



# Implementation of User Rights in L. Albert- Uganda

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# Presentation Lay out

1. Background information on Lake Albert
  - Fish production
  - Threats to the fishery
2. General Fisheries control systems in Uganda
3. Licensing in details
4. Challenges
5. Recommendation and Way forward

# Background information- Map of Uganda showing Lake Albert

The lake is 160km long and 30km wide



# Background information

- Lake Albert contributes significantly to fish production in Uganda.
- It is located in the western arm of the Great East African rift valley
- It's shared between Uganda (54%) and Democratic Republic - of Congo (DRC) (46%)
- The lake is multi-species (about 47- 60species) fishery in nature- the main commercial species currently being- Nile Perch, Nile Tilapia and the small sardine like muziri and ragogi

# Fish production

- The lake contributes about 30% into fish production in the country annually. This is about 144,000- 150,000MT of fish. The largest of this is from the sardine like ragogi and muziri.(80%), 6% Nile Perch- but high value about 36% of the value of fish
- Lake Albert is currently the second-most productive lake in Uganda after Lake Victoria, worth UGX 122.5 billion annually (approximately USD 40 million). (CAS report 2012)
- Six district administrative unit surround the lake -The annual value of fish landed in Buliisa District alone is estimated at UGX 17 billion (USD 5.5 million).
- Fisheries are a key source of employment, income, food and source of livelihood for the surrounding community

# A typical fishing boat on Lake Albert



# *Gender issues*

- The youth who form a substantial proportion of the population at the various landing sites (villages) contribute to the labour force.
- The male dominate in the fishing and the large scale marketing
- the womenfolk do the fish processing and small scale marketing
- Boat ownership is a mainly by the main and this means that they take the majority share in the user rights for the resource

# Threats to the fishery

- Overfishing- many stocks are not now in quantities large enough to be fished on a commercial basis
- Development of oil and gas sector in the Lake
- Political instability in Eastern DRC triggering migration of cheap labour in the fishing industry further endangers the fishery
- Political interference at all levels
- Unharmonised law between Uganda and DRC on fishing practices- fishing practices that are acceptable in DRC are not acceptable in Uganda and vice versa e.g seining, closed season fishing
- Conflicts between Light fishers and Gillnetters/ Long liners
- Water weeds- *Salvinia Molesta* (Kariba weed)

# Fisheries Control systems in Uganda

1. Centralized fisheries with a young co-management system involving the Fisheries community (BMUs), Community Based Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, Local Gov't Authorities, Private Sector, other Government agencies- Police, Army and the Revenue Authority.
2. Gov't in consultation with key stakeholders sets the Fisheries Policies, Laws and Regulations-
3. The Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy (2017) is derived from the Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (ASSP, 2015- 2020) National Dev't Plan II-2020 ( Vision 2040) which is derived from the Sustainable Dev't Goal 2030.
4. Fish Act Cap ,197- 2000; Statutory Instruments- Fish(Fishing)Rules 2010; Local Gov't Act; Beach management Rules
5. The Fish (Fishing Rules) 2010- Licensing is currently the main Law being used to control the Fisheries

# The current fisheries management regime on the Lake

- Regulated through controlling the types and methods of use of the fishing gear, size of fish caught and the areas of fishing
- Licensing through a rigorous method that involves, application by fishers, registration, vetting and issuance of Fishing Vessel Identification Plates (FVIPs) on fishing boats is being implemented with a goal of minimizing illegal fishing activities thereby enhancing the stocks.

# Licensing re-strategized

- Until 2008- Licensing was decentralized- meaning Local Gov't was delegated to handle
- From 2005 it was noted that there are sharp decline in the fish stocks because the Local Governments that was charge with Licensing ( giving user rights to the resource were more focused on revenue generation from the sector.
- Therefore in 2008- Licensing planning was recalled from LGs and back to the center
- With the objective reduce illegal fishing activities- Recommendation from Research

# Fisheries Licensing as a Control Mechanism

- The Lake Albert fishery is an open access fishery by all standard that is moving towards a controlled fishery.
- Controls are implemented in the fishery through issuance of Licenses. These Licenses are issued on an annual basis and they are species specific meaning for which ever species a fisher intends to fish; the fisher has to own a license for.
- The processes of issuance of Licenses involves the registration of the fishers and also application by the fishers expressing their interest to operate in the kind of fishery for which a license is issued. In order to get licenses, the fishers have to log online. Therefore, the kind of licensing is referred to as e-licenses. Since the fees collected are deposited in the government consolidated fund, the fishers require tax identification numbers before they can log on to the licensing portal.

# Challenges

- Changing and cumbersome system of licensing- Acquisition of Tax Identification Numbers, Possession of internet ,having the knowledge to use the internet, electricity etc
- Delays in procurement of Licensing Inputs- Fishing Vessel Identification Plates, Certificate of Vessel Ownership (CVOs)
- Limited enforcement that makes those of who have paid for the License fish equally with those who have not yet paid.
- Unharmonised policies, laws ,regulations with the neighbouring DRC
- Conflicts- Political Insecurity in Eastern Congo
- Political

# Recommendations and way forward

- Establishment of a Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMB) for the Fisheries that border DRC- This could be done in many ways e.g. expansion of the mandate of the LVFO or creation of a different organization all together
- Harmonization of fisheries policies , laws and regulation with DRC- Closed season in DRC and nothing in Uganda
- Conflict resolution between the users- Mukene/ ragogi fishers (Light fishers and the Gill netters / long liners