



EAC Secretariat
Arusha, Tanzania

Entebbe Declaration



LVFO Secretariat
Jinja, Uganda

**The Regional Stakeholders' Conference
on the State of the Fisheries Resources
of Lake Victoria and Their Management**



Imperial Resort Beach Hotel, Entebbe 24th - 25th February 2005

This workshop was convened by the:

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The Partnership Fund of the East African Community.

The cover page shows one of the major fish landings on Lake Victoria where sails are used to tap wind power to propel fishing boats. This saves fuel. The page also shows a healthy looking boy carrying a large Tilapia. The Lake should be managed to ensure that it provides fish for such children and other lake dependant communities for generations to come.

FOREWORD

The sixth Special Session of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation (LVFO) Council of Ministers held at Nile Resort Hotel, Jinja on 30th October 2003, deliberated on some of the problems facing Lake Victoria and was concerned that key stakeholders especially those involved in policy formulation and implementation such as Members of Parliament and District leaders were not adequately informed about the state of the fisheries resources of Lake Victoria to enable them make informed decisions and take appropriate actions. The Council of Ministers, therefore requested me to organize a conference to inform key stakeholders on the status of the Fisheries of Lake Victoria so as to enable them make informed decisions and take appropriate actions.

The East African Community (EAC) Secretariat together with the LVFO Secretariat successfully organized the conference. The Conference was held from 24th to 25th February in Entebbe and was attended by 260 participants that included Council Members; Members of Parliament from the three Partner States, East African Legislative Assembly MPs, Administrators, Researchers, Development Partners and other Key Stakeholders.

This '**Entebbe Declaration**' which articulates major outcomes of the conference was read at the end of the conference. I now have the pleasure of formally presenting to you the finalised text which I believe you will use to initiate actions as appropriate, to ensure that the rich fisheries resources of Lake Victoria are managed sustainably for the benefit of the current and future generations.



Nuwe Amanyamba Mushega
Secretary General, East African Community

Entebbe Declaration

We, the Participants of Regional Stakeholders Conference on: **The Status of the Fisheries Resources of Lake Victoria and Their Management: Concerns, Challenges and Opportunities**; held at Entebbe Imperial Resort Beach Hotel, Uganda, 24th-25th February, 2005:

1. Recognizing that the three Partner States of the East African Community have a shared heritage and a common interest in the health of Lake Victoria and their commitment to ensure proper management and sustainability of its living resources for the benefit of present and future generations;
2. Acknowledging that adverse actions in any part of the Lake within the territorial limits of one Partner State will have negative impacts on the other Partner States;
3. Aware that the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Principles require that the Lake Basin is developed in a manner that does not compromise the health of the ecosystem that supports living resources;
4. Aware that the Food and Agricultural Organization Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the associated technical guidelines places responsibility on governments, including industry, fishing communities and all stakeholders to ensure responsible and sustainable fisheries in respective areas of operation;

5. Cognizant that the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community committed Partner States to establish common fisheries management and investment guidelines for inland and marine waters; and the Convention for the establishment of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization(LVFO) committed contracting parties to sustainably manage the fisheries resources of the Lake;
6. Noting that the Partner States have adopted and ratified the Protocol for Sustainable Development of the Lake Victoria Basin;
7. Aware of the decisions and management measures made and adopted by the Council of Ministers of the LVFO and thereafter, the implementation of the same by the Partner States to sustainably manage the exploitation of the fisheries resources;
8. Recognizing that the Council of Ministers of the LVFO has adopted a Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) to prevent, deter and eliminate Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing in Lake Victoria as an integral part of the international Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries;
9. Recognizing that the quantity, quality and value of fish from Lake Victoria has increased substantially and hence the need to ensure sustainability of the fish yields;

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10. Informed that the lake fish stocks are in danger of irreparable damage as a result of human activities leading to siltation, pollution loading, unsustainable fishing practices and rapid increase in fishing pressure;
11. Conscious of the dangers of over fishing, the use of illegal fishing methods and practices and of other environmental degradation;
12. Noting that the rapid growth of the human population in the lake basin, the first growing regional and international fish markets have increased pressure on the wild stocks of the lake;
13. Informed that aquaculture production could meet the deficit in fish supply for local and international demands and contribute to reduction of fishing pressure on the lake;
14. Cognizant of the fact that HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis and Bilharzia are prevalent in fishing communities and that the poverty reduction efforts and sustainable resources use are undermined through increased cost of providing healthcare, loss of skilled labour, loss of women's productive time and loss in productivity of the fisheries sector;
15. Aware of the necessity for harmonization of fisheries policies, fisheries legislation and management decisions around the lake;

16. Committed to continued regional cooperation with respect to the sustainable utilization of Lake Victoria and its resources;
17. Recognizing the concerns raised by the sixth special session of the LVFO Council of Ministers held on 30th October 2003 that the key stakeholders especially those involved with policy formulation and implementation were not adequately informed about the state of the fisheries resources of the lake to enable them make informed decisions and take appropriate actions and therefore their directive to hold a conference to provide necessary information;

Now declare that the East African Community should take measures for the following:

- a) Reduction of nutrient and pollutant loads into the lake through treatment of municipal effluents, promotion of cleaner production practices, good land use in the catchment area, conservation of wetlands and control of aquatic weeds;
- b) Management of factors that influence rainfall patterns such as maintenance of forest cover around the lake to maintain historical high rainfall regimes around the lake and the overall water level;
- c) Accelerating harmonization and implementation of environmental and fisheries policies, laws, regulations and management options to address concerns at local, national, regional and international level for sustainable management;

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- d) Ensuring the dissemination of research information to guide management of the Lake Victoria basin resources at local, national and regional level;
- e) Promoting and strengthening co-management in the fisheries resources of Lake Victoria;
- f) Strengthening the existing beach management units and facilitating the creation of new ones to support sustainable management of the fisheries resources;
- g) Promoting the participation of civil societies, public and private sector institutions in the development and management of the fisheries of Lake Victoria;
- h) Managing the lake as a single eco-system with multiple but harmonized jurisdictions and, controlled access in order to avoid tragedy of the commons;
- i) Determining, negotiating and agreeing on the fishing capacity allowable by Partner States to limit access and reduce pressure on lake fisheries;
- j) Strengthening national and regional institutions for fisheries research and management including infrastructure and human resources capacity;
- k) Making deliberate efforts to develop aquaculture through promotion of semi-intensive commercial private sector ventures

and providing State support for the improvement of quality and quantity of fish seeds and development of high value species;

- l) Promoting the culture of saving and investment amongst fishing communities by building their capacity in financial management and investment as well as providing facilities for credit through micro-finance service providers;
- m) Mainstreaming environment and natural resources management, HIV/AIDS and other water related diseases such as bilharzias, malaria and cholera in the fisheries sector in synergy with the health sector;
- n) Implementing measures to reduce post harvest losses, improvement of fish handling infrastructure, production of value added products and upgrading of health conditions in the distribution and marketing of fish and fishery products;
- o) Reducing trans-boundary conflicts by supporting ongoing initiatives and interactions to address the root causes of these conflicts where they occur;
- p) Enforcement of laws to protect the fisheries resource from abusive harvest and destructive extraction;
- q) Promoting inter-agency cooperation at national and regional levels to promote synergy in combating insecurity and enhancing safety on Lake Victoria;

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- r) Establishing and implementing sustainable funding mechanisms for fisheries research development and management of fisheries resources in the Lake Victoria Basin; and
- s) Continuing with implementation of management measures already agreed on by the Council of Ministers of the LVFO including slot size and protection of breeding nursery areas.

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