



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY
LAKE VICTORIA FISHERIES ORGANIZATION



Status, planned activities on domestication, ratification of global instruments related to aquatic biodiversity conservation and

environmental management



Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization

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Casablanca, Morocco

African Union



Background:

- ❖ **The Mandate** of Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) is to coordinate the management and development of fisheries and aquaculture resources in the EAC region in order to contribute to **food security** and economic growth
- ❖ LVFO is registered under Article 102 of the United Nations Charter as a Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO)
- ❖ **Vision:** A Competitive and Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Industry in the East African Community”.
- ❖ **Mission:** “To promote Sustainable Management and Development of Fisheries and aquaculture in the East African Community for Food Security and Wealth creation”

Objectives of the organization

- **Fostering cooperation** among the Contracting Parties,
- **Harmonizing national measures** for the sustainable utilization of the fisheries and aquaculture resources of the East African Community water bodies and
- **Developing and adopting conservation and management measures**

Current contracting Parties to the LVFO Convention :

The Republic of Burundi, The Republic of Kenya, The Republic of Uganda, and The United Republic of Tanzania

Status, planned activities on domestication, ratification of global instruments related to aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management

The East African Community (EAC) Through partner States, Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization and other partners has been actively involved in domestication, ratification, and implementation of global instruments related to aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management.

Some of the global instruments and the current status and recent activities are as follows:

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

- **Status:** All EAC member states are parties to the CBD.
- **Ongoing Activities:** The EAC is developing the regional Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (RBSAPs) in alignment with the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*.
- EAC countries have their National Biodiversity strategies
- LVFO under TRUEFISH Project is developing Regional Biodiversity Strategies for fish in the Lake Victoria basin
- LVFO through ECOFISH Project is enhancing protection of breeding areas in the Lake Victoria for the biodiversity conservation
- LVFO in collaboration with AU IBAR supported Partner states in developing Policy guidelines and regulatory frameworks for the consolidated national strategy on conservation of aquatic biodiversity and environmental management
- **Implementation Efforts:** EAC countries, are enhancing protected areas and integrating biodiversity monitoring. Efforts are ongoing across EAC to establish transboundary biodiversity corridors, specifically around Lake Victoria.

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

IUU fishing is a major threat to biodiversity in Lake Victoria leading to unsustainable fisheries, reduced benefits for resource users, resource use conflicts and danger to food security and can lead to fish species extinction



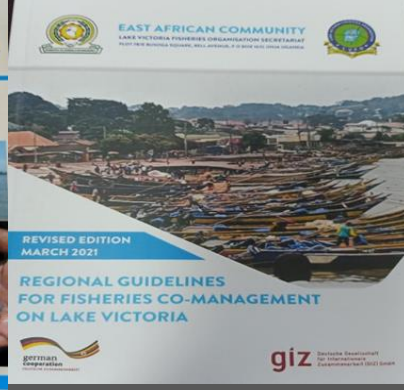
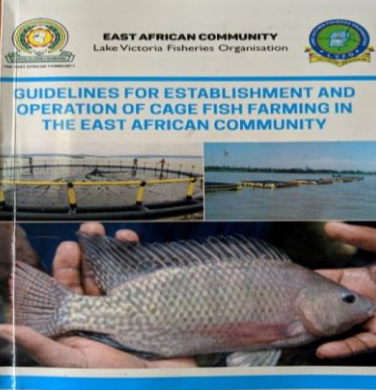
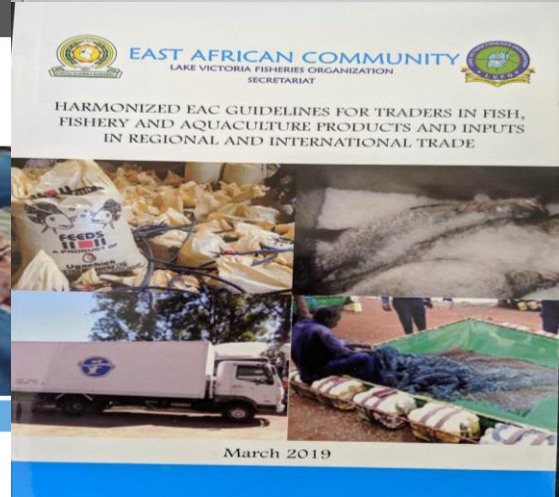
Illegal fishing gears and methods

- ❖ LVFO fights Over capacity in Lake Victoria fisheries; Discourages capture of immature fish and resolves trade disagreements and conflicts;
- ❖ Conducts studies on fishing technology conflicts;
- ❖ Faces a challenge of unified fisheries Monitoring Control and surveillance;

LVFO domesticated International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported (IPOA-IUU) and IPOA-Capacity into RPOA-IUU and RPOA-Capacity and is developing a regional framework for joint MCS on Lake Victoria

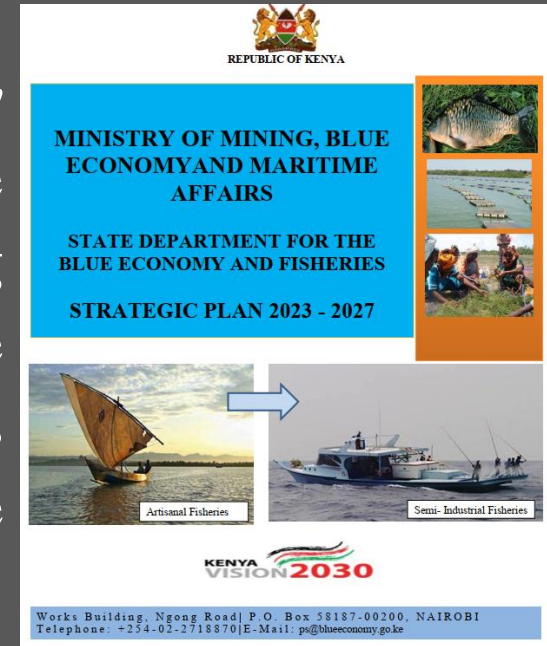
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

- **Status:** EAC countries have ratified CITES and actively regulate trade in endangered species, including aquatic species.
- **Ongoing Activities:** LVFO and national authorities coordinate monitoring and enforcement against illegal trade, particularly Nile Perch Fish maw and ornamental species. The EAC also focuses on capacity-building programs for CITES enforcement.
- LVFO harmonized guidelines, Protocols, and SOPs to protect endangered species
- Guideline for fish maw extraction, processing & trade
- Boarder inspection manual



United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

- **Status:** Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania have ratified UNCLOS.
- **Ongoing Activities:** Kenya's *Blue Economy Strategy* focuses on sustainable use of marine resources. EAC countries are also collaborating to strengthen Exclusive Economic Zone management, and enforce UNCLOS provisions related to marine pollution and resource conservation.
- Spatial Planning for Indian ocean and Lake Victoria
- The EAC and IGAD have developed and implemented regional anti-piracy programs.



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 14: Life Below Water)

- **Implementation:** EAC countries are integrating SDG 14 into national policies, focusing on reducing pollution, managing fish stocks, and protecting aquatic habitats. Joint initiatives are in place between LVFO and the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) to mitigate pollution and enhance habitat conservation.
- **Convention on the Protection and Use of Trans-boundary Watercourses and International Lakes (ECE Water Convention), Helsinki, 1992.**
 - **Ongoing Activities:** The LVFO coordinates sustainable fisheries management and aquatic biodiversity conservation across Lake Victoria; LTA on Lake Tanganyika. The EAC is advancing aquaculture projects and efforts against invasive species in regional waters.
 - LVFO has harmonized different policies guidelines Protocols, and SOPs

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 14: Life Below Water)



LVFO Research initiatives- Hydroacoustics, trawl, Frame survey, CAS etc

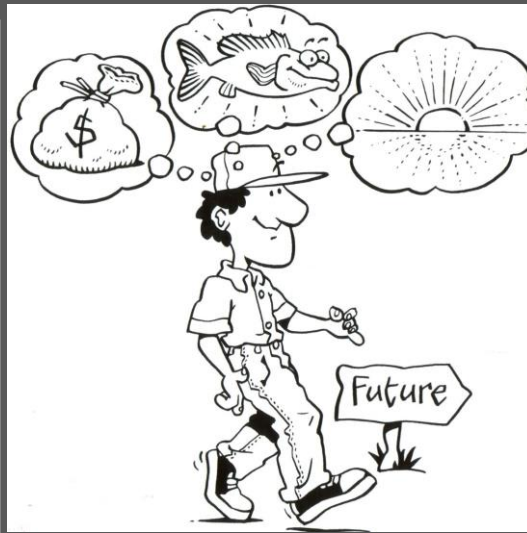


Planned Activities and Future Directions

- **Transboundary Aquatic Ecosystems:** EAC countries are developing a regional approach to manage shared water bodies through harmonized policies and conservation projects.
- **Climate Adaptation Initiatives:** Initiatives planned and supported by the World Bank and Global Environment Facility (GEF) are anticipated to enhance resilience in aquatic ecosystems vulnerable to climate change impacts;
- LVFO has entered into Memorandum of Cooperation with LTA for long-term aquatic biodiversity conservation and environmental management

Recommendations

- Conduct **regular reviews and updates of national legislation and policies** to ensure they align with global biodiversity commitments;
- Establish a **regional capacity-building program**, focusing on biodiversity conservation, compliance with international conventions, and sustainable resource management;
- Develop a **regional biodiversity fund** in partnership with international donors (e.g., GEF, GCF, and the EU) to support initiatives aligned with global instruments;
- Develop and implement long-term community management regimes for sustainable biodiversity conservation and management



Thank You

