

Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration

Report of the Lake Edward Fisheries Stakeholders' Workshop

Held 18th March 2009

Virina Garden, Kasese, Uganda

Compiled by Geoffrey Mwedde (WCS)



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1. Introduction

This is a report of the Lake Edward Fisheries Stakeholders Workshop jointly organised by Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and *Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature* (ICCN) with support from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). The purpose of this meeting held at Virina Garden on the 18th of March 2009 was to discuss challenges facing fisheries on and around Lake Edward and targeted to generate workable recommendations for sustainable management of lake resources and fisheries related conflicts between DR Congo and Uganda. The workshop was attended by stakeholders from both Uganda and DR Congo representing government, NGOs, community, political and private sectors (see appendix II for list of participants).

Three key presentations with perspectives from Uganda and DRC were made at three levels: national level highlighting policy issues, protected area level highlighting problems of management with an ecosystem context, and community level outlining key lessons learnt and challenges faced. Discussions were facilitated between and after presentations and recommendations generated.

2. Proceedings

2.1. Introductions and introductory remarks

Chaired by Jobogo Mirindi of ICCN, the meeting commenced with self introductions and a welcome note from the chair who then invited Tom Okello to give introductory remarks.

In his remarks, Tom Okello, the Conservation Area Manager (CAM) of Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area informed members that transboundary collaboration was as old as 15 years and was initiated with collaboration between Uganda (Bwindi and Mgahinga), DRC (Mikeno Sector) and Rwanda (Volcanoes National Park) for conservation of mountain Gorillas. He also noted that this particular collaboration between UWA and ICCN commenced in 2003 with support from WCS in order to extend the collaboration further north. He pointed out that the Greater Virunga Landscape, which forms part of the Albertine Rift has a high concentration of National Parks and thus was of high significance. Given the transboundary nature of resources in the region, the CAM pointed out that transboundary collaboration is aimed at improving management of such resources through enlisting stakeholder participation and engaging different thematic stakeholders like immigrations, security and magistrates both from DR Congo and Uganda.

On illegal activities and unsustainable fishing practices on Lake Edward, the CAM remarked that due to limited awareness of, and commitment to implementing fisheries policies and laws, there was an increase in illegal activities. He informed the meeting that monitoring data from transboundary coordinated patrols indicated that over 214 illegal fishing gears were confiscated and 304 fishermen arrested in three years between 2004 and 2007. He added that even though fisheries management is under jurisdiction of Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries; water resources were managed by the Ministry of water. He said in Uganda, UWA was concerned about water dwelling wildlife and livelihoods of all people in general because of the consequential impacts on conservation as some fishing villages are found inside the protected area.

The CAM reiterated that the purpose of the workshop was to discuss challenges facing the fisheries sector on and around Lake Edward with stakeholders in the region and outlined the objectives of the workshop as follows:

1. To explore challenges and opportunities in the fisheries sector on and around Lake Edward
2. To sensitize and create awareness on the policies and laws regarding fisheries management among Uganda and Congo stakeholders
3. To chart a way forward to curb illegal transboundary activities and improve management of resources on Lake Edward



Participants during workshop

The CAM encouraged members to actively participate in the discussion reiterating that conservation cannot be achieved effectively by one sided efforts. It was expected that by the end of the workshop, people would have a better understanding of the legislation and policies governing fisheries management in the two countries and hoped that the meeting would generate meaningful recommendations for sustainable fisheries management on the Lake.

2.2. Opening Remarks

The Secretary for Works and Environment Kasese District, Mr. Mulhondi Serawo gave opening remarks on behalf of the District Chairman who did not make it to the meeting. In his remarks, Mr. Mulhondi delivered apologies from the District chairperson, welcomed members to Kasese and thanked UWA and ICCN for the collaboration. Like the previous speaker, the Secretary emphasised that management of fisheries on Lake Edward needed concerted efforts of the two countries sharing the resource and urged resource managers to engage in joint planning to achieve this goal.

The secretary appreciated the organisers for inviting the fishermen to the workshop noting that this would reduce conflicts and counter accusations. He urged both DR Congo and Ugandan fishermen and managers to work together to conserve the Lake reiterating that it was God given which deserved to be used wisely. Mr. Mulhondi also advised that despite several reports of boundary conflicts on the Lake, the most important thing was to emulate past generations to use and manage the Lake sustainably for the benefit of present and future generations.

The Secretary for Works and Environment wished members good deliberations and declared the meeting open.

2.3. Legal framework for fisheries management in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) - Sosthene Maombi Katsongo

Mr. Sosthene Maombi Katsongo from the Fisheries Department in DR Congo gave a presentation on the legal framework governing fisheries resources in DR Congo. He informed members that in DR Congo, the current law governing fisheries management was the 1937 decree enforced alongside that of 1932. He said that under this decree, there were articles that gave power to provincial directors to pass by-laws to regulate fishing and hence to provide for fishnet sizes, sale and sustainable management. However, he added that the law was not uniformly applied but emphasised different conservation aspects depending on the nature and biological importance of the water resource in question.

Mr. Katsongo highlighted practices that were forbidden under the law and these included the following:

- Fishing in breeding grounds
- Use of electrical fishing methods
- Using poison in fishing
- Using dynamites
- Use of chemicals for fishing
- Using engines of high capacity
- Poaching on the Lakes (in protected areas)
- Settlements on Lake shores for lakes in protected areas against existing bylaws
- Use of fishnets less than 4.5 inches
- The use of beach seines

He added that the 1932 decree provided for fishing concessions and spelt out criteria for allocating them, which included assurance of use of sustainable methods, proper fishing gear, financial capacity of concessionaire to carry out sustainable fishing, and sticking to demarcated fishing areas. He reported that concessions were not transferable.

In addition, Mr. Katsongo highlighted a number of challenges facing fisheries on the DR Congo side of Lake Edward and these were as below;

- Existence of many unauthorised fishermen at the Western Coast of the lake. The meeting was informed that there were around 2,300 illegal boats on the lake
- COPEVI, a community organisation responsible for fisheries management is not efficient at its work due to insufficient financial capacity to run the industry and also due to political interference in its management
- Unrestricted entry of people and immigrants into the fishing villages, which reportedly created and expanded settlements around the lake thereby destroying flora and increasing incidences of poaching and illegal fishing
- Presence of armed groups in the national park and surrounding villages which makes regulation difficult

Consequences of the above challenges and unsustainable practices were reported to include huge declines in fish sizes and fisheries productivity, food web disruption, malnutrition among populations and declining incomes as a result of declining fish stocks.

Mr. Katsongo further noted that enforcement of the law was yet to yield desirable results due to the fact that while illegal boats and fishnets impounded on the lake were

destroyed, there were manufacturers in the villages who provided a steady supply of the same. He recommended that in order to address this problem, there was need to:

- Strengthen the existing law or enact a new law that addresses gaps in the current law
- Initiate and support community income generating activities
- Introduce Pisciculture (or fish farming) among the communities
- Strengthen capacity of local government and non-government organisations to manage fisheries resources sustainably

2.4. Legal framework for fisheries management in Uganda

The presentation on legal framework for fisheries management in Uganda was made by Mr. Richard Rugadya from Fisheries department Entebbe on behalf of the Commissioner for Fisheries. In his presentation, Mr. Rugadya noted that there were a combination of factors that affect efficient management of fisheries resources and these included institutional issues, policy issues, regulation and politics adding that despite existence of legal frameworks, the fisheries resource has continued to decline.

He pointed out that while regional, national and local institutions and initiatives like the transboundary collaboration between ICCN and UWA, the LEAF Project and district local governments were in place, Uganda had not yet attained optimal delivery for fisheries management. However, Mr. Rugadya noted that as a move towards sustainable management, colonial fisheries policies had been replaced with more relevant ones, the current being the Uganda Fisheries Policy 2004. He stated though that different [sectoral] policies were bound to overlap or contradict principles of resource sustainability but efforts were being made to harmonise them to address a common goal. The LEAF project was cited as an example of a project trying to address policy inconsistencies at regional level.

The speaker also informed the meeting that the Fish Act (Cap 197), the constitution, various Statutory Instruments, Beach Management Unit Statute and Guidelines among others support sustainable management of fisheries. However, he submitted that despite existence of the above policies and laws, there was still no sound management of fisheries resources. This, he reported, was due to non compliance by those directly involved in fisheries utilisation and management (Fishermen, processors, traders, policy makers and managers). As a result, he said, over-fishing had become endemic, and fish stocks over exploited. He noted that irresponsible fishing activities such as the use of beach seines and other illegal fishing gears were rampant. In addition, Mr Rugadya stated that such inefficient management of fisheries resources had a positive feedback effect in that when fish stocks dwindle, prices go up providing an incentive to fishermen to catch more fish.

Other factors said to exacerbate unsustainable fisheries management included environmental degradation and politics. Singling out politics, Mr. Rugadya reiterated that political interference at national, district and local levels was one of the major factors contributing to non compliance and cited failure to pass the Fisheries Bill 2005 as one example of this.

As a way forward, Mr. Rugadya suggested that there was need to do the following:

- Develop supportive policy and legal framework (by-laws)
- Improve funding to fisheries activities

- Build strong institutional set up and linkages (Vertical and Horizontal)
- Establish effective and efficient MCS (Strategic planning, enforcement and reporting system)
- Cultivate a good political will and commitment among leaders
- Conduct Co-management and public awareness raising campaigns
- Be supportive judicial and legal processes in breach of the laws

In conclusion, the presenter reiterated that despite the need to replace the 1962 law, the current legal and policy framework for fisheries was sufficient to attain a good degree of sustainability in the fisheries sector. He stressed that what was needed was to strengthen existing frameworks, build capacity of various actors at different levels and most importantly to garner support of politicians to support fisheries.

2.5. Discussion on legal framework presentations for DR Congo and Uganda

The discussion session was chaired by the CAM QECA. Questions, comments and points for clarification were taken from participants and responses given. The main issues are summarized below:

- Clarifying about how laws are implemented and whether there were any by-laws in DRC, Mr. Katsongo responded that fisheries was a mandate of the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Livestock but in the case of Lake Edward, it was managed and governed by ICCN since it is located within the park. Mr. Katsongo alluded that there were several cases of interference and confrontation not only between technical departments and politicians but also with the army. However he stressed that what ever action the fisheries department decides to take is guided by the law and by-laws in some places.
- Asked about the unsatisfactory handling of culprits apprehended by Uganda and handed over to DRC authorities, Mr. Katsongo responded that all those arrested for illegal practices were sent away from the fishing villages and their equipment destroyed. However, he noted that this has not been effective because the same people were often welcomed and allowed to operate in other fishing villages with help of politicians and the army. Mr. Katsongo added that this, and unending civil wars were some of the reasons why many illegal boats were still operating on the lake. He reported that only 700 boats are allowed on the lake but also expressed need for a harmonized fishing strategy.
- Responding to the question as to why a new fisheries law for Uganda was necessary despite existence of different statutory instruments, Mr. Rudadya stated that the Statutory Instruments do not replace the principal law which has been in operation since 1962. He stressed that there was need to enact a new law to cater for current trends and realities but also added that for improvement to be realized, Fisheries departments need to be better facilitated and information flow improved.



The Chairman LC5 Rukungiri district (standing) making his submission

- The District Chairman Bushenyi district (Uganda) expressed concern that Ugandans and Congolese were fighting over a God-given resource yet the two sides were supposed to be brothers and sisters. He reiterated that lawlessness in DR Congo had contributed to persistence of conflicts on the lake. He also pointed out that political interference was not the reason for mismanagement of the fisheries resource but the incompetence of technical staff. He was not supportive of the impending policy to re-centralise fisheries.
- There was also a view expressed by the Chairman LC5 Rukungiri that instead of depending on natural processes for fish, technical people should advise communities on ways of boosting production in the lake as well as on ways of engaging in fish farming to meet the demand.

2.6. Impact of fisheries activities on Wildlife – ICCN perspective

Mr. Jobogo Mirindi presented impacts of fisheries on wildlife from ICCN's perspective. He stated that ICCN was responsible for management of Lake Edward because of its location. He reiterated challenges of managing fisheries resources earlier presented by the officer from the DR Congo fisheries department (see Section 2.3) and added that COPEVI, the community structure responsible for management of fisheries was no longer effective.

The warden observed that as a result of over fishing, people had resorted to hunting piscivorous birds which were traditionally respected and treated as special fishing guides for fishermen. Mr. Jobogo reinforced earlier arguments that unless corruption is eliminated and alternative income generating activities put in place, culture, identity and tourism would continue to erode.

He urged politicians to support conservation efforts and recommended that customary power of chiefs (in DRC) be reinstated and negative forces removed from Eastern DR Congo.

2.7. Impacts of fisheries activities on wildlife – UWA perspective

The Conservation Area Manager of Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area, Tom Okello presented impacts of fisheries on wildlife conservation from UWA's point of view. He described QECA as not only being part of the extensive transboundary Albertine Rift but also as endowed with water bodies (Lake George, Kazinga Channel and Lake Edward) which support both livelihoods (with over 55,000 people living off the two lakes) and wildlife by acting as, and supporting, habitats for birds and other wildlife.

Mr. Okello reported that there were eleven fishing villages with in and around QECA, four of which were in public enclaves and legally gazetted as wildlife sanctuaries whereas the other seven had no legal status. He also stated that there were areas within the Lakes and the Kazinga channel in which fishing is prohibited but fishermen often ventured into these areas, contravening section 22(1) and 74(a) of UWA Act cap 200 which forbids fishing in protected waters reserved as important breeding areas.

Highlighting impacts of fishing methods on wildlife, the manager pointed out that various fishing methods often trap non targets species including hippos, snakes, crocodiles (trapped by nets) and birds (trapped by hooks), killing them in the process. Scenarios of this nature the manager said were responsible for increasing conflicts between communities and wildlife/park authorities.

Further, Mr. Okello highlighted some challenges and consequences of irresponsible acts to include erosion of park staffs' morals due to corruption perpetrated by fishermen, and increasing poaching pressure resulting from declining incomes due to unsustainable fishing. He also added that the growing population in fishing villages also came with increasing demand for household and business necessities, pushing people into protected areas. He noted that together with the above, use of game meat as bait for fish had increased poaching incidences and in effect escalated conflict.

In conclusion the manager stated that as long as the human population in the fishing villages continued to grow while fish stocks dwindle, conservation of wildlife in protected areas would remain threatened.

The following were his recommendations:

- The fisheries monitoring team in the water bodies of QECA should be composed of people neither directly nor indirectly involved in fishing to avoid conflict of interest.
- Programs for alternative activities in the fishing villages should be restricted to only those that do not conflict with conservation.
- Any canoe recovered or impounded in protected waters should be forfeited and the owner imprisoned.
- Any canoe impounded with either game meat or charcoal any where on the waters of QECA should be forfeited and the owner suspended from fishing in QECA water bodies indefinitely.
- The Department of fisheries should develop a by-law to guide fishing activities and stipulating punishment on sight for anybody contravening the by-law.

(See Appendix 1 for full presentation)

2.8. Challenges and lessons from the fishing community (BMUs) in Uganda

Challenges facing the fishing community, mainly organized into Beach Management Units in Uganda were presented by the Chairperson Kisenyi BMU. The presenter appreciated the organizers for bringing the two fishing communities together and hoped that a lasting solution to current and impending problems would be found. In his presentation, he highlighted challenges facing BMUs and fisheries as follows:

- Increasing population at landing sites, some times supported by politicians who even welcome wrong doers for political gains
- Limited funds for BMU activities and inadequate coordination between fisheries authorities, BMUs and other organs hence leaving room for some institutions and individuals to condone crime
- Conflicting interests between BMUs and fisheries authorities arising from the fact that the latter feel their powers have been usurped by BMUs
- Lack of motivation for BMU management leading to corruption
- Escalating levels of HIV/AIDS at BMUs reportedly forces infected fishermen to care less for the resource and to fish in shallow and/or prohibited zones due to lack of energy and motivation
- Encroachment by DR Congo fishermen on Ugandan waters. These were said to not only fish illegally on the Ugandan side but also to engage in unacceptable and unsustainable practices like fishing for long periods (one week) and drying fish while on the lake.

2.9. Challenges and lessons from the fishing community in DR Congo

A representative from Fishermen committee made a presentation on challenges and lessons from the DR Congo side and in his presentation he informed the meeting that there are up to 20 fishing villages around Lake Edward out of which 17 were illegal. He also added that besides the 700 legally licensed boats operating on the Lake, there were some 2,300 illegal ones. He said that on top of over fishing, fishermen often used undersize net of between 1.5 – 3.5 inches and also used illegal fishing techniques. He further added that this situation was made worse by having 20 unauthorized institutions over and above the four officially authorized. Other challenges aired out included:

- High corruption and crime rates
- Over exploitation of fisheries resources
- Lack of alternative income generating activities to address livelihood needs
- Un acceptable agricultural and livestock keeping practices in the park (in fishing villages)
- Un authorised fisheries officials bailing out apprehended offenders
- Increasing human population in fishing villages (e.g. Over 5,000 people in Nyakakoma, over 11,000 people in Kyavinyonge)
- Fishermen being arrested in



DR Congo participants (2 right) presenting

Uganda (source of conflict)

In conclusion, the presenter recommended that a scientific study be conducted on the lake to determine fish stocks, regeneration and extraction rates. He further suggested that joint activities between the two countries be initiated to address the various challenges facing the industry.

2.10. Discussion on experiences of park and community authorities

The Chairman Rukungiri district while chairing the discussion session also submitted that there was need to re-open the boundary on the lake and mark it with floaters as it used to be.

From the discussion, it emerged that:

- implementation of laws and regulations needs to be improved
- there was need to decongest the fishing villages (though this required development and promotion of income generating activities outside park boundaries for fishermen repatriated from protected areas on legal grounds)
- Co-management of the lake needs to be fostered for sustainability
- Issues of co-management and border conflicts on the lake also need to be discussed at higher levels (national and international) as they go beyond the mandate of local authorities like the BMUs and COPEVI.

2.11. Case of a Conflict resolution project in Nyakakoma

Papy Shamavu shared WCS' experiences in conflict resolution in Nyakakoma, DR Congo. He reported that the initiative started in 2006 following recommendations from a stakeholders' workshop which aimed at identifying conflicts around Lake Edward. Two key issues (conflict areas) were identified as illegal fishing on Lake Edward and encroachment at the Western Coast corridor.

Papy informed the meeting that the project conducted a series of activities including stakeholder consultations covering different social groups and identification of potential implementers to re-organise fishing communities. Other activities included planning, budgeting and creation of a conflict monitoring committee. As a result of these activities, reported that there was a reduction in illegal fishing with closure of the 106 illegal fishing channels. However, he stated that more illegal cases were being reported now with recent insurgency in the region. Other achievements reported included:

- Population census in Nyakakoma which established the population to be 5682.
- Stakeholders participation in the project
- Creation of one fishermen committee
- Other fishing villages picked interest the same initiative

Constraints during implementation of the project were reported to be:

- Insecurity
- Involvement of Agripel and Army in condoning illegal fishing and other crimes
- Insufficient funds to scale up project
- Sabotage from people with selfish interests
- Unclear roles of various institutions operating in Nyakakoma
- Lack of adequate support from marine forces

Finally, Papy outlined lessons learnt as follows

- ◆ Involvement of stakeholders is important and consultations have to be wide enough to capture views of all social groups within the conflict area
- ◆ Cases of sabotage are bound to occur where such initiatives take place
- ◆ Where money is involved, care needs to be taken to ensure correct appropriation of funds.

Following this presentation, Ivan Ebong briefed the meeting about what Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) had been doing around Lakes Albert and Edward. He asserted that NBI had implemented a project focusing on sustainable fisheries and development around the two lakes. He contended that many of the issues that had been raised in this meeting were also encountered during implementation of that project. He emphasised that problems of transboundary nature can be better addressed only with a bilateral agreement in place and that involvement of stakeholders from both countries and at different levels from local to national was critical. He informed the meeting that NBI was planning follow up actions after the pilot project to try and address realised challenges.

3. Way forward and recommendations

Edgar Buhanga, the Senior Planning and EIA Coordinator at UWA facilitated this session which aimed at identifying the key issues to be addressed and generating recommendations for action. Drawing from presentations and discussions thought out the day, members recommended the following:

- i) Establish joint monitoring team comprising of Uganda & DRC
- ii) Demarcate and respect international boundary
- iii) Carryout scientific study to establish fish stocks to determine allowable number of fishers and catch levels
- iv) Develop a coordinating body for the entire Lake Edward.
- v) Reduce pressure/population in fishing villages
- vi) Develop and promote alternative income generating activities for the fishing community in conformity with existing laws
- vii) Draw lessons from management of other transboundary lakes and apply them to Lake Edward
- viii) Ensure compliance with regulations and laws in place in each country.
- ix) Promote regular community level meetings for fishing communities from both countries
- x) Develop proposals for implementation and do fundraising
- xi) Start innovations in fisheries development and management by boosting fish populations, influencing breeding cycles, introducing 'closed' fishing seasons and promoting fish farming
- xii) Regulate fishing duration
- xiii) Develop a communication and information sharing strategy between the stakeholders
- xiv) Carryout awareness raising and capacity building in the fishing community



Edgar facilitating the way forward

xv) Hold regular regional meetings for fisheries stakeholders of Lake Edward.

4. Closing remarks

Mr. Baloky from DR Congo gave the closing remarks. In his presentation, thanked the organisers for the efforts invested in making the workshop successful. He promised to put more effort in sensitising people about sustainable fisheries and associated laws and urged everyone to support this cause. He called upon members to emulate the good will gesture portrayed by the Presidents of Uganda and DR Congo to improve relations between the two countries. He also requested members to respond to calls for any actions intended to improve management of the lake and its resources.

Finally, he wished members a safe journey back and officially closed the workshop.

Appendix I: QECA Presentation

The Impact of Fishing on Wildlife Conservation in Queen Elizabeth Protected Area.

By: Tom Obong Okello, Conservation Area Manager, Queen Elizabeth Conservation Area(QECA).

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*A paper presented at fisheries workshop in Kasese on 18th March 2009.
The Impact of Fishing on Wildlife Conservation in Queen Elizabeth Protected Area*

Introduction:

Queen Elizabeth Protected Area (QEPA) comprises the Queen Elizabeth National Park (1978sqkm), Kyambura Wildlife Reserve (157sqkm) and Ishasha sector(330sqkm). QEPA is located within the Albertine Rift Valley and forms part of an extensive transboundary ecosystem that includes Rwenzori mountains National Park, Kibale National Park and Park Nationale des Virunga in the Democratic Republic of Congo. QEPA overlies the convergence of West African rainforest and East African grassland biomes and represents a significant reservoir of biodiversity.

Lake George, Edward and the Kazinga channel:

These two water bodies form the core of the QEPA system. They are connected by the 38km long Kazinga channel. A significant portion of this water resource comprises wetlands, providing critical habitat for a host of birds and other wildlife. The massive fringe papyrus swamps that border this resource help buffer the lakes from **agricultural** and **industrial pollutants** entering from outside the QEPA borders. The northern wetland system of Lake George, most of which is located within the QEPA's Dura sector, has been given special recognition by being declared Uganda's first Wetland of international importance, or **Ramsar** Site.

These two lakes and the channel also support an important economic base for the region. At one time Lake George was considered to be one of the most productive lakes in the world, capable of producing 3,000-5,000 metric tons of fish annually (Dunn, 1989). However, intensive exploitation and pollution since the 1950s have severely impacted Lake George's fisheries. Roughly over 55,000 people rely on these two lakes and the channel for their livelihood.

There are eleven fishing villages within and around Queen Elizabeth Protected Area (QEPA).

Public enclaves:

Four of the eleven fishing villages lie inside public enclaves namely; Hamukungu, Kasenyi, Katunguru(Bushenyi) and Katwe Kabatoro. These areas are also gazetted as Wildlife sanctuaries and were legally established by Statutory Instrument No.226-11 of 1964.

Park enclaves:

Seven fishing villages exist within QEPA with no legal status. Kahendero, Katunguru (Kasese), Kazinga, Kisenyi, Rwenshama, Kayanja occupy QENP land; Kashaka lies inside Kyambura Wildlife Reserve. As these villages lie within the QEPA boundaries, they are commonly known as 'park enclaves.' The role of UWA in managing activities within these villages has remained vague.

No fishing zone:

In the QEPA General Management Plan(GMP), it is stipulated that fishing will be prohibited in; part of *West kazinga Channel*; part of *East Kazinga Channel*; *Katunguru Bridge*; part of *East L. George*, within 200m of the shoreline; within 100m of the *Sikanki Island shoreline*; part of *Katwe Bay*; *Izinga Sundaowner Island/former Chimp Island* within 100m of shoreline; part of *East lake Edward* within 100m of the shoreline.

The fishermen have gone against these guiding principles and started fishing and occasionally landing anywhere they feel like.

The fishermen in the said villages use various fishing methods with varying impacts on conservation: -

Fish-net method;

The nets are spread in water and on addition to capturing fish, they also capture water borne animals e.g Hippos, crocodiles, snakes etc. When these animals are captured, they are killed and thrown away without being reported and handed over to the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) as required by law. In 2008, two Hippos, two crocodiles and numerous other aquatic organisms were captured and killed.

Hook Method:

The baits (tiny fish) used on the hooks are palatable to birds. Occasionally the fishermen expose these hooks with baits and the birds get hooked. The fishermen kill those birds and throw them away. On some occasions, we have arrested fishermen using game meat as bait on the hooks.

Basket Method:

This method is commonly used in small rivers for example R. Ntungwe in the southern sector of the Protected Area(PA). This is done mostly by the Banyabitumbi. This method scoops other aquatic organisms which end up being thrown on land and consequently die.

These protected waters are important as breeding areas. Entering there without permission contravenes section 22(1) and 74(a) of UWA Act cap 200.

Community /park conflict:

The indiscriminate capture of wildlife in the nets as well as killing them for baits destabilizes the hydrological -ecosystem and promotes community/park conflict.

There are areas designated as breeding zones; for example part of the Kazinga channel. Fishermen from Katunguru(Kasese) and Kazinga villages encroach on these waters. By so doing, they deny fish time to reproduce.

The nets spread in these protected waters entangle the propeller of the Tourism boats used on launch cruises and affect their movement. Such experiences reflect badly on the Tourism Industry of Uganda in the world Tourism market.

Erosion of staff moral fibre:

The fishermen corrupt our staff and make them compromise the integrity of the PA. This has led to increased administrative costs due to transfers, dismissal and recruitments in addition to the costs of the frequent marine operations.

Increased poaching pressure:

Some nets used are below the recommended size hence capturing young fish below reproductive age. This practice reduces fish reproduction rate and their numbers in the waters and consequently increasing the prices of fish. This may cause increased pressure on wildlife by promoting poaching as a cheaper source of proteins.

Population pressure:

The population of these villages has increased over the years and consequently exerted a lot of pressure on the natural resources within QEPA.

- Fuel wood for smoking fish
- Poles for house construction
- Fuel wood for brick burning
- Fuel wood for household use

Agriculture and other economic activities:

Some families have started cultivation of crops which are palatable to wildlife. Others have resorted to livestock farming to supplement the income from the small catch of fish that they get. All these promote conflict due to crop raids and illegal grazing or encroachment and poisoning of cats eating livestock. Charcoal burning is carried out at the shores of L. George and canoes are used to transport the charcoal along R. Mpanga and on L. George up to Mahyoro. The canoes are further used to transport game meat especially of hippos from Islands to the shores of the water bodies where it is sold.

Conclusion:

Given the increasing population and the reducing numbers of fish in the waters due to unsustainable fish harvesting, the fishing villages will remain a big challenge in the conservation of wildlife and the Protected Areas.

Recommendations:

- The monitoring system of the fishing activity in the water bodies of QEPA should be composed of people who neither have boats nor nets to avoid conflict of interest.
- The activity programs in the fishing villages should be restricted to only those that do not promote conflict with conservation.
- Any canoe recovered or impounded in protected waters should be forfeited and the owner be imprisoned.
- The canoe impounded with either game meat or charcoal anywhere on the waters of QEPA should be forfeited and the owner be suspended from fishing in QEPA water bodies indefinitely.
- The Department of fisheries should develop a byelaw to guide the fishing activity programs stipulating punishment on sight any body contravening the byelaw.

Conserving for Generations

Appendix II: List of Participants

Edward Fisheries Stakeholders' Workshop – Virina Gardens Kasese, 18th March 2009

Participants list

Name	Designation and organisation	Contact
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