



LVBC Monthly Review

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MARA DAY PREPARATIONS COMPLETE



Kuria traditional dancers from Tarime entertain guests during the 14th Mara Day Celebrations in Butiama, United Republic of Tanzania.

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Preparations to host the 15th Mara Day Celebrations in Bomet County, Republic of Kenya, have been finalized. The annual event, organized by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC), is scheduled to take place from 12th–15th September 2026.

The celebrations will feature a range of build-up activities aimed at promoting conservation, environmental stewardship, and community engagement....**Contd Pg2**





EALA MP Hon. David Ole Sankok waters a tree he planted during the 14th Mara Day Celebrations in Butiama, Tanzania.

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These will include exhibitions by conservation organizations, tree-planting activities, installation of beacons to mark riparian setbacks in the Mara River Basin, sports and games, essay-writing competitions and awards, and clean-up campaigns. The activities will commence on 12th September 2026.

A Stakeholders' Forum will be held on 14th September 2026 at Bomet University, bringing together key actors involved in the conservation and sustainable management of the Mara River Basin. The forum will precede the main Mara Day celebrations on 15th September 2026 at Bomet Stadium.

This year's theme, **"Mara River, Diverse Lives: Keep It Thriving"** translated in Swahili as **(Mto Mara, Uhai wa Viumbe, Tuutunze)**, highlights the Mara River and the diverse life it supports while issuing a clear call to action to protect and sustain the ecosystem.

LVBC Executive Secretary Dr. Masinde Bwire said several high-level dignitaries, including Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers responsible for relevant sectors from the Republic of Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, are expected to attend the celebrations.

He noted that a series of meetings involving representatives and stakeholders from the two EAC Partner States had been held as part of preparations for the important event.



Community members from Magu District, Mara Region, in the United Republic of Tanzania, supported by the ACC-LVB Project, showcase their products during the 14th Mara Day Celebrations in Butiama.

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"A series of meetings between representatives and stakeholders from the two EAC Partner States have been held to prepare for this important event, whose aim is to create awareness and promote the conservation of the Mara ecosystem," said Dr. Bwire.

Mara Day is observed annually by the East African Community (EAC) Partner States to raise awareness of the conservation and sustainable management of the Mara River Basin. The celebrations bring together government officials, conservation organizations, local communities, development partners, researchers, students, and other stakeholders to promote environmental stewardship and regional cooperation.

The Mara Ecosystem is one of the most important ecosystems within the Lake Victoria Basin. It supports rich biodiversity, tourism, and the livelihoods of millions of people across the region. Recognizing its significance, the 10th Sectoral Council of Ministers for Lake Victoria Basin, held on 4th May 2012 in Kigali, Rwanda, declared 15th September as Mara Day. The date coincides with the annual Great Wildebeest Migration between Tanzania's Serengeti National Park and Kenya's Maasai Mara National Reserve.

The Lake Victoria Basin Commission coordinates the annual Mara Day celebrations on a rotational basis among the EAC Partner States. The 14th Mara Day was hosted by the United Republic of Tanzania in Butiama District, Mara Region, in 2025. Beyond celebrating the shared Mara-Serengeti ecosystem, Mara Day has served as a platform for strengthening transboundary cooperation.

Notable achievements include the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Kenya and Tanzania on the management of the Mara River Basin's transboundary water resources and the establishment of the Mara River Transboundary Water Users' Forum. Kenya's hosting of the 15th edition reaffirms the country's commitment to regional environmental conservation and the sustainable management of one of East Africa's most iconic ecosystems.



SCORE CARD

ONCE AN EYESORE, NOW A LANDMARK IN KISUMU

BEFORE



LVBC headquarters

In 2021, the construction of the new headquarters of the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) was marred by confusion, delays and setbacks. The contractor on site failed to meet the Commission's agreed standards, resulting in substandard workmanship.

Workers and suppliers eventually downed their tools, protesting delayed payments and poor working conditions. What was intended to be a landmark project had instead become an eyesore an embarrassing reflection of the image and aspirations of the East African Community (EAC).

But the situation soon changed.

After taking the helm of the Commission in May 1st 2022, Executive Secretary Dr. Masinde Bwire, together with her Deputy, Eng. Coletha Ruhanya, made a bold decision that would help restore the image and credibility of the institution. A new contractor was brought on board to undertake the necessary works and give the neglected building a much-needed facelift.

Today, the LVBC Headquarters stands as a striking new landmark in the lakeside city of Kisumu a remarkable transformation from what was once an eyesore. It is a story of decisive leadership, determination and the courage to act when it mattered most.





SCORE CARD

ONCE AN EYESORE, NOW A LANDMARK IN KISUMU

AFTER



LVBC headquarters

Located on a 2.8-acre piece of land donated by the Government of the Republic of Kenya in 2016, the new LVBC Headquarters represents a significant investment in the future of the Lake Victoria Basin and the EAC integration agenda.

The design phase of the project began in 2006, while the first phase of construction commenced in January 2021 under a 52-week contract, which concluded on August 31st, 2022. The approved budget for Phase I was USD 1,350,000.

Phase II commenced on August 7th, 2023, with a budget of USD 2,560,717.68, bringing the total allocated amount to approximately USD 3.54 million, fully funded by the EAC Partner States.

In November 2024, the EAC Council of Ministers approved an additional USD 802,126 to facilitate the completion of essential works. The approval was announced by the former EAC Secretary General, H.E. Hon. Veronica Mueni Nduva, during the 46th Ordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers, held in Arusha from November 23rd to 28th, 2024.





SCORE CARD

ONCE AN EYESORE, NOW A LANDMARK IN KISUMU

AFTER



Reflecting on the transformation, Dr. Bwire said:

"When my Deputy and I took over the leadership of the Commission, we made the bold decision to dismiss the contractor and take the necessary steps to ensure that the project was completed to the required standards. We are proud that today, the decision we made has borne fruit."

The transformation of the LVBC Headquarters is more than a construction success story. It is a testament to the impact of decisive leadership, accountability and determination to deliver results.

From a stalled and neglected project to a modern landmark in Kisumu, the new headquarters now reflects the vision, dignity and aspirations of the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the East African Community.



LVBC headquarters





Facts About East African Waters

River Nzoia



River Nzoia is located in western Kenya and is part of the Lake Victoria North Basin. It originates mainly from the highland areas of Mount Elgon and the Cherangany Hills, where rainfall supplies water to the river and its tributaries. It flows through several parts of western Kenya before finally draining into Lake Victoria.

River Nzoia is a perennial river, meaning it has water throughout most of the year, although its volume changes with the seasons. It has several tributaries and drains a large basin, making it one of the most important rivers in the region.

The river has great economic potential. Its water is used for domestic purposes, irrigation, agriculture and livestock keeping.

It also has potential for hydroelectric power generation, fishing, industrial development and tourism. The river supports many people who depend on agriculture and other water-related activities for their livelihoods.

However, River Nzoia faces several challenges, especially flooding, pollution, deforestation, soil erosion and sedimentation. Flooding is common in the lower parts of the river and can destroy crops, homes and infrastructure. Conservation measures such as tree planting, protecting riverbanks and wetlands, controlling pollution and improving flood management are necessary to protect the river and its resources.

Overall, River Nzoia is a very important natural resource in western Kenya because of its water supply, agricultural importance and economic potential.



PICTORIAL



Deputy Executive Secretary, LVBC, Eng. Coletha Ruhanya presents a banquet of flowers to the Senior Personal Secretary, Margaret Kassaja, to mark the end of her tenure.



Hon. Charles N. Kadonya, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation (responsible for East African Affairs), inspects LVBC projects in Magu, Tanzania.



Hon. Charles N. Kadonya, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation (responsible for East African Affairs), and LVBC Executive Secretary Dr. Masinde Bwire pose for a photo with members of a self-help group in Magu District.

East African Community Lake Victoria Basin
Commission

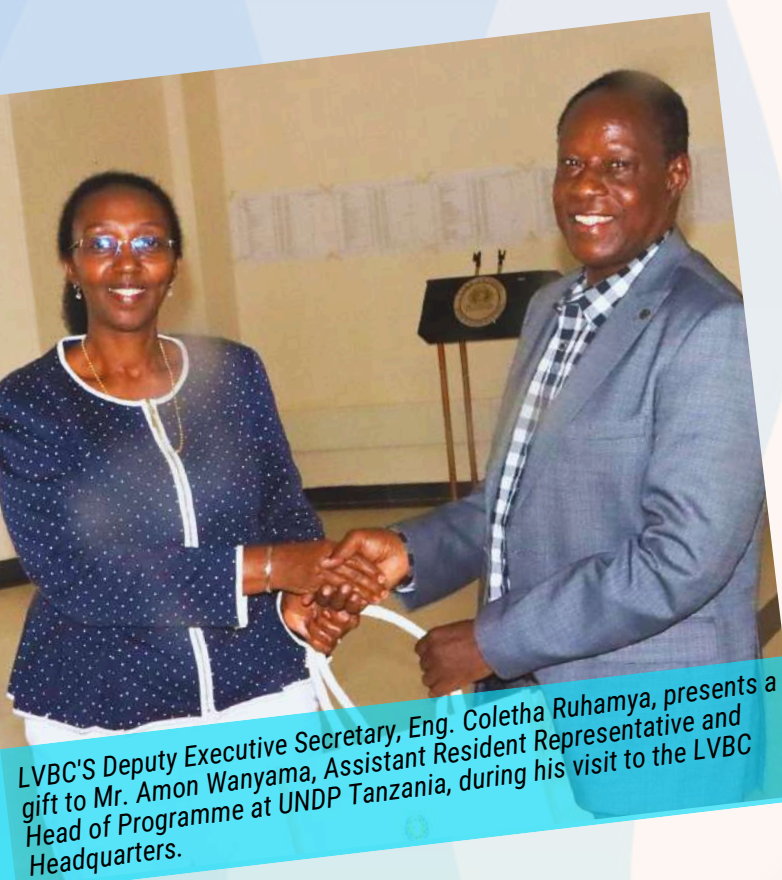
Nkurumah Road, Off Kisumu-Busia Highway
P. O. Box 1510 – 40100, Kisumu, KENYA

Telephone Number: +254 57 2023894/73, 2026344
Email: lvbc@lvbcom.org





PICTORIAL



LVBC'S Deputy Executive Secretary, Eng. Coletha Ruhamyia, presents a gift to Mr. Amon Wanyama, Assistant Resident Representative and Head of Programme at UNDP Tanzania, during his visit to the LVBC Headquarters.



The EAC RDB. A delegation from the World Bank held discussions with the EAC and the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) technical team, led by the EAC Deputy Secretary General, Hon. Andrea Ariik, at EAC Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.



Traditional dancers entertain guests during the visit by Hon. Charles N. Kadonya, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation (responsible for East African Affairs), in Magu District.

East African Community Lake Victoria Basin
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