilebasin.org	P	1, 2	Authoritative for signature and ratification dates; used to resolve conflict with Doc. 45
9	Nile Basin Initiative	2024	Institutional announcement	Announcement of the entry into force of the CFA on 13 October 2024	nilebasin.org (PDF)	P	1, 2	Records AU depositary confirmation of 4 Sept 2024; issuing body has an interest in framing entry into force as achievement
10	African Union	2024	Depositary confirmation	Confirmation of status of deposits of instruments of ratification and accession	Recorded in Doc. 9	P	1, 2	Depositary under CFA Art. 44; authoritative for the act recorded

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
11	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Institutional record	History of the Nile Basin Initiative	nilebasin.org	P	1, 2	Establishment 22 Feb 1999; Secretariat at Entebbe; governance structure
12	Nile Basin Initiative	2021	Institutional report	State of the River Nile Basin report 2021	Nile-SEC, Entebbe	P	2	Joint analytical product; institutional self-assessment noted; evaluative claims corroborated
13	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Institutional record	Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat (Nile-SEC)	nilesec.nilebasin.org	P	1, 2	Secretariat location and function
14	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Institutional record	Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO)	nilebasin.org	P	2	Subsidiary programme structure; institutional continuity
15	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Institutional record	Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme Coordination Unit	nilebasin.org	P	2	Subsidiary programme relevant to the equatorial riparians
16	Nile Basin Initiative	2024	Institutional statement	The Nile Basin Initiative celebrates its 25th anniversary	nilebasin.org	P	2	Institutional continuity; self-assessment noted
17	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Institutional strategy	NBI ten-year strategy 2017 to 2027	nilebasin.org	P	2	Programme priorities across the study period

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
18	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Corporate report	NBI corporate report	nilebasin.org	P	2	Programme delivery record; institutional self-reporting
19	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Meeting record	Nile Council of Ministers meeting, Entebbe	nilebasin.org	P	1, 2	Evidence of ministerial organ convening; Uganda as host
20	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Press release	Kampala Declaration on Transboundary Water Resources Management in Africa	nilebasin.org	P	2	Ministerial-level declaration; Uganda as host state
21	Republic of Uganda	2002	Statute	The Nile Basin Initiative Act, 2002	FAOLEX, faolex.fao.org	P	1	Domestic statutory standing conferred on the NBI; primary evidence of institutional commitment
22	Ministry of Water and Environment	n.d.	Government webpage	International and transboundary water affairs	mwe.go.ug	P	1, 3	Mandate of the Directorate of Water Resources Management; institutional interest in presenting mandate as effective
23	Ministry of Water and Environment	2018	Sector report	Water and environment sector performance report	mwe.go.ug	P	3	Sector capacity and financing; institutional self-assessment noted
24	Ministry of Water and Environment	n.d.	Government publication	Ministry of Water and Environment service delivery standards	mwe.go.ug	P	3	Institutional mandate and delivery framework

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
25	National Planning Authority	2025	Planning document	Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV) 2025/26 to 2029/30	npa.go.ug	P	3	National planning framework for water and energy investment
26	National Planning Authority	n.d.	Government webpage	National development plan portal	npa.go.ug	P	3	Planning cycle and predecessor plans
27	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	n.d.	Government webpage	About us	mofa.go.ug	P	1, 3	Mandate for the conduct of foreign relations; used to establish the separation of mandates
28	Republic of Uganda	2025	Official statement	Statement of Uganda as chair of the Nile Council of Ministers on convening a basin summit	Reported in Doc. 61	P	1, 2	Reported rather than located in the institutional record; treated as provisional; see Table 5.2
29	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Communique	Nile-COM ministerial outcomes	nilebasin.org	P	2	Evidence of dialogue sustained at ministerial level
30	Nile Basin Initiative	n.d.	Institutional statement	All-inclusive cooperation remains key for optimising basin-wide development	nilebasin.org	P	2	Declared institutional position on inclusivity; not treated as evidence of outcome
31	Zeitoun, M., and Warner, J.	2006	Journal article	Hydro-hegemony: A framework for analysis of trans-boundary water conflicts	Water Policy, 8(5), 435-460	S	3	Core framework for structural constraint; critical orientation noted in appraisal

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
32	Warner, J., et al.	2017	Journal article	Transboundary hydro-hegemony: 10 years later	WIREs Water, 4(6), e1242	S	1, 3	Revision of the framework; concedes counter-hegemonic effect at the margin
33	Cascao, A. E.	2009	Journal article	Changing power relations in the Nile River Basin: Unilateralism vs. cooperation?	Water Alternatives, 2(2), 245-268	S	1, 2, 3	Distinction between contesting and displacing a basin regime; central to Section 5.1.2
34	Cascao, A. E., and Zeitoun, M.	2010	Book chapter	Power, hegemony and critical hydropolitics	In Transboundary water management (pp. 27-42), Earthscan	S	2, 3	Upstream implementation deficit; non-unitary character of the upstream group
35	Zeitoun, M., et al.	2017	Journal article	Transboundary water interaction III: Contest and compliance	Int. Environmental Agreements, 17(2), 271-294	S	3	Typology of contest and compliance in transboundary interaction
36	Cascao, A. E., and Nicol, A.	2016	Journal article	GERD: New norms of cooperation in the Nile Basin?	Water International, 41(4), 550-573	S	3	Infrastructure and basin norms; used in Section 5.3.2
37	Nicol, A., and Cascao, A. E.	2011	Journal article	Against the flow: New power dynamics and upstream mobilisation in the Nile Basin	Rev. African Political Economy, 38(128), 317-325	S	1, 3	Upstream mobilisation as a collective phenomenon
38	Salman, S. M. A.	2013	Journal article	The Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement: A peacefully	Water International, 38(1), 17-29	S	1, 2, 3	Legal assessment of the instrument; specialist

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
				unfolding African spring?				authorship; interpretive claims treated as such
39	Mekonnen, D. Z.	2010	Journal article	The Nile Basin CFA negotiations and the adoption of a water security paradigm	European Journal of International Law, 21(2), 421-440	S	1, 3	Negotiation history of Article 14(b)
40	Sadoff, C. W., and Grey, D.	2002	Journal article	Beyond the river: The benefits of cooperation on international rivers	Water Policy, 4(5), 389-403	S	2	Institutionalist position on cooperative benefit
41	Selby, J.	2005	Journal article	The geopolitics of water in the Middle East: Fantasies and realities	Third World Quarterly, 26(2), 329-349	S	2, 3	Cooperation as entrenchment under asymmetry
42	Swain, A.	2011	Journal article	Challenges for water sharing in the Nile basin: Changing geo-politics and changing climate	Hydrological Sciences Journal, 56(4), 687-702	S	3	Durability of the basin order under changing conditions
43	Wheeler, K. G., et al.	2018	Journal article	Exploring cooperative transboundary river management strategies for the Eastern Nile Basin	Water Resources Research, 54(11), 9224-9254	S	2	Modelled gains from coordination; prospective rather than observed evidence
44	Tawfik, R.	2016	Discussion paper	Revisiting hydro-hegemony from a benefit-sharing perspective: The case of the GERD	German Development Institute, DP 5/2016	S	3	Ethiopian infrastructure and basin bargaining; used with the caution in Section 5.3.2

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
45	Kikoyo, D., and Patricia, S.	2026	Journal article	Managing shared waters: The elusive quest for cooperative governance in the Nile Basin	Water, 18(2), Article 157	S	2, 3	Alignment of national development strategy with basin objectives; ratification date conflicts with Doc. 8, resolved by Table 3.0
46	Arsano, Y.	2007	Monograph	Ethiopia and the Nile: Dilemmas of national and regional hydropolitics	ETH Zurich	S	3	Historical and regional hydropolitical context
47	Conca, K.	2006	Monograph	Governing water: Contentious transnational politics and global institution building	MIT Press	S	2	Institution building in transboundary water governance
48	Tekuya, M.	2024	Legal commentary	Entry into force of the Nile Basin CFA: Challenges and prospects	EJIL: Talk!	S	1, 2, 3	Third-party rule and its consequences for the NRBC; identified specialist authorship
49	Salman, S. M. A.	2024	Legal commentary	Finally! The Nile Basin CFA enters into force	International Water Law Project Blog	S	1, 2	Assessment of what entry into force does and does not settle
50	Keohane, R. O.	1984	Monograph	After hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy	Princeton University Press	S	2	Theoretical foundation for Liberal Institutionalism

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
51	Keohane, R. O., and Nye, J. S.	2012	Monograph	Power and interdependence (4th ed.)	Longman	S	2	Complex interdependence; institutional effects on state behaviour
52	Rose, G.	1998	Journal article	Neoclassical realism and theories of foreign policy	World Politics, 51(1), 144-172	S	1, 3	Theoretical foundation for Neoclassical Realism
53	Schweller, R. L.	2004	Journal article	Unanswered threats: A neoclassical realist theory of underbalancing	International Security, 29(2), 159-201	S	1, 3	Domestic intervening variables in foreign policy
54	Yin, R. K.	2018	Monograph	Case study research and applications: Design and methods (6th ed.)	Sage	S	Method	Single-case design; definition of the case and unit of analysis
55	Braun, V., and Clarke, V.	2006	Journal article	Using thematic analysis in psychology	Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77-101	S	Method	Six-phase thematic analysis framework applied in Section 3.8
56	Bowen, G. A.	2009	Journal article	Document analysis as a qualitative research method	Qualitative Research Journal, 9(2), 27-40	S	Method	Documentary method; treatment of documents as social products
57	Scott, J.	1990	Monograph	A matter of record: Documentary sources in social research	Polity Press	S	Method	Authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning; basis of Table 3.3
58	Lincoln, Y. S., and Guba, E. G.	1985	Monograph	Naturalistic inquiry	Sage	S	Method	Trustworthiness criteria applied in Section 3.9

No.	Author or issuing institution	Year	Type of document	Title	Source or locator	Class	Obj.	Appraisal note and use
59	Creswell, J. W.	2014	Monograph	Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (4th ed.)	Sage	S	Method	Consulted; the five-step attribution in the earlier draft was corrected against Doc. 55
60	Page, M. J., et al.	2021	Journal article	The PRISMA 2020 statement	BMJ, 372, n71	S	Method	Reporting logic for Figure 3.0; not a claim to systematic review
61	The Reporter	2025	News report	Uganda seeks Nile summit in June	AllAfrica, 8 April 2025	S	1, 2	Uganda as chair of Nile-COM in 2025; provisional pending institutional record
62	Ecofin Agency	2025	News report	Ethiopia inaugurates Grand Renaissance Dam	ecofinagency.com, 9 September 2025	S	3	GERD inauguration date and capacity; Egyptian dependence figures; Sudanese position

Source: *Author's compilation.*

Appendix B: Document Screening Checklist

The criteria in this checklist correspond exactly to those stated in Table 3.3 and were applied at the screening stage recorded in Figure 3.0. A document was carried forward only where every criterion was answered in the affirmative.

Table B1: Screening Checklist Applied to Each Record

No.	Screening criterion	Yes	No	Remarks
1	The document addresses Uganda's diplomacy, Nile Basin governance, or the study's theoretical or methodological framework			Subject criterion, Table 3.
2	The document falls within 2010 to 2025, or is used only for historical, legal, theoretical or methodological purposes			Period criterion, Section 3.6.2; purpose recorded in the log
3	The document has an identifiable individual, institutional or governmental author			Records without identifiable authorship were excluded
4	The document is of an admitted type under Table 3.3			Unattributed online commentary excluded
5	The document is in English or in an official English translation			Language limitation recorded in Section 3.10.1
6	The document is retrievable by another researcher from the citation given			Verified in the week beginning 17 August 2026
7	The document contributes evidence not already captured by an included document			Duplicates excluded at this stage
8	The document addresses at least one stated research objective			Objective recorded in the log
9	The document passes the credibility assessment at Table 3.1			Appraisal note recorded in the log

Source: Author's compilation, corresponding to Table 3.3 and Table 3.1.

Appendix C: Search Keywords

Searches ran between 6 January and 27 March 2026. The retrievability of every included document was re-verified in the week beginning 17 August 2026. Where a database supported field restriction, searches were run on title, abstract and keyword fields. Where it did not, full-text searching was used and results were screened on title.

Table C1: Sources Searched

Category	Sources searched
Academic databases and platforms	Google Scholar; JSTOR; Taylor and Francis Online; ScienceDirect; SpringerLink; MDPI; SAGE Journals; Directory of Open Access Journals
Basin and international institutions	Nile Basin Initiative; African Union; United Nations Treaty Collection; FAOLEX legal database
Ugandan government sources	Ministry of Water and Environment; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; National Planning Authority; Parliament of Uganda
Specialist legal commentary	International Water Law Project; EJIL: Talk!
Supplementary	Citation tracking from the reference lists of retrieved documents

Source: Author's compilation.

Table C2: Full Boolean Search Strategy

No.	Search string	Objective served
1	("Uganda" OR "Ugandan") AND ("Nile Basin" OR "River Nile" OR "White Nile") AND (diplomacy OR "foreign policy" OR negotiation OR "water diplomacy")	One
2	("Nile Basin Initiative" OR "NBI" OR "Nile-COM" OR "Nile-TAC" OR "Nile-SEC") AND (Uganda OR "upstream state*" OR "equatorial lakes" OR "riparian")	One and Two
3	("Cooperative Framework Agreement" OR "Entebbe Agreement" OR "CFA") AND (ratif* OR accession OR "entry into force" OR "Article 14" OR "water security")	One and Two
4	("transboundary water*" OR "shared water*" OR "international watercourse*") AND (governance OR management) AND (Africa OR Nile) AND (cooperation OR "regional cooperation" OR "benefit sharing")	Two

No.	Search string	Objective served
5	("hydro-hegemony" OR "hydrohegemony" OR "counter-hegemony" OR "hydro-hegemonic") AND (Nile OR "transboundary")	Three
6	("upstream riparian*" OR "upper riparian*" OR "headwater state*") AND (coalition OR bloc OR alliance OR "collective bargaining") AND Nile	One and Three
7	(Uganda) AND ("water resources management" OR "water sector" OR "Directorate of Water Resources") AND (coordination OR "institutional capacity" OR "inter-ministerial" OR "policy coherence")	Three
8	("Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam" OR "GERD") AND ("Declaration of Principles" OR negotiation OR filling) AND (upstream OR basin OR riparian)	Three, context
9	("Nile Waters Agreement" OR "1929 agreement" OR "1959 agreement") AND (succession OR "colonial treat*" OR validity OR "third state*")	Historical background
10	("documentary analysis" OR "document analysis" OR "documentary research") AND ("thematic analysis" OR coding) AND (rigour OR rigor OR trustworthiness OR credibility)	Methodological grounding
11	(Uganda) AND ("Isimba" OR "Karuma" OR "Victoria Nile") AND (hydropower OR dam OR abstraction)	Three, domestic development
12	("Lake Victoria Basin Commission" OR "East African Community") AND (Uganda) AND ("water" OR "transboundary")	One, institutional context

Source: Author's compilation.

Variant spellings accepted in all searches were hydro-hegemony and hydrohegemony, rigour and rigor, organisation and organization, and Cooperative Framework Agreement and Entebbe Agreement. Truncation using the asterisk was applied where the database supported it.

Appendix D: Inclusion and Exclusion Guide

The rules below are those stated in Table 3.3 and were applied through the checklist at Appendix B. They are reproduced here in the operative form in which they were applied, so that another researcher could apply them identically.

Table D1: Operative Inclusion and Exclusion Rules

Rule	Include if	Exclude if
Subject relevance	The document contains substantive material on Uganda's basin diplomacy, on Nile Basin governance, or on the study's theory or method	The document mentions Uganda or the Nile only incidentally and contains no substantive material
Period	Dated 2010 to 2025 and used as substantive evidence; or dated at any time and used for historical, legal, theoretical or methodological purposes, with the purpose recorded	Dated outside 2010 to 2025 and used as substantive evidence for Chapters Four or Five
Authorship	An individual author, institution or government body is identifiable as responsible for the content	No author or issuing body can be identified
Document type	Treaty, legislation, communiqué, official publication, institutional report, peer-reviewed article, monograph, chapter, specialist legal commentary, or attributed reporting	Unattributed online commentary; opinion pieces without institutional or authorial accountability; content aggregators without an identified original source
Language	Written in English or available in an official English translation	Available only in a language the researcher could not read and for which no official translation was located
Retrievability	Another researcher could locate the document from the citation given, at the date of verification	The document could not be located at the date of verification
Distinctness	The document contributes evidence not already captured	The document reproduces content already captured by an included document, in which case the earlier

Rule	Include if	Exclude if
		or more authoritative version was retained
Credibility	The document passed appraisal against the eight criteria in Table 3.1	The document failed appraisal, in particular where evaluative claims were advanced without any stated basis and could not be corroborated

Source: *Author's compilation, corresponding to Table 3.3 and Table 3.1.*

Appendix E: Document Profiling Form

A profiling form was completed for every document carrying substantial evidence on one or more objectives. Table E1 gives the blank form and Table E2 a completed exemplar.

Table E1: Document Profiling Form

Item	Entry
Log number	
Title of document	
Author or issuing institution	
Year of publication	
Document type	
Source, database or repository, with locator	
Class under Section 3.3.1: primary or secondary documentary source	
Purpose for which the document was produced	
Methodological quality and transparency	
Research objective addressed	
Key evidence extracted	
Principal claims advanced by the document	
Limitations and identified bias	
Corroborating source, where the claim required corroboration	
Analytical theme to which the material was assigned	

Source: Author's compilation.

Table E2: Completed Exemplar, Document 9

Item	Entry
Log number	9
Title of document	Announcement of the entry into force of the Agreement on the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework on 13 October 2024
Author or issuing institution	Nile Basin Initiative
Year of publication	2024

Item	Entry
Document type	Institutional announcement recording a depositary confirmation
Source, database or repository, with locator	Nile Basin Initiative website, nilebasin.org, PDF dated October 2024
Class under Section 3.3.1: primary or secondary documentary source	Primary documentary source
Purpose for which the document was produced	To record and publicise the completion of the entry-into-force procedure
Methodological quality and transparency	High for the act recorded; the document names the depositary, the confirming date and the governing articles
Research objective addressed	Objectives One and Two
Key evidence extracted	Entry into force on 13 October 2024; African Union confirmed the status of deposits on 4 September 2024; six states party, namely Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and South Sudan
Principal claims advanced by the document	That the Agreement is in force and that a new phase of basin cooperation begins
Limitations and identified bias	The issuing body has an institutional interest in presenting entry into force as a cooperative achievement, and the announcement does not address the position of non-parties
Corroborating source, where the claim required corroboration	Documents 1 and 8 for the treaty provisions and the ratification record; Documents 48 and 49 for independent legal assessment of effect
Analytical theme to which the material was assigned	CFA support; legal and institutional advancement

Source: Author's compilation.

Appendix F: Objectives, Questions, Literature, Findings, Discussion and Conclusion Alignment Matrix

The matrix below demonstrates the correspondence between each objective and every subsequent element of the thesis. It was prepared before final revision and used to verify that no objective was under-represented in any chapter.

Table F1: Alignment Matrix

Element	Objective One	Objective Two	Objective Three
Objective	Examine Uganda's diplomatic strategies for influencing Nile Basin relations	Assess the impact of those strategies on regional cooperation	Analyse the challenges constraining Uganda's advocacy for fair water governance
Research question	Section 1.4, Question 1	Section 1.4, Question 2	Section 1.4, Question 3
Operational definition	Diplomatic influence, five levels, Table 1.0	Regional cooperation, six indicators, Table 2.0	Constraint typology, three levels, Table 2.1
Theoretical proposition	P1, P4 (Table 1.1)	P3 (Table 1.1)	P1, P2, P4 (Table 1.1)
Literature section	Section 2.1	Section 2.2	Section 2.3
Codes and themes	Table 3.5, row 1	Table 3.5, row 2	Table 3.5, row 3
Findings section	Section 4.1, with Table 4.0 and Figure 4.0	Section 4.2, with Table 4.2	Section 4.3, with Table 4.4
Discussion section	Section 5.1.2	Section 5.1 and Section 5.1.1	Section 5.2
Conclusion	Section 6.1.1	Section 6.1.2	Section 6.1.3
Recommendations traceable to it	Table 6.1, items 2, 5	Table 6.1, items 5, 6	Table 6.1, items 1, 3, 4

Source: Author's compilation.