LVBC Monthly Review

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LVBC RECOGNIZES DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

LVBC's Executive Secretary Dr Masinde Bwire presents a gift to Mr Valerio Crespi, Fisheries Officer at FAO during the inaugural Lake Victoria Day celebrations in Mwanza, Tanzania.

In this Issue

- LVBC CALLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION
- COMMUNITY INSIGHT
- FACTS ABOUT EAST AFRICAN WATERS

The Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) has paid glowing tribute to its development partners, acknowledging their unwavering support in advancing sustainable development, regional integration and environmental conservation across the Lake Victoria Basin. Speaking during the Development Partners Roundtable convened as part of the Inaugural Lake Victoria Day Celebration in Mwanza in Tanzania in May 20th, the Executive Secretary of LVBC, Dr. Masinde Bwire, described the basin's progress as a product of strong partnerships, collective commitment and shared investment that have transformed regional ambitions into tangible development outcomes...***Contd Pg2***

LVBC Executive Secretary, Dr. Masinde Bwire, delivers his remarks during the Development Partners Roundtable.

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The transformation of the Lake Victoria Basin has never been the work of one institution alone," Dr. Bwire said. "It is a story of enduring partnerships that have enabled us to move from concern to action and from pilot initiatives to investment-ready programmes that will benefit millions of people across the region." Dr. Bwire noted that as LVBC embarks on implementing its Fifth Strategic Plan (2026/27–2030/31) and the Lake Victoria Basin Regional Development Plan, the Commission is building on a solid foundation laid by years of collaboration with development partners.

Their support has enabled the Commission to develop investment-ready programmes focused on ecosystem restoration, improved water quality, climate resilience, safe inland water transport, inclusive water supply and sanitation, and stronger basin governance. The Executive Secretary observed that the Roundtable also marked the technical release of three key regional products that demonstrate the value of long-term partnerships.

These include the State of the Basin Report, prepared with support from GIZ on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany; the Lake Victoria Basin Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Strategy, developed with support from Germany through BMZ and KfW, with co-financing from the European Union and Partner States; and the Lake Victoria Basin Water Information System, also supported through German Cooperation and KfW.

According to Dr. Bwire, these milestone products provide the evidence, planning tools and digital systems needed to guide investments, strengthen accountability and support evidence-based decision-making while offering development partners a common framework for aligning future financing around shared regional priorities. Reflecting on LVBC's development journey, Dr. Bwire expressed profound appreciation to the many institutions that have stood alongside the Commission over the years.

Ms Vanessa Eidt, Country Director of KfW (German Cooperation Tanzania) keenly follows proceedings.

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He recognized the World Bank, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Government of Sweden through Sida for supporting the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Programme (LVEMP), which strengthened transboundary natural resource management, harmonized regional policies and standards, restored degraded wetlands, promoted sustainable land management, improved sanitation, encouraged cleaner production and enhanced navigation safety across the basin.

The African Development Bank was commended for its significant investments through the Lake Victoria Water Supply and Sanitation Programme, which has expanded access to clean water and sanitation services across fifteen secondary towns.

Dr. Bwire also applauded the Bank's support through the Multinational Lake Victoria Maritime Communication and Transport Project, which established the Regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in Mwanza, national rescue centres in Kisumu and Entebbe, strengthened maritime communication systems, enhanced search-and-rescue capacity and improved navigational safety on the lake. He further acknowledged the African Development Bank's continued support for emerging climate resilience initiatives, including agricultural water-food nexus investments and climate-resilient maritime infrastructure that will strengthen the basin's long-term sustainability.

Special appreciation was extended to the Federal Republic of Germany through BMZ, KfW and GIZ for its longstanding partnership with LVBC. Dr. Bwire noted that Germany's support has been instrumental in advancing integrated water resources management, strengthening water information systems, enhancing institutional capacity, supporting strategic planning, promoting nature-based solutions, improving basin governance and facilitating the preparation of the State of the Basin Report.

Mr Ally Mwinchande, Programme Officer responsible for cooperation with the EAC and LVBC at the EU Commission, makes his contribution during the Development Partners Round Table Forum

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The Executive Secretary also recognized the European Union for supporting integrated water resources management and regional cooperation, while acknowledging USAID for its contribution through the PREPARED Programme and transboundary natural resource management initiatives. The World Bank was further commended for its analytical and investment support, including the Lake-wide Inclusive Sanitation Agenda, the Lake Victoria Basin Regional Development Plan and the Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience.

He expressed gratitude to Norway and the Nordic Development Fund for supporting climate resilience and green growth initiatives, while the Austrian Development Cooperation and the Austrian Development Agency were recognized for supporting resilience-focused research and innovation, including the INTERVENE project implemented with IIASA.

Denmark, JICA, the Netherlands and other bilateral partners were equally acknowledged for their valuable contributions to water resources management, environmental conservation, sanitation, institutional strengthening and regional integration. The Executive Secretary also recognized the important contribution of the United Nations system in supporting sustainable development across the basin. He thanked UNEP for implementing the Adaptation Fund-supported Adapting to Climate Change in the Lake Victoria Basin Project, FAO for supporting fisheries, integrated water resources management and food systems, UNDP for climate resilience and development cooperation, and UN-Habitat for its work on urban development, sanitation and human settlements.

A packed session at the development Partners Round Table.

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Further appreciation was extended to the Cooperation in International Waters in Africa (CIWA), the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), NELSAP, the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO), the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), Conservation International, WWF, IIASA, academia, civil society organizations, water utilities, the private sector and community-based organizations whose collaboration has strengthened regional institutions and improved the livelihoods of communities across the basin.

He emphasized that the collective contribution of these partners has enabled LVBC to build strong regional institutions, generate reliable scientific evidence, mobilize investment and translate development priorities into bankable programmes capable of delivering lasting environmental, social and economic impact.

"As we begin implementing our new Strategic Plan, we remain deeply grateful to all our development partners," he said. "Your support has helped shape the Lake Victoria Basin's development journey, and we look forward to strengthening these partnerships as we work together towards a resilient ecosystem, prosperous communities and sustainable regional growth."

LVBC CALLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Algae bloom in Lake Victoria

The Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) has called on governments, development partners, civil society, communities and all stakeholders to renew their collective commitment to safeguarding and restoring the ecological integrity of the Lake Victoria Basin.

In his message marking World Environment Day 2026, the Executive Secretary of LVBC, Dr. Masinde Bwire, emphasized that protecting the Basin's environment is central to securing climate resilience, sustainable development and improved livelihoods for millions of people who depend on its resources. He noted that the Basin continues to face growing environmental pressures, including ecosystem degradation, pollution and climate change impacts, which require coordinated and sustained action across Partner States.

This year's World Environment Day was guided by the global theme, "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future," which highlights the importance of nature-based solutions in addressing environmental challenges.

Dr. Bwire stressed that nature-based solutions such as wetland restoration, catchment protection and sustainable land and water management—are essential tools for strengthening resilience across the Basin. He added that such approaches not only restore ecological balance but also enhance water quality, protect biodiversity and support sustainable livelihoods.

He further urged stakeholders to translate commitments into practical actions that will accelerate environmental restoration and climate adaptation efforts across the Lake Victoria Basin.

"As we observe World Environment Day, we must reaffirm our shared responsibility to protect the natural systems that sustain us," the message noted. "Through collective action and nature-based solutions, we can secure a healthier, more resilient and more prosperous future for all."

COMMUNITY INSIGHT

SUCCESS OF ACC–LVB PROJECT

Mr. Benjamin Ongaria attends to his poultry flock.

OVERVIEW

Mr Benjamin Ongaria,is a beneficiary of the ACC–LVB Project and a member of Nambale Youth Group in Busia County, Republic of Kenya. He shares how the project has strengthened the group's capacity, improved poultry production, and enhanced collaboration with the County Government.

1. Q- Kindly state how you have benefited from the ACC–LVB Project.

A-The project supported us through education and sensitization. This helped us gain the knowledge and skills required to manage the project effectively.

It also created a direct link between our Community-Based Organization (CBO) and the County Government departments, particularly the Departments of Environment and Livestock. These departments are now actively supporting our operations.

For example, last week the Department of Livestock provided vaccines, which we administered to our flock at the project site. In addition, the infrastructure developed through the project has made our operations much easier by providing adequate space for carrying out our activities.

2. Q- What is the progress so far?

A-We have made significant progress since the project's inception.
We have reached the layer hen production stage, and the hens will now supply eggs to the hatchery as originally intended. This will significantly reduce the cost of purchasing eggs.
We have also upgraded our incubation facilities. We currently operate four fully automated incubators:

- Two incubators, each with a capacity of 1,056 eggs.
- One incubator with a capacity of 528 eggs.
- One incubator with a capacity of 120 eggs.

3. Q. What is your message to LVBC and the donors?

A.We sincerely thank the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC), the Adaptation Fund through UNEP, and all project partners for their invaluable support and for how far they have helped us come with this initiative.
We request that LVBC considers this project as a benchmark model for other community groups and promotes it as a learning centre for future projects.
We also kindly request LVBC's support in helping us secure additional funding for:

- A solar power upgrade.
- Training in poultry feed formulation and the equipment required for feed production.

Finally, we request LVBC to engage the County Government of Busia to support the construction of poultry structures on individual members' farms. This will enable more members of our community to participate in poultry farming and benefit from the project's success.

Facts About East African Waters

The Mara River

The Mara River is one of the most important rivers in East Africa. It flows through Kenya and Tanzania, where it supports millions of people, livestock, wildlife, and diverse ecosystems. The river is internationally famous for the annual migration of wildebeest and zebras, making it one of the world's most significant wildlife rivers. The Mara River originates from the Mau Escarpment in Kenya, within the Mau Forest, the country's largest indigenous forest.

From its source, the river flows southward through the fertile highlands of Kenya, passes through the Masai Mara National Reserve, enters Tanzania, continues across the Serengeti National Park, and finally empties into Lake Victoria. The river has a total length of approximately 395 kilometres.

Hydrologically, the Mara River is a perennial river, meaning it flows throughout the year, although its water levels vary with the rainy and dry seasons.

It is mainly fed by rainfall in the Mau Forest and surrounding catchment areas, as well as by several tributaries, including the Talek, Amala, Nyangores, and Sand rivers. The river eventually drains into Lake Victoria, becoming part of the upper Nile River basin. The Mara River basin covers an area of about 13,750 square kilometres, with the larger portion located in Kenya and the remainder in Tanzania.

The basin contains forests, grasslands, wetlands, agricultural land, and protected wildlife areas. These landscapes provide habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals.

The river is renowned for its rich biodiversity. It is home to Nile crocodiles, hippopotamuses, numerous fish species, and hundreds of bird species. It also provides water for elephants, buffaloes, giraffes, antelopes, and many other wild animals. Each year, the river becomes the centre of the Great Migration, when more than a million wildebeest, accompanied by zebras and gazelles, cross its waters while moving between the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania and the Masai Mara National Reserve in Kenya.

The Mara River is economically important because it supplies water for domestic use, livestock, irrigation, tourism, and small-scale fishing. Tourism associated with the Great Migration generates significant income for both Kenya and Tanzania and creates employment opportunities for local communities.

Despite its importance, the Mara River faces several environmental challenges. Deforestation in the Mau Forest, agricultural expansion, soil erosion, pollution, overgrazing, increasing water abstraction, and climate change have reduced water quality and affected river flow.

Conservation efforts by the governments of Kenya and Tanzania, together with environmental organizations and local communities, aim to protect the river and ensure its sustainable use.

PICTORIAL

The LVBC team poses for a group photo after a meeting with Dr. Eric Tardieu, Executive Secretary of the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO), in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

On the sidelines of the INBO World Basin Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, LVBC Deputy Executive Secretary, Eng. Coletha Ruhamya, held a bilateral engagement with Ms. Marjeta Jager, Deputy Director-General of the Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA).

LVBC Executive Secretary Dr. Masinde Bwire (right) presents a gift to Mr. Duncan Mwangi, General Manager of Imperial Sarova, during his visit to the LVBC headquarters.

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PICTORIAL

LVBC Human Resource Officer, Mr. Toffique Ruba, presents a gift to Ms. Vicky Yvonne, a student at State House Girls Senior School, during her visit to the institution. Ms. Yvonne, who made a presentation during the inaugural ceremony of the new LVBC Headquarters, is passionate about environmental conservation.

LVBC Deputy Executive Secretary, Eng. Coletha Ruhamya, makes her submission during the World Basin Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Participants of the validation workshop for the updated Northern Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan, held in Nairobi, Kenya from 8th–9th June, pose for a group photo. LVBC was represented by Maritime Safety Officer, Mr. Amos Ndoto.

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