

## LVFO Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity in Lake Victoria



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# LVFO Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity in Lake Victoria



Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization  
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The Parties to the Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity (RPOA-Capacity) in Lake Victoria are the Governments of the Republic of Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Republic of Uganda which are the Contracting Parties of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization and the Partner States of the East African Community (EAC), hereinafter referred to as the Partner States.

The RPOA-Capacity was adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization on 30 March 2007 at Nairobi, Kenya.

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## Foreword

Fishing is a major income generating activity for the riparian communities of Lake Victoria. The fisheries of Lake Victoria has a beach value of over \$600 million and contributes \$300 million in annual fish export revenues to the economies of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda who share the lake. Nile perch is the major source of fish export to international markets, omena/dagaa/mukene and tilapia are the basis of regional trade and domestic markets.

After the upsurge of the Nile perch fishery in the 1980/90s, there has been a drastic decline in its contribution to the total fish catches from Lake Victoria. In 1999/2001, Nile perch provided about 59% of the lake's catch, which dropped to 37% in 2005/06. Now there is great concern about the continuing increase in fishing effort and capacity targeting the major commercial fish species of Lake Victoria and, especially, the Nile perch. If not controlled this may lead to overcapacity and overfishing.

Despite the increase in wealth from the fisheries, there is a decline in incomes due to the increase in the fisheries dependent population in the lake basin. Individual incomes continue to decline as more people come to the lake to fish for Nile perch and other fish species. Fisheries census (Frame Surveys) conducted between 2000 and 2006 show major increases in the number of fishers, boats, engines, fishing nets and hooks. The use of illegal gears and methods has also increased fishing effort and the catching of immature fish. The fishing pressure on the lake calls for better management of the number of people catching Nile perch and the fishing practices and methods.

The Partner States acknowledged the need to control fishing effort, after recognizing the dangers of increasing fishing effort and capacity on the valuable fisheries resources and the impact on the livelihoods of the fisher communities of Lake Victoria.

In order to address the problem, a Regional Plan of Action for Management of Fishing Capacity (RPOA-Capacity) on Lake Victoria was developed by the Partner States through the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The process was spearheaded by a Regional Taskforce formed by the Partner States, which prepared a draft RPOA-Capacity document.

The draft was reviewed through stakeholder consultations and a final RPOA-Capacity was produced and approved in March 2007 by the LVFO Council of Ministers for implementation by the Partner States.

The purpose of the RPOA-Capacity is to sustain the fisheries resource base for optimal economic growth, poverty reduction, food security, foreign exchange earnings, employment, gender equity and improved standards of living among fisheries dependent communities

Implementation of the RPOA-Capacity calls for commitment of all key stakeholders - especially, the BMUs; Local Authorities; fish traders, Industrial processors and exporters, fish factory supply agents; Civil Society and Central Government. All the stakeholders must work together to achieve optimum fishing capacity corresponding to the sustainable fisheries resources.

I call upon all stakeholders to support the efforts being made to manage fishing capacity on Lake Victoria by promoting wise use of the fisheries resources for sustainable individual and national incomes for the benefit of the riparian communities and Partner States sharing Lake Victoria.



Thomas Wanyika Maembe  
**Executive Secretary, LVFO**

## Preamble

The Parties to this Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) on the Management of Fishing Capacity on Lake Victoria are: the Governments of the Republic of Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Uganda which are the Contracting Parties of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) and the Partner States of the East African Community (EAC), hereinafter referred to as the Partner States;

Appreciating the efforts made by the Partner States to strengthen regional cooperation by signing the Convention for the establishment of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1994 in Kisumu, Kenya to jointly manage the living resources of Lake Victoria;

Recognizing the efforts already made by the Partner States of Lake Victoria to strengthen regional cooperation in the spirit of the East African Community (EAC) Treaty signed in Arusha on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 1999;

Appreciating that Lake Victoria is a shared heritage and the EAC Treaty obliges the Partner States to cooperate in the management of natural resources which include the Lake Victoria fisheries in a sustainable manner for the benefit of present and future generations;

Noting that the Partner States have, through the EAC, designated the Lake Victoria basin as an economic growth zone, and formed a Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC);

Being Aware that LVFO is obliged to collaborate with LVBC and other institutions of the EAC in the management of the Lake Victoria basin;

Acknowledging that the Protocol for Sustainable Development of the Lake Victoria Basin states that the development and management of the fisheries resources shall be as stipulated in the Convention for the establishment of the LVFO;

Recalling that the Partner States are committed to implementing the relevant provisions of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and the associated Technical Guidelines;



Recognizing that the LVFO has developed, adopted and is implementing a Strategic Vision, a Fisheries Management Plan and the Regional Plan of Action to prevent, deter and eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing for Lake Victoria;

Acknowledging that Lake Victoria has important fisheries which are vital to the economies of the Partner States and activities undertaken in any part of Lake Victoria have impacts on the lake;

Noting that the fisheries Frame Survey results of 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2006 show that fishing effort measured by the number of fishing gears, fishing crafts and fishermen on the lake have increased considerably;

Being Aware that lack of capacity management can lead to increasing fishing effort and result in overfishing and depletion of commercial fish species, decline of biodiversity, reduced returns on investment and a decline in the quality of life of fishers;

Convinced that management of fishing capacity contributes to sustainable fish stocks and increased social and economic benefits;

Accepting that the Catch Assessment Surveys indicate declines in Nile perch size and catches, increases in *Rastrineobola* and *Haplochromines* catches and relative stability of Nile *Tilapia* catches;

Noting the need to determine the desired levels of **capacity for individual** commercial fish species of Lake Victoria because the lake has finite fisheries resources;

Recognizing the value of accurate data and information to guide fisheries management and the need to take a precautionary approach in management in accordance with the CCRF based on best available information;

Being Aware that the Contracting Parties of the LVFO Convention, have agreed to develop, coordinate and implement a harmonized and effective RPOA-Capacity;

Reaffirming that this RPOA-Capacity supports the IPOA-Fishing Capacity; and

Desiring to conclude the development of the RPOA-Capacity, and implementing it within the framework of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Now, therefore, the Partner States and Contracting Parties agree as follows:

## 1. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this RPOA–Capacity the terms below are defined as:

1. **“Beach Management Units (BMUs)”** means, an Organization of fisherfolk at the beach (boat crew, boat owners, managers, charterers, fish processors, fish mongers, local gear makers or repairers and fishing equipment dealers) within a fishing community;
2. **“Capacity utilization”** means the degree to which a fishing unit is utilized under normal working conditions within a specified period of time;
3. **“Catch per unit effort”** means average catch by a fishing unit over a specified period of time;
4. **“Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries”** (CCRF) means the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries as adopted by the 28th Session of the FAO Conference on 31 October 1995;
5. **“Contracting Parties”** means the Governments of the Republic of Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Uganda;
6. **“Convention”** means the instrument for the establishment of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation signed by the Governments of the Republic of Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Uganda on 30th June 1994 in Kisumu, Kenya to manage the living resources of Lake Victoria;
7. **“Excess capacity”** means existence of unutilised, redundant fishing capacity;
8. **“Fishing capacity”** means the sum total of fishing effort applied by all fishing units on a fishery within a period of time if fully utilised;
9. **“Fishing effort”** means a measure of application and efficiency of a fishing unit to catch fish;
10. **“Fish Stock”** means the abundance, distribution and composition of a fish species throughout its range in the lake.
11. **“Fishing unit”** means a defined single combination of the craft, crew, gear and means of propulsion;

12. **“IPOA-Capacity”** means the FAO International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity;
13. **“LVFO”** means the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization;
14. **“RPOA-Capacity”** means the LVFO Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity on Lake Victoria ;
15. **“RPOA-IUU”** means the Regional Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing;
16. **“Overcapacity”** means a situation whereby the current fishing effort is higher than required to ensure a target level of capacity commensurate with sustainable exploitation;
17. **“Partner States”** means the Republic of Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Uganda;
18. **“Slot size”** means lower and upper total length of a fish species allowed for capture, processing and marketing;
19. **“Stakeholders”** means all individuals, BMUs, fish processing establishments, public and private institutions, organisations, agencies, civil society organisations and all others interested in, benefiting from or impacting on the fisheries of Lake Victoria;
20. **“Target level of fishing effort”** means the optimum level of fishing effort that optimises economic returns from a fishery without compromising resource sustainability.

## II. BACKGROUND

21. In the context of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and its overall objective of sustainable fisheries, the issue of increasing fishing effort and overcapacity is of increasing concern. Overcapacity, if not managed in a timely manner, could contribute to overfishing, depletion of fish stocks and decline of socio-economic benefits.
22. The CCRF requires that States should take measures to prevent or eliminate overcapacity and to ensure that levels of fishing effort are commensurate with sustainable use of fisheries resources.
23. In 1999 the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) adopted the International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity (IPOA-Capacity), which is elaborated within the framework of the CCRF.

24. The IPOA-Capacity requires States and regional fisheries organizations to achieve equitable and transparent management of capacity not later than 2005. In pursuant to this the Partner States agreed to prepare a RPOA-Capacity for Lake Victoria.
25. The FAO and LVFO held a Regional Technical Workshop on Fishing Effort and Capacity on Lake Victoria in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania in December 2005. A Regional Taskforce (RTF) was formed to prepare the draft RPOA-Capacity. The RTF held its first meeting in Kisumu, Kenya from 11th to 12th April 2006, and subsequently in Bukoba, Tanzania on 1st and 2nd June 2006. The draft RPOA-Capacity was presented to the LVFO Council of Ministers who directed it be presented to the national and regional stakeholders' consultative workshops, and the RTF incorporated comments from these workshops and prepared a final draft for submission to the LVFO Statutory Organs.

### III. NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE RPOA-CAPACITY

26. This RPOA-Capacity is a further commitment of the Partner States to implement the CCRF and the IPOA-Capacity. Partner States shall apply this document consistently with measures adopted by the LVFO Council of Ministers.
27. This RPOA-Capacity constitutes an element of fisheries conservation and sustainable management. The provisions of Article 3 of the CCRF apply to the interpretation and application of this RPOA-Capacity and its relationship with other international, regional and national instruments.

### IV. VISION, MISSION AND STRATEGY OF RPOA-CAPACITY

28. The Vision for the RPOA-Capacity is sustainably exploited fisheries accruing optimal socio-economic benefits.
29. The Mission is to manage fishing capacity so as to prevent, deter and eliminate overfishing on Lake Victoria.

30. The Strategy for effecting the Vision and Mission is to set guidelines to determine and manage capacity at optimal levels for individual commercial species taking into consideration the endangered species.

## V. PRINCIPLES AND PROCESS

31. The management of fishing capacity will be based on the principles of participation, phased implementation, holistic approach, conservation, priority, new technologies, mobility, and transparency in accordance with the CCRF.
32. **Participation:** The RPOA-Capacity shall be implemented by Partner States directly, through the LVFO Institutions at grassroots (especially BMUs), local governments, national, and regional levels, and in collaboration with other stakeholders. The successful implementation of the RPOA-Capacity relies on consultation, cooperation and co-management as well as on close and effective coordination.
33. **Phased Implementation:** The management of fishing capacity on the basis of national and regional plans shall be achieved through assessment and diagnosis of the resource base, development and adoption of management measures and periodic monitoring and adjustment of adopted measures.
34. **Holistic Approach:** The management of fishing capacity should consider factors affecting capacity and fisheries at national and regional levels as well as the health of the lake's catchment and its ecosystem.
35. **Conservation:** The management of fishing capacity will be designed to promote conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources, protection of the biodiversity, critical habitats, and the environment of Lake Victoria consistent with the precautionary approach and other international, regional and national obligations. Capacity management policies and measures will be designed and implemented both to encourage the minimization of by-catch, waste, catching of immature fish and reduction of post-harvest losses and to encourage selective and environmentally sound fishing practices.

36. **Priority:** Initially, priority shall be given to management of fishing capacity of the commercial species, especially, *Lates niloticus* (Nile perch), *Oreochromis niloticus* (Nile Tilapia), *Rastrineobola argentea* (Dagaa/Omena/Mukene) and the emerging fisheries such as Haplochromines.
37. **New Technologies:** The management of fishing capacity shall be designed so as to take into account the incorporation of environmentally sound and emerging technologies in all areas of capture fisheries and aquaculture. New fishing technologies shall be verified by research and approved by the LVFO before licensing by the relevant Authorities.
38. **Mobility:** The management of fishing capacity shall encourage efficient use of fishing capacity in areas where overcapacity does not exist. Where overcapacity exists encourage redistribution of fishing capacity within national boundaries. Discourage unauthorized movement of fishers and their gears to different fishing grounds and encourage diversification of sources of livelihoods in the basin to reduce pressure on the fisheries.
39. **Transparency:** The RPOA-Capacity shall be implemented in a transparent, accountable, and trustworthy manner.
40. All of the above principles and processes are intended to ensure good governance, equity, poverty focus, gender sensitivity, peaceful settlement of disputes, and good neighborliness at all levels.

## VI. CURRENT EFFORTS TO MANAGE FISHING CAPACITY

41. The Partner States through LVFO are currently implementing the following measures which contribute to management of fishing capacity:
  - a. Implementing decisions adopted by the LVFO Council of Ministers, e.g. controlling access to the fishery through registration and licensing of fishing crafts and fishers; controlling the size of Nile perch harvested to a slot size of 50 – 85cm and Nile Tilapia to fish of not less than 25cm and

- setting a minimum mesh size of gill net at 127 mm (5”);
  - b. Implementing the RPOA-IUU through Monitoring, Control, Surveillance and other measures;
  - c. Promoting co-management of the fisheries through formation of Beach Management Units (BMUs) and involvement of other stakeholders;
  - d. Assessing and monitoring the fish stocks through acoustic, trawl, gillnet and other surveys;
  - e. Assessing the nature and magnitude of fishing effort through frame surveys;
  - f. Monitoring commercial fisheries through catch assessment surveys;
  - g. Considering suitable mesh sizes and fishing grounds for Dagaa;
  - h. Prohibiting the use of destructive fishing gears and methods including monofilament gill nets, beach seines, trawl nets, cast nets, beating/splashing water, and use of poisons;
  - i. Implementation of a closed season for Dagaa in the Kenyan part of Lake Victoria; and
  - j. Setting up closed areas and seasons to protect breeding and nursery grounds, pathways for migratory fishes, and biodiversity.
42. Despite the above management measures, the numbers of fishers, fishing crafts and fishing gears have increased and optimal numbers of fishers, fishing crafts and fishing gears need to be determined, agreed and managed.

## VII. PURPOSE AND OVERALL OBJECTIVE

43. The Purpose of RPOA-Capacity is to sustain the fisheries resource base for optimal economic growth, poverty reduction, food security, foreign exchange earnings, employment, and gender equity and improved standards of living among fisheries dependant communities.



44. The Overall Objective of RPOA-Capacity is to have an efficient, equitable and transparent system for management of fishing capacity on Lake Victoria for long-term sustainability of the fisheries resources.
  
45. The Specific Objectives of RPOA-Capacity are to:
  - a. Ensure that there is a clear policy and legal framework for management of fishing capacity
  - b. Ensure there are institutions and institutional mechanisms at national and regional level for management of fishing capacity
  - c. Collaborate and link with relevant international and regional bodies
  - d. Ensure political commitment to RPOA-Capacity implementation
  - e. Promote stakeholder participation in capacity management in a co-management arrangement
  - f. Ensure sustainable financing of implementation of RPOA-Capacity
  - g. Have information on the status of the fisheries resources and fishing capacity
  - h. Make information available to different stakeholders
  - i. Manage and maintain optimum capacity at a level that does not compromise sustainability of the fisheries resource base
  - j. Develop and implement species-specific strategies for management of capacity
  - k. Improve the socio-economic welfare of the fisheries dependent communities through management of fishing capacity
  - l. Explore economic incentives and develop alternative livelihoods options to reduce overcapacity
  - m. Improve human resource capacity for effective capacity management
  - n. Improve infrastructure facilities for fishing capacity management
  - o. Encourage mechanisms that address environmental issues impacting fisheries

## VIII. STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

46. The Partner States shall implement the following interventions to meet the above objectives:
- a. Develop a regional harmonized policy and legal framework on fishing capacity management that ensures equitable access and distribution of benefits that accrue from the fisheries;
  - b. Identify institutions and define clear institutional structures and processes for management of capacity at regional, national, local government and village levels
  - c. Fulfill international obligations especially in relation to CCRF and IPOA–Capacity
  - d. Sensitize the political leadership especially Members of Parliament (MPs) and Local Government Councilors on RPOA-Capacity
  - e. Strengthen co-management institutions at all levels
  - f. Develop and implement mechanisms for sustainable financing of fisheries activities
  - g. Review, assess and monitor the fish stocks and fishing capacity
  - h. Collate, design, store, manage, repackage, disseminate and utilize information and databases
  - i. Determine, set and manage optimal species–specific capacity levels
  - j. Take immediate actions for specific fisheries requiring urgent remedial measures based on the assessments of the resource
  - k. Identify and promote mechanisms that address socio-economic welfare of the fisherfolk
  - l. Review economic and social incentives and livelihood strategies in fisheries sector;
  - m. Develop sensitization, education and training programmes;
  - n. Establish infrastructure facilities for fishing capacity management
  - o. Identify environmental issues affecting fisheries and work with lead agencies and institutions to address them.

## IX. SPECIFIC ACTIONS

### 47. Policy and Legal Framework

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Review existing national policy and legal frameworks, develop and present a regional harmonized fisheries policy and legal framework on the management of capacity to the respective National Parliaments for ratification;
- b. Develop, implement, monitor, publicize and periodically review regional, national and district plans of action for managing fishing capacity;
- c. Examine and streamline policy and legislation relating to licensing in relation to target species, type of fishing gear, type and size of fishing craft and any other component relating to capacity;
- d. Develop and implement a mechanism to ensure equitable distribution of benefits accruing from fisheries;
- e. Encourage member states to minimize changing fisheries policies outside agreed RPOA-Capacity requirements;
- f. Promote affirmative action to mainstream gender issues; and
- g. Ensure that there is equitable supply of fish products for exports and local consumption.

### 48. Institutions and Institutional Processes

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Identify key players and determine their roles in the management of fishing capacity; and
- b. Develop and strengthen linkages within and between LVFO Institutions, relevant Ministries, Local Governments, Private Sector, Civil Society and Development Partners to address fishing capacity and related externalities.

### 49. Regional and International Collaboration

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Participate in international agreements which relate to the

- management of fishing capacity;
- b. Promote technical cooperation to implement the RPOA-Capacity;
- c. Improve co-operation in collection and exchange of information regarding fishing capacity management among regional and international fisheries organizations; and
- d. Regularly review information on implementation of RPOA-Capacity and inform EAC, FAO, the relevant Regional Institutions and the Development Partners of Lake Victoria.

#### **50. Political Issues**

The governments and Legislative Assemblies of Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Create channels for sensitizing the Members of Parliament (MPs) and Councilors on their roles for effective participation in the management of the Lake; and
- b. Promote political commitment, goodwill and positive intervention at all levels for successful implementation of RPOA-Capacity.

#### **51. Stakeholder Participation**

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Clearly define roles of all stakeholders in the management of fishing capacity;
- b. Establish and build capacity of co-management institutions at different levels of governance including the participation of civil society and the private sector;
- c. Support the effective participation of BMUs in determination and management of fishing capacity; and
- d. Review the BMU Guidelines from time to time to strengthen their abilities in managing fishing effort.

#### **52. Financing Capacity Management**

Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Seek sustainable financing mechanisms to support fisheries

- management, research and related environmental concerns;
- b. Establish Fish Levy Trust Funds (e.g. cost recovery from processors, fish dealers and fishers in form of user fee, levies, royalties etc.);
- c. Encourage Donors to channel their interventions for BMUs through LVFO institutions to achieve intended objectives;
- d. Lobby for better fisheries sector budgets for implementing the RPOA-Capacity;
- e. Urge Members of Parliament to consider using Constituency Development Funds for infrastructural development in fishing communities; and
- f. Call upon Local Authorities to set up plough back arrangements for infrastructure development e.g. constructing fish landing sites and fish markets.

### **53. Information on Fisheries Resources**

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Review and analyze existing information and data on fish stocks, and fishing effort and suggest relevant recommendations for management of capacity;
- b. Update the inventory of existing fish species in Lake Victoria;
- c. Ensure that Institutions doing research undertake demand driven research relevant to the RPOA and work with BMUs and other relevant stakeholders;
- d. Categorize fishing units and quantify their components;
- e. Carry out research on seasonal resource mobility (stock migration) and breeding patterns in order to guide establishment of closed seasons and areas;
- f. Determine the stocks of commercially important fish species, their composition, relative abundance and population structure and distribution by Limnological strata (or any other appropriate strata, e.g. district);
- g. Determine fishable stocks and corresponding fishing effort especially the number, size and type of fishing gears, the number, type and size of fishing crafts, and the mode of craft propulsion;
- h. Generate information and monitor the dynamics of commercial

- fisheries and the indicators of capacity;
- i. Set up and support mechanisms for collecting, processing, storing, retrieving, packaging and disseminating information relevant to the RPOA-Capacity, by different stakeholders, especially BMUs;
- j. Explore the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in data and information communication to speed up development among communities; and
- k. Monitor the socio-economic impacts of capacity-related interventions.

#### **54. Information Exchange and Dissemination**

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Assess information needs of stakeholders for fishing capacity management;
- b. Repackage and disseminate information on capacity to fishers and other stakeholders;
- c. Disseminate information on viable alternative livelihoods to fishers;
- d. Develop, maintain and manage appropriate and compatible national and regional databases on fishing capacity;
- e. Exchange information on fishing crafts that do not comply with conservation and management measures adopted by LVFO;
- f. Translate the RPOA and CCRF into local languages (Kiswahili, Dholuo, Luganda);
- g. Ensure research findings related to RPOA-capacity are verified, cleared, approved and adopted by LVFO Statutory organs; and
- h. Ensure awareness creation for the stakeholders and the general public on policy, legal, conservation, resource sustainability and economic gains and environmental concerns.

#### **55. Management of Fishing Capacity**

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Ensure that RPOA-IUU is implemented and monitored;
- b. Examine and use all relevant fisheries management tools in the implementation of the RPOA-Capacity;

- c. Ensure that implementation of the RPOA- Capacity includes limitation of fishing access;
- d. Gazette fish landing sites and register fishers, fishing crafts and gear;
- e. Develop measures to manage capacity using a participatory approach;
- f. Assess and manage the fisheries using the Fisheries Management Decision Support Tool;
- g. Where overcapacity exists, the Partner States initially limit capacity at present levels and then set out and implement plans for the progressive reduction of capacity;
- h. Where under capacity exists, promote measures to optimize utilization;
- i. Consolidate efforts in the implementation of the LVFO regional strategy on cross-border fishing;
- j. Manage transfer of capacity between countries and within national jurisdictions across water bodies;
- k. Strive to minimize cross border conflicts through demarcation of boundaries on water;
- l. Put in place a mechanism for regulating manufacture, importation and marketing of fishing nets allowable for Lake Victoria;
- m. Negotiate and agree on the distribution of fishing capacity at different levels of governance (from grassroots to regional level);
- n. Take collective measures to ensure that Partners States and Local Authorities/Districts fulfill their responsibilities under the RPOA-Capacity;
- o. Employ appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms;
- p. Put in place mechanisms at all levels to fight corruption and conflicts of interest in the process of implementing the RPOA-Capacity;
- q. Promote the capture, documentation and use of indigenous knowledge in management of fishing effort and capacity;
- r. Ensure adequate participation of all stakeholders in Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS);
- s. Ensure that capacity management includes incentive systems for promoting reduction of IUU fishing;

- t. Strengthen MCS and encourage joint patrols with Security Agencies and Communities; and
- u. Ensure that the fisheries legislations in the Partner States are amended to make trials speedy and conviction easier and have deterrent penalties.

#### **56. Species-specific capacity management measures**

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Implement and enforce the decisions made by the Council of Ministers;
- b. Initially limit fishing effort on Nile perch at the Frame Survey 2006 levels as a precautionary measure;
- c. Agree on and implement mesh size and fishing grounds for *Rastrineobola argentea* (Dagaa/Omena/Mukene); and
- d. Apply the precautionary approach, using the best available information for Nile tilapia.

#### **57. Socio-economic Concerns**

Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Streamline marketing channels that reduce exploitation of fishers;
- b. Enforce child labour laws in fisheries;
- c. Promote credit facilities and mobile banks and encourage fishers to have a saving culture;
- d. Encourage institutional collaboration and linkages to address socio-economic issues including the existing provisions under the EAC Treaty;
- e. Mainstream control of HIV/AIDS and other diseases such as malaria, TB and Bilharzia;
- f. Encourage and support the actions of Inter-state Security Committee and national law enforcement agencies to address the issue of piracy and security of fishers on the lake; and
- g. Promote mechanisms that address poverty alleviation among fishing communities.



## **58. Incentives in the Fishing Sector**

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Assess the factors which contribute to overcapacity including subsidies and incentives as a first step to progressively reducing and eliminating all factors, including subsidies and economic incentives which contribute, directly or indirectly, to overcapacity, taking into consideration special requirements of small-scale marginalized fishers;
- b. Assess, develop and promote alternative livelihood options, including aquaculture, and build the capacity of fisherfolk to adopt new options to reduce pressure on lake fisheries; and
- c. Promote fish processing for value added fish products to maximize profits.

## **59. Human Resources Development**

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Build human resources capacity in fisheries management, research institutions and other stakeholders to determine, monitor and manage capacity;
- b. Ensure sufficient personnel to address technical fisheries issues; and
- c. Conduct awareness raising, sensitization and training programmes on capacity management.

## **60. Infrastructure Development**

The Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Develop infrastructure for collecting, analyzing and disseminating information;
- b. Procure relevant office and field equipment for capacity management;
- c. Encourage infrastructure development in fishing communities (e.g. rural electrification, solar, wind power, cold storage) as part of encouraging diversification of livelihoods;

- d. Promote establishment of educational, health and sanitary facilities at beaches.

## **61. Environmental and Ecosystem Issues**

Partner States through LVFO shall:

- a. Recognize the impacts of external environmental issues on fisheries, e.g. water abstraction, Water hyacinth and other invasive weeds, increasing population in the catchment, and encourage appropriate authorities to address them
- b. Promote the conservation of the Lake Victoria ecosystem
- c. Promote culture of bait fish to reduce the catch of wild immature fish;
- d. Identify, demarcate and conserve wetlands, buffer zones and breeding grounds;
- e. Promote linkages and cross-references between fisheries and environmental laws;
- f. Encourage relevant Authorities to mitigate the impact of boat building industry and fish smoking on the forests including enhancement of afforestation programmes
- g. Encourage relevant authorities to address the poor land use practices in the in the Lake Victoria basin;
- h. Encourage urban authorities and lake side settlements to address and enforce uncontrolled domestic, municipal and industrial wastes;
- i. Discourage use and disposal of plastic materials around the lake in fishing;
- j. Understand and manage the impacts of declining water levels on fisheries and the ecosystem of the lake;
- k. Encourage relevant authorities to undertake seismological studies to understand whether there is loss of water through underground seepage; and
- l. Consider the inclusion of other Lake Victoria basin states (Rwanda and Burundi) in the management of RPOA-Capacity.

## X. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE RPOA-CAPACITY

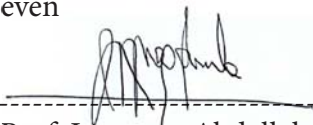
62. The RPOA–Capacity shall be implemented according to the LVFO institutional structure and mechanisms, ranging from the grassroots, local government, national and regional levels within the co-management framework
63. The Fisheries Authorities will be the lead institutions in policy, legislation and other fisheries management related issues.
64. The Fisheries Research Institutions will take the lead in the collection and provision of information for management of fishing capacity.
65. Stakeholders in the Lake Victoria fisheries will be involved in the implementation of the RPOA-Capacity.
66. Civil Society Organizations in the Lake Victoria basin will be involved in the monitoring of the implementation of the RPOA-Capacity
67. The LVFO Secretariat shall coordinate the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the RPOA-Capacity.
68. The Partner States through the LVFO shall ensure that the above activities are included in the Fisheries Management Plan for Lake Victoria.
69. The Partner States through the LVFO shall seek financial, technical and other assistance from Development Partners and other sources to implement the RPOA-Capacity.

## LVFO REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR MANAGEMENT OF FISHING CAPACITY ON LAKE VICTORIA

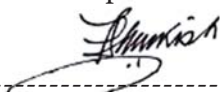
The Regional Plan of Action for Management of Fishing Capacity (RPOA-Capacity) on Lake Victoria was adopted by the LVFO Council of Ministers on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2007 as the LVFO RPOA-Management of Fishing Capacity for Lake Victoria.

This plan will be implemented by the EAC Partner States sharing Lake Victoria, whose authorized representatives have duly signed this Plan.

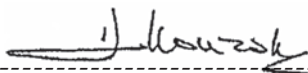
Done in Nairobi, Kenya on the Thirtieth Day of March, Two Thousand and Seven



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Hon. Prof. Jumanne Abdallah Maghembe MP  
Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism  
For the United Republic of Tanzania



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Hon. Fred Mukisa, MP  
Minister of State for Fisheries  
Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries  
For the Republic of Uganda



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Hon. Joseph Konzollo Munyao, EGH, MP  
Minister, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries  
For the Republic of Kenya

ANNEX 1 REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR MANAGEMENT OF FISHING CAPACITY

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
<p>a. Ensure that there is a clear policy and legal framework for management of fishing capacity</p>	<p>a. Develop a regional harmonized policy and legal framework on fishing capacity management that ensures equitable access and distribution of benefits that accrue from the fisheries;</p>	<p><b>Para 47 Policy and Legal Framework</b> The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review existing national policy and legal frameworks, develop and present a regional harmonized fisheries policy and legal framework on the management of capacity to the respective National Parliaments for ratification;</li> <li>Develop, implement, monitor, publicize and periodically review regional, national and district plans of action for managing fishing capacity;</li> <li>Examine and streamline policy and legislation relating to licensing in relation to target species, type of fishing gear, type and size of fishing craft and any other component relating to capacity;</li> <li>Develop and implement a mechanism to ensure equitable distribution of benefits accruing from fisheries;</li> <li>Encourage member states to minimize changing fisheries policies outside agreed RPOA-Capacity requirements;</li> <li>Promote affirmative action to mainstream gender issues; and</li> <li>Ensure that there is equitable supply of fish products for exports and local consumption.</li> </ol>

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
<p>b. Ensure there are institutions and institutional mechanisms at national and regional level for management of fishing capacity</p>	<p>b. Identify institutions and define clear institutional structures and processes for management of capacity at regional, national, local government and village levels</p>	<p><b>Para 48 Institutions and Institutional Processes</b>                      The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify key players and determine their roles in the management of fishing capacity; and</li> <li>b. Develop and strengthen linkages within and between LVFO Institutions, relevant Ministries, Local Governments, Private Sector, Civil Society and Development Partners to address fishing capacity and related externalities.</li> </ol>
<p>c. Collaborate and link with relevant international and regional bodies</p>	<p>c. Fulfill international obligations especially in relation to CCRF and IPOA–Capacity</p>	<p><b>Para 49 Regional and International Collaboration</b>                      The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Participate in international agreements which relate to the management of fishing capacity;</li> <li>b. Promote technical cooperation to implement the RPOA–Capacity;</li> <li>c. Improve co-operation in collection and exchange of information regarding fishing capacity management among regional and international fisheries organizations; and</li> <li>d. Regularly review information on implementation of RPOA–Capacity and inform EAC, FAO, the relevant Regional Institutions and the Development Partners of Lake Victoria.</li> </ol>

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
<p>d. Ensure political commitment to RPOA-Capacity implementation</p>	<p>d. Sensitize the political leadership especially Members of Parliament (MPs) and Local Government Councilors on RPOA-Capacity</p>	<p><b>Para 50 Political Issues</b>                      The governments and Legislative Assemblies of Partner States through LVFO shall:                      a. Create channels for sensitizing the MPs and Councilors on their roles for effective participation in the management of the Lake; and                      b. Promote political commitment, goodwill and positive intervention at all levels for successful implementation of RPOA-Capacity.</p>
<p>e. Promote stakeholder participation in capacity management in a co-management arrangement</p>	<p>e. Strengthen co-management institutions at all levels</p>	<p><b>Para 51 Stakeholder Participation</b>                      The Partner States through LVFO shall:                      a. Clearly define roles of all stakeholders in the management of fishing capacity;                      b. Establish and build capacity of co-management institutions at different levels of governance including the participation of civil society and the private sector;                      c. Support the effective participation of BMUs in determination and management of fishing capacity; and                      d. Review the BMU guidelines to strengthen their capacity in managing fishing effort.</p>

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
<p>f. Ensure sustainable financing of implementation of RPOA-Capacity</p>	<p>f. Develop and implement mechanisms for sustainable financing of fisheries activities</p>	<p><b>Para 52 Financing Capacity Management Partner States through LVFO shall:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Seek sustainable financing mechanisms to support fisheries management, research and related environmental concerns;</li> <li>b. Establish Fish Levy Trust Funds (e.g. cost recovery from processors, fish dealers and fishers in form of user fee, levies, royalties etc.);</li> <li>c. Encourage Donors to channel their interventions for BMUs through LVFO institutions to achieve intended objectives;</li> <li>d. Lobby for better fisheries sector budgets for implementing the RPOA-Capacity;</li> <li>e. Urge Members of Parliament to consider using Constituency Development Funds for infrastructural development in fishing communities; and</li> <li>f. Call upon Local Authorities to set up plough back arrangements for infrastructure development e.g. constructing fish landing sites and fish markets.</li> </ol>



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
<p>g. Have information on the status of the fisheries resources and fishing capacity</p>	<p>g. Review, assess and monitor the fish stocks and fishing capacity</p>	<p><b>Para 53 Information on Fisheries Resources</b>                      The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review and analyze existing information and data on fish stocks, and fishing effort and suggest relevant recommendations for management of capacity;</li> <li>b. Update the inventory of existing fish species in Lake Victoria;</li> <li>c. Ensure that Institutions doing research undertake demand driven research relevant to the RPOA and work with BMUs and other relevant stakeholders;</li> <li>d. Categorize fishing units and quantify their components;</li> <li>e. Carry out research on seasonal resource mobility (stock migration) and breeding patterns in order to guide establishment of closed seasons and areas;</li> <li>f. Determine the stocks of commercially important fish species, their composition, relative abundance and population structure and distribution by Limnological strata (or any other appropriate strata, e.g. district);</li> <li>g. Determine fishable stocks and corresponding fishing effort especially the number, size and type of fishing gears, the number, type and size of fishing crafts, and the mode of craft propulsion;</li> <li>h. Generate information and monitor the dynamics of commercial fisheries and the indicators of Capacity;</li> <li>i. Set up and support mechanisms for collecting, processing, storing, retrieving, packaging and disseminating information relevant to the RPOA-Capacity, by different stakeholders, especially BMUs;</li> <li>j. Explore the use of ICTs in data and information communication to speed up development among communities; and</li> <li>k. Monitor the socio-economic impacts of capacity-related interventions.</li> </ol>

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
<p>h. Make information available to different stakeholders</p>	<p>h. Collate, design, store, manage, repack, disseminate and utilize information and databases</p>	<p><b>Para 54 Information Exchange and Dissemination</b>                      The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Assess information needs of stakeholders for fishing capacity management;</li> <li>b. Repack and disseminate information on capacity to fishers and other stakeholders;</li> <li>c. Disseminate information on viable alternative livelihoods to fishers;</li> <li>d. Develop, maintain and manage appropriate and compatible national and regional databases on fishing capacity;</li> <li>e. Exchange information on fishing crafts that do not comply with conservation and management measures adopted by LVFO;</li> <li>f. The RPOA and CCRF should be translated into local languages (Kiswahili, Dholuo, Luganda);</li> <li>g. Research findings related to RPOA-capacity should be verified, cleared, approved and adopted by LVFO Statutory organs; and</li> <li>h. Ensure awareness creation for the stakeholders and the general public on policy, legal, conservation, resource sustainability and economic gains and environmental concerns.</li> </ol>

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
<p>i. Manage and maintain optimum capacity at a level that does not compromise sustainability of the fisheries resource base</p>	<p>i. Determine, set and manage optimal species-specific capacity levels</p>	<p><b>Para 55 Management of Fishing Capacity</b> The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ensure that RPOA-IUU is implemented and monitored;</li> <li>b. Examine and use all relevant fisheries management tools in the implementation of the RPOA-Capacity</li> <li>c. Ensure that implementation of the RPOA- Capacity includes limitation of fishing access</li> <li>d. Gazette fish landing sites, and register fishers, fishing crafts and gear;</li> <li>e. Develop measures to manage capacity using a participatory approach;</li> <li>f. Assess and manage the fisheries using the Fisheries Management Decision Support Tool;</li> <li>g. Where overcapacity exists, the Partner States initially limit capacity at present levels and then set out and implement plans for the progressive reduction of capacity;</li> <li>h. Where under capacity exists, promote measures to optimize utilization;</li> <li>i. Consolidate efforts in the implementation of the LVFO regional strategy on cross-border fishing;</li> <li>j. Manage transfer of capacity between countries and within national jurisdictions across water bodies;</li> <li>k. Strive to minimize cross border conflicts through demarcation of boundaries on water;</li> <li>l. Put in place a mechanism for regulating manufacture, importation and marketing of fishing nets allowable for Lake Victoria;</li> <li>m. Negotiate and agree on the distribution of fishing capacity at different levels of governance (from grassroots to regional level);</li> <li>n. Take collective measures to ensure that Partners States and Local Authorities/Districts fulfill their responsibilities under the RPOA-Capacity;</li> <li>o. Employ appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms;</li> <li>p. Put in place mechanisms at all levels to fight corruption and conflicts of interest in the process of implementing the RPOA-Capacity;</li> <li>q. Promote the capture, documentation and use of indigenous knowledge in management of fishing effort and capacity;</li> <li>r. Ensure adequate participation of all stakeholders in Monitoring, Control and Surveillance;</li> <li>s. Ensure that Capacity management includes incentive systems for promoting reduction of IUU fishing;</li> <li>t. Strengthen MCS and encourage joint patrols with Security Agencies and Communities; and</li> <li>u. Ensure that the fisheries legislation in the Partner States are amended to make trials speedy and conviction easier and have deterrent penalties.</li> </ol>

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
j. Develop and implement species-specific strategies for management of capacity	j. Take immediate actions for specific fisheries requiring urgent remedial measures based on the assessments of the resource	<p><b>Para 56 Species-specific capacity management measures</b>                      The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Implement and enforce the decisions made by the Council of Ministers;</li> <li><b>b. Initially limit fishing effort on Nile perch at the Frame Survey 2006 levels as a precautionary measure;</b></li> <li>c. <b>Agree on and implement mesh size and fishing grounds for <i>Rastrineobola argentea</i> (Dagaa/Omena/Mukene); and</b></li> <li><b>d. Apply the precautionary approach, using the best available information for Nile tilapia.</b></li> </ol>
k. Improve the socio-economic welfare of the fisheries dependent communities through management of fishing capacity	k. Identify and promote mechanisms that address socio-economic welfare of the fisherfolk	<p><b>Para 57 Socio-economic Concerns</b>  <b>Partner States through LVFO shall:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Streamline marketing channels that reduce exploitation of fishers;</li> <li>b. Enforce child labour laws in fisheries;</li> <li>c. Promote credit facilities and mobile banks and encourage fishers to have a saving culture;</li> <li>d. Encourage institutional collaboration and linkages to address socio-economic issues including the existing provisions under the EAC Treaty;</li> <li>e. Mainstream control of HIV/AIDS and other diseases such as malaria, TB and Bilharzia;</li> <li>f. Encourage and support the actions of Inter-state security committee and national law enforcement agencies to address the issue of piracy and security of fishers on the lake; and</li> <li>g. Promote mechanisms that address poverty alleviation among fishing communities.</li> </ol>
l. Explore economic incentives and develop alternative livelihoods options to reduce overcapacity	l. Review economic and social incentives and livelihood strategies in fisheries sector;	<p><b>Para 58 Incentives in the Fishing Sector</b>                      The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Assess the factors which contribute to overcapacity including subsidies and incentives as a first step to progressively reducing and eliminating all factors, including subsidies and economic incentives which contribute, directly or indirectly, to overcapacity, taking into consideration special requirements of small-scale marginalized fishers;</li> <li>b. Assess, develop and promote alternative livelihood options, including aquaculture, and build capacity of fisherfolk to adopt new options to reduce pressure on lake fisheries; and Promote fish processing for value</li> </ol>

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
<p>m. Improve human resource capacity for effective capacity management</p>	<p>m. Develop sensitization, education and training programmes</p>	<p><b>Para 59 Human Resources Development</b> The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Build human resources capacity in fisheries management, research institutions and other stakeholders to determine, monitor and manage capacity;</li> <li>b. Ensure sufficient personnel to address technical fisheries issues; and</li> <li>c. Conduct awareness raising, sensitization and training programmes on capacity management.</li> </ol>
<p>n. Improve infrastructure facilities for fishing capacity management</p>	<p>n. ; Establish infrastructure facilities for fishing capacity management</p>	<p><b>Para 60 Infrastructure Development</b> The Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop infrastructure for collecting, analyzing and disseminating information;</li> <li>b. Procure relevant office and field equipment for capacity management;</li> <li>c. Encourage infrastructure development in fishing communities (e.g. rural electrification, solar, wind power, cold storage) as part of encouraging diversification of livelihoods;</li> <li>d. Promote establishment of educational, health and sanitary facilities at beaches.</li> </ol>

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	SPECIFIC ACTIONS
<p>o. Encourage mechanisms that address environmental issues impacting fisheries</p>	<p>o. Identify environmental issues affecting fisheries and work with lead agencies and institutions to address them;</p>	<p><b>Para 61 Environmental and Ecosystem Issues</b>                      Partner States through LVFO shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Recognize the Impacts of external environmental issues on fisheries, e.g. water abstraction, increasing population in the catchment, and encourage appropriate authorities to address them</li> <li>b. Promote the conservation of the Lake Victoria ecosystem</li> <li>c. Promote culture of bait fish to reduce the catch of wild immature fish;</li> <li>d. Identify, demarcate and conserve wetlands, buffer zones and breeding grounds;</li> <li>e. Promote linkages and cross-references between fisheries and environmental laws;</li> <li>f. Encourage relevant Authorities to mitigate the impact of boat building industry and fish smoking on the forests including enhancement of afforestation programmes</li> <li>g. Encourage relevant authorities to address the poor land use practices in the in the Lake Victoria basin;</li> <li>h. Encourage urban authorities and lake side settlements to address and enforce uncontrolled domestic, municipal and industrial wastes;</li> <li>i. Discourage use and disposal of plastic materials around the lake in fishings; and</li> <li>j. Understand and manage the impacts of declining water levels on fisheries and the ecosystem of the lake</li> <li>k. Encourage relevant authorities to undertake seismological studies to understand whether there is loss of water through underground seepage</li> <li>l. Consider the inclusion of other Lake Victoria basin states (Rwanda and Burundi) in the management of transboundary environmental concerns such as invasive aquatic weeds.</li> </ol>



The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) is a regional organization formed in 1994 by the three East African Partner States of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, to jointly coordinate and manage the fisheries resources of Lake Victoria. In 1999 LVFO became a specialised institution of the East African Community in charge of the fisheries of Lake Victoria. The objective of the LVFO is to foster cooperation among the Partner States by harmonizing, developing, adopting and coordinating management measures for sustainable and optimal utilization of the fisheries resources of Lake Victoria for maximum socio-economic benefits. The Partner States adopted the Regional Plan of Action for Management of Fishing Capacity (RPOA-Capacity) in Lake Victoria, in March 2007, to ensure that mechanisms are put in place to achieve equitable access and sustainable utilisation of the fisheries resources.



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