

# The LVEMP II Civil Society Watch E-bulletin

A Monthly from the **East African Sustainability Watch Network** comprising: Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD), Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) and Sustainable Environmental Development Watch Network (SusWatch Kenya)

**November 2014**



**Left to Right:** Fresh Tilapia fish from Lake Victoria in Rakai, Uganda, Weighing fresh fish in a market in Mwanza Tanzania; and burning illegal fishing gear in Mityana Uganda (Photos by UCSD)

## World Fisheries day Celebrated amidst rows of diminishing fish in East Africa

November 21, 2014 was the World Fisheries day. In East Africa the day was marked with statements and meetings where stakeholders complained of dwindling fish quality and quantity. Mr. Collins Ong'ore a research officer at Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research institute (KMFRI), noted that there will not be much change in the status of depleting fisheries if the attitudes of the fishermen towards over fishing do not change. He added that "There is a serious decline in fish stocks in the Lake Victoria therefore, fishermen need to be involved in the conservation of wild fish species and abide by the laid down regulations by their respective governments as the governments act on the research findings from KMFRI."

The Kisumu County World Fisheries Celebrations organized by Kisumu County government was held at Dunga Beach. The event was marked by exhibitions by different players in the fisheries industry, including the -KEMFRI, that runs research operations in Kenya and Uganda. The Director of Agriculture and Livestock in Kisumu County, who was the Guest of Honor at the event, emphasized the use of recommended fishing gear by the fishing community. He noted that Kenya Government will ensure that money be set aside to fence off Dunga beach area in addition to the Kshs 200,000 the Dunga Beach Management Unit (BMU) had received for the task. He promised that a cold storage facility for fish will be purchased for the BMU in order to reduce post-harvest losses. He also pledged that the road leading to Dunga will also be tarmacked.

In Uganda, the Minister of State for Fisheries in the Ministry of Agriculture Animal industries and Fisheries Hon. Ruth Nankabirwa said that the closure of some fish processing plants is not only due to inadequate raw materials but because some firms were not complying with government of Uganda Fish regulations which prohibits fish processing companies to process immature fish. She said punitive measures are in place to target those who break the law.

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“In Uganda it is illegal to harvest fish especially Nile perch which is below the size of 20 inches (50 cm)”. Fish is measured in inches at landing sites. Those that are above 80 inches (200 cm) are considered the breeding mothers which should not be captured.

Meanwhile, the Uganda Fish Processors and Exporters Association-UFPEA has contested the government reports that fish exports have increased in the financial year ending of 2013/2014 compared to 2012/2013. William Tibyasa the UFPEA Deputy Executive Director said Uganda’s fish exporting status is still inadequate because of the deficient fish capture from the major water bodies. This in part is because government has failed to check illegal fishing activities that have led to immature fish openly traded in many regional markets.

“The increment in the earning is not from increased capture of fish from Uganda, but its associated with the stabilized market at the international markets due to the improved quality standard of Uganda’s fish products being exported to the international market by UFPEA members. Everything is going down. That is why fish processing factories are closing down. Where is the increment in fish capture in the country?” he said.

Exports of Uganda fish have dwindled from \$140 million in 2005 to about \$111 million in 2013. Total export tonnage has plunged from close to 40,000 metric tonnes down to about 20,000 during the same period.

In Tanzania, the Chief Executive officer of Africa Wind Energy Technology Associate Company Ltd- AWETA, Mr. Robert Matiku noted that the countries with in the Nile Basin should support beach management units in monitoring illegal fishing activities in Lake Victoria. Speaking at Rorya District in Kagera region, he said, “These countries should take the matter seriously as Lake Victoria fisheries provide employment for many people, generate income and export earnings,” .Regarding the beach management units he said presently there is lack of modern speed boats for patrolling the Lake. “They use canoes for patrolling the Lake, which is a slow means of transport hence it drags efforts to combat illegal fishing. We call on the government to provide support to beach management units in form of modern speed boats so that they can patrol the Lake”.

## World Meeting Promises to safe guard Natural Assets



Wildebeests in Serengeti National Park in Tanzania and Boat transport on Lake Victoria –Kisumu (Photos by UCSD)

More than 6,000 participants from over 170 countries have set a ‘Promise’ to safe guard the world’s natural assets including Africa’s protected areas that are considered one of the best long term investments for the future of Africa and the world.

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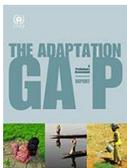
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The 'Promise' was made in Sydney Australia under the auspices of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and hosted by the Government of Australia and the World Parks Congress. The 'Promise' also includes commitments to boost investment in nature's solutions to halt biodiversity loss, tackle climate change, reduce the risk and impact of disasters, improve food and water security and promotes human health. At the conference, the Deputy Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC) in charge of Productive and Social Sectors, Hon. Jesca Eriyo said that managing and protecting ecosystems must be an integral part of development. Noting that it is better to conserve rather than restore.

In her key message on how protected areas should develop over the next decade, she noted that it is crucial for countries to prepare red lists of threatened species for every region and country to guide development. She added, "Create a framework and network for regional and continental Parks authorities to collaborate, share information, carryout enforcement jointly or collaboratively. Particularly in Africa, scale up trans-boundary ecosystems management and conservation." She pledged commitment from the EAC to support conservation initiatives in the region. She called for strengthening of trans-boundary conservation collaboration at continental, sub-regional and regional levels in Africa in partnership with expert organisations and stakeholders at all levels given that many of Africa's natural resources transcend borders. Cross-border protected areas in East Africa are Serengeti-Mara, Amboseli-Kilimanjaro, Tsavo – Mkomazi, Virunga Mountains Range, Mountain Rwenzori and Kibira-Nyungwe among others. The EAC has established key institutions such as the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) and the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation (LVFO) for the protection of the Lake Victoria trans-boundary ecosystem.

LVBC and the Line Ministries of Environment in the 5 partner states of the EAC are implementing the Lake Victoria Environment Management Project –LVEMP II that is working with communities within the Lake Victoria Basin to conserve this transboundary eco-system. Chapter 19 and 20 of the Treaty for the establishment of the EAC, states the commitment to environmental conservation and wild life management. The Promise of Sydney includes pledges from governments, international organizations, the private sector, indigenous leaders, community groups and individuals. It outlines a pathway for achieving the global target to protect at least 17% of land and 10% of oceans by 2020.

## Upcoming Events and Resources

- **Infographic: What is climate change?**  
UK Met Office's infographic explores the difference between weather and climate, what drives our climate and how our climate is changing. More: <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/news/in-depth/climate-infographic>
- **UNEP's first Adaptation Gap Report**  
  
Focuses on gaps in developing countries in three important areas: finance, technology and knowledge. Other gaps, including in capacity and governance, are equally important to consider, as are the complex interactions between various gaps.  
More: <http://www.unep.org/climatechange/adaptation/gapreport2014/>
- **Tanzania CSOs Annual Forum** organised by the Foundation for Civil Society and Trademark East Africa – Tanzania Programme, 11 – 12 December 2014, Arusha International Conference Centre (Tanzania)