

NELSAP Conducts First Ever Lake-wide Survey of Fish Stock, all Fishing Gears and Fishers on Lakes Edward and Albert



UWIMANA SIFA (RIGHT) A FISH TRADER AT THE RWENSHAMA FISH LANDING SITE ON LAKE EDWARD IN RUKUNGIRI DISTRICT OF UGANDA ON 28.02.2020

Monitoring fish stocks in relation to their species composition, abundance, distribution, catch, and fishing effort is required for sound management of fisheries resources. When the lakes in question are transboundary, this exercise becomes even more significant as it promotes cooperation on the international waters, reduces border conflicts and brings countries closer. NELSAP-CU through the

LEAF II Project and the countries (D.R Congo and Uganda) conducted a lake-wide Frame Survey and Catch Assessment Survey on Lakes Edward and Albert. This is the first time a lake-wide survey has been conducted on both of these transboundary lakes. This activity was funded through a grant by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to the NELSAP-

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Incoming and Outgoing Council of Ministers Chairs Congratulate NELSAP for Exemplary Performance



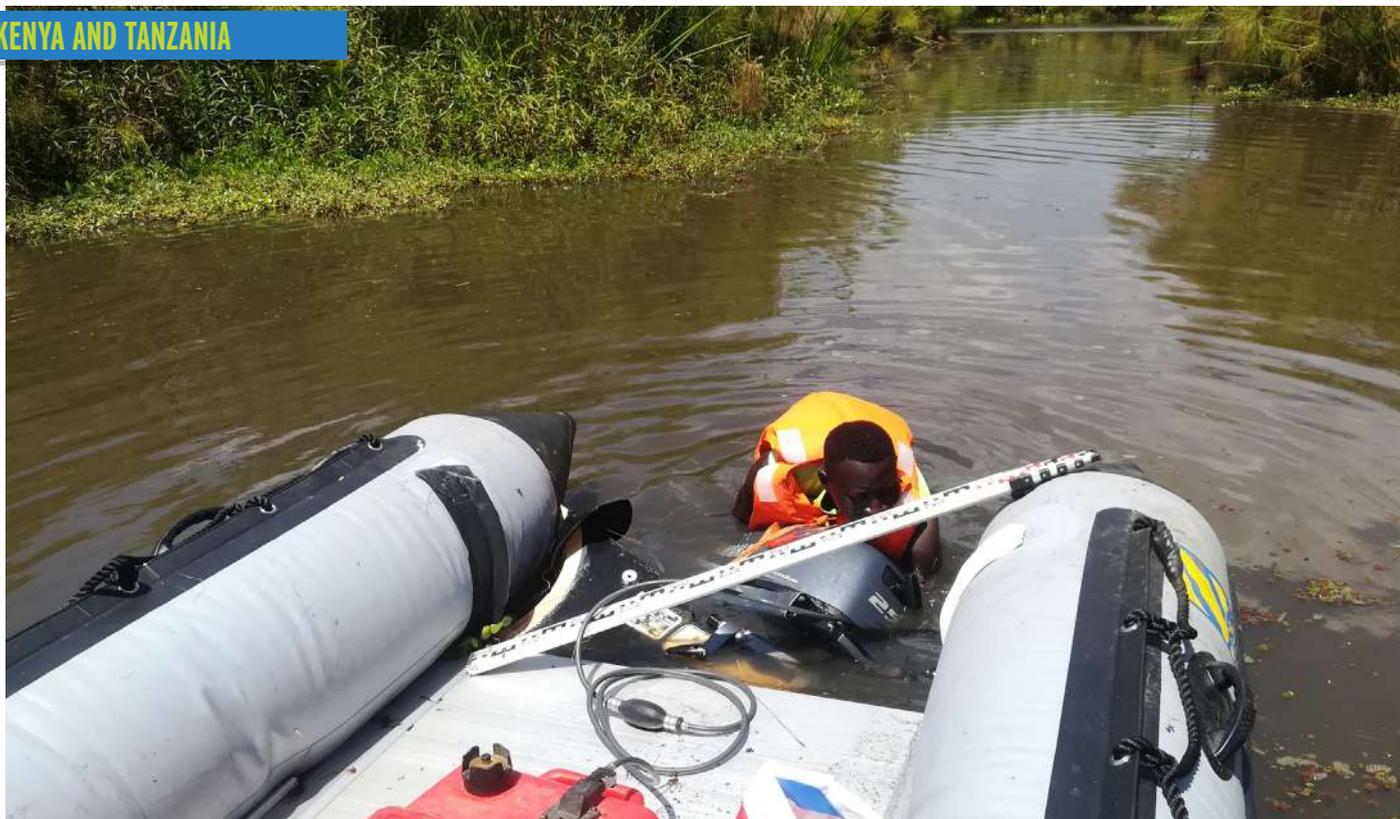
CHANGE OF GUARD: THE OUTGOING NELCOM CHAIR HON. SAM CHEPTORIS THE UGANDA MINISTER IN CHARGE OF WATER AFFAIRS WELCOMES THE NEW NELCOM CHAIR HON. DEO-GUIDE RUREMA THE BURUNDI WATER MINISTER

The Burundi Minister in charge of water affairs who is also the incoming chair of the Nile Equatorial Lakes Council of Ministers (NELCOM) Hon. Deo-Guide Rurema has congratulated NELSAP-CU for attaining a budget performance of 87% and a physical performance of 92% in the year 2019. The Hon Minister was speaking at the Nile Equatorial Lakes

...continued p.5

» | INSIDE

- 01 **DR CONGO AND UGANDA:** First Ever Lake-wide Survey of Fish Stock, all Fishing Gears and Fishers on Lakes Edward and Albert
- 02 **TANZANIA AND KENYA:** NELSAP/GIZ Complete the Lower Mara Environmental Flow Assessment that will inform Water Allocation Planning in the Mara
- 03 **BURUNDI AND RWANDA:** NELSAP Steps up Preparation for Akanyaru Multipurpose Project to Irrigate 12,474 HA and Generate 14.5MW
- 04 **KENYA, RWANDA, UGANDA:** Commissioning of the Rwanda - Uganda Power Interconnection and Synchronization of NEL Grid in 2020
- 07 **ALL NEL COUNTRIES:** Capacity Building on Institutional Sustainability for River Basin Planning and Management



A SECTION OF THE LOWER MARA RIVER IN TANZANIA

NELSAP/GIZ Complete the Lower Mara Environmental Flow Assessment that will inform Water Allocation Planning in the Mara River Basin

Over the past nine months, NELSAP-CU and *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)* have conducted and completed environmental flow assessment of the Lower Mara river basin of Tanzania. Environmental Flows Assessment is an important water management tool meant to scientifically assess the required optimum level of flow of river at different stages, points and seasons to ensure that downstream water needs for ecosystems including people, for domestic water supply, industrial and hydropower are sustained. The Mara Environmental Flow Assessment was done using the 2015 Nile Basin Initiative's Guideline on Environmental Flows Framework. The framework was developed to ensure that a standard process is followed for environmental flow assessments in the Nile Basin.

“This is the first time this kind of assessment under the framework has been done for a transboundary river basin in Tanzania and findings from it will inform the national water allocation plan for the Lower Mara river basin as well as the process of harmonizing the transboundary water allocation planning between the member states of Kenya and Tanzania, for sustainable and equitable water use,” says Sadiki Lotha, the NELSAP/GIZ Biodiversity Conservation project Officer.

“I would like to thank NELSAP-CU and GIZ as well as implementing partners for developing this e-flow report, and being the first of its kind, it will serve as

a pilot for the other river basins in Tanzania,” said Dr. George Lugomela, the Director of Water in the Ministry of Water Tanzania.

“This e-flow report has already contributed to the development of Water Allocation Plan (WAP) guidelines for Tanzania that will soon be approved,” he added. Dr. Lugomela spoke during the validation of the E-flow report workshop on 29th September 2019 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

The Mara River which is shared between Kenya and Tanzania supports well-being of a large wildlife and human population. The Lower Mara river basin has 396,000 people and this population is projected to grow to 700,000 by 2030. To develop sustainably, this population must share the basin's limited water resources with ecosystems of Serengeti National Park, the Mara Wetland, and the river corridor extending into each of the river's tributaries as well as the Maasai Mara Game Reserve of Kenya. Environmental flows, are explicitly protected in the NBI member countries' national water laws, and trans-boundary protections are featured in the treaty of the East African Community and the Nile Basin Sustainability Framework.

Key Findings

The Lower Mara river basin environmental flow assessment results depicts that, in order to meet the basic human water need of 25 liters per person per day, section of the Lower Mara, that is not part of

...continued p.6



FROM LEFT. MTCHERA CHIRWA JOHANNES FROM THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, AfDB (NEPAD-IPPF) RAHEL KABA EBBA FROM AFRICA WATER FACILITY (AWF) MS. MUKARUBIBI FATINA THE RWANDA PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, ENG. MARC MANYIFIKA, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF LAND, WATER AND FORESTRY AND NELSAP-CU SENIOR STAFF DURING THE AKANYARU PROJECT APPRAISAL MISSION IN RWANDA

NELSAP Steps up Preparation for Akanyaru Multipurpose Project to Irrigate 12,474 Ha and Generate 14.5MW for Burundi and Rwanda

NELSAP-CU has stepped up preparation for full feasibility and detailed design studies of the Akanyaru Multipurpose Water Resources Development Project that will be shared between Burundi and Rwanda. The project, located on the trans-boundary Akanyaru River, comprises a 52m high dam with storage capacity of 333 million cubic metres that will supply water to 614,200 people and irrigate 12,474 ha directly benefitting 24,948 farmers. It will also generate 14.5 MW hydropower which will power 141,111 homes and serve 846,000 people. This project was identified in 2012 by Rwanda and Burundi with support from NELSAP-CU. NELSAP-CU did detailed identification studies in 2012 with financing from a Sweden-Norway grant. In 2016 NELSAP-CU prepared a Project concept note and did a full proposal in March 2018 for funding from the AfDB NEPAD-IPPF.

Speaking during the Nile Equatorial Lakes Council of Meeting (NELCOM) on 29.11.2019 in Nairobi, Hon. Deo-Guide Rurema, the Burundi minister in charge of water affairs, reiterated his country's commitment to the Akanyaru project and confirmed that through coordination of NELSAP-CU the two countries would soon be signing an MOU on its implementation.

AfDB / NEPAD-IPPF and African Water Facility (AWF) Appraisal Mission

Early November 2019, NELSAP-CU hosted a team from the African Development Bank (AfDB) NEPAD-

IPPF (Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility) and from the African Water Facility (AWF) for an appraisal mission in Rwanda to discuss among others modalities for financing of this project and to get country commitment on the same.

“Rwanda commends NELSAP-CU for following up on this project all the way from identification, prefeasibility and now full feasibility,” said Ms. Fatina Mukarubibi, the Rwanda Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Environment. She was speaking during the AfDB / NEPAD-IPPF appraisal mission.

“Following review and technical screening of the Akanyaru project, it was found to present a strong case for socio-economic development in the sub-region because it will address food, water and energy security, and contribute to economic development, thus the project is eligible for NEPAD-IPPF and AWF support and has accordingly been included in the 2019 Work Program for preparation,” said Mr. Mtchera Johannes Chirwa, Chief Infrastructure and PPP Specialist from the AfDB's NEPAD-IPPF.

Burundi and Rwanda formally mandated NELSAP-CU to prepare the project into full feasibility, and to conduct on their behalf, detailed design, tender documents preparation, environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) and a resettlement action plan (RAP). This phase will commence in March 2020 and cover a 24-month period.



THE KENYA (LESSOS) - UGANDA (TORORO - BUJAGALI) OVERHEAD TRANSMISSION LINE

Commissioning of Rwanda-Uganda Power Interconnection and Synchronization of Kenya-Uganda-Rwanda-Burundi-DRC Grids in 2020

In order to improve access to electricity in NEL countries, NELSAP-CU is promoting increased cross-border sharing of energy and power. This year (2020), commissioning of the Uganda (Mbarara/Mirama)-Rwanda (Shango) power interconnection and synchronization of the interconnection between the electric grids of Burundi - DR Congo - Kenya - Rwanda - Uganda will take place. Initial power trading through the lines between Uganda and Rwanda is planned to commence in 2020 once the Rwanda - Uganda Interconnector is commissioned into operational service. On the Uganda side, construction of both the line and the Mbarara substation are complete and all facilities for interconnection with Rwanda are ready and the line has been energized up to the Rwanda border.

The electric grids of Kenya and Uganda are in synchronized operation, the same case is for Rwanda, Burundi and part of the Eastern D.R Congo at Ruzizi. The interconnection between Rwanda and Uganda was the missing link, whose commissioning will realize parallel operation of the electric grids of the five countries namely; Burundi, D.R Congo, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

NELSAP-CU together with EAPP with support from USAID are working on modalities for preparation for coordinated and smooth synchronized operation of the interconnected grid system in the NEL. Key areas being addressed are protection schemes, interconnection switching operations, outage requests, fault detection and clearing,

synchronization, telecommunications, dispatch/operational procedures, coordination of maintenance schedules and regional power trade as per the East Africa Power Pool (EAPP) Interconnection Code. In order to facilitate commissioning of this project and synchronization of the networks of the concerned countries, NELSAP-CU and the countries, together with the EAPP will put into place working groups that consist of planning, dispatching, protection and telecommunications engineers from Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda and from EAPP and NELSAP-CU.

These activities fall under the Interconnection of the Electric Grids of the Nile Equatorial Lakes Countries project that covers Burundi, DR Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda and is being managed by NELSAP-CU on behalf of the countries. The project constitutes construction of 930km Overhead Transmission Lines with 17 substations. Implementation is on-going and is funded by AfDB, KfW, JICA, GON.

The goal of this project is to improve the living conditions of the peoples as well as economic development environment of countries through increased availability of affordable electric energy and increased cross-border sharing of energy and power in the NEL countries. Through this project, several transmission lines in the region were completed including The Rwanda - DR Congo transmission 220kV line which was commissioned into operation three years ago initially at 110kV.

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First Ever Survey of Lakes Edward & Albert

implemented regional component of the project. The two national project components are funded through a grant to DR Congo and a loan to Uganda.

The Catch Assessment Survey was conducted by the *Service National de Promotion et de Développement de la Pêche* / National Service for the Promotion and Development of Fisheries (SENADEP) of the D.R Congo and National Fisheries Resources Research Institute (NaFIRRI) of Uganda. The survey was carried out at 56 landing sites between July and August 2019 using 141 trained enumerators (87 from the DRC & 54 from Uganda). The enumerators worked under direct supervision of Sub-County/District (Uganda) and Province (DRC) Fisheries Officers (FOs) with the overall coordination by NaFIRRI and the Directorate of Fisheries Resources (Uganda) and SENADEP (D.R Congo). The survey was implemented using the harmonized Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) agreed upon by D.R Congo and Uganda.

An upstream Frame Survey was earlier conducted on both lakes, which involved direct and complete enumeration of all fish landing sites, fishing inputs and all other facilities supporting the fisher community on a regular or ad hoc basis.

“NELSAP/NBI decided to spearhead this exercise in order to generate reliable scientific information on the fishing effort, fish catch and the level of fishing pressure that fisheries can support on lakes Edward and Albert to inform effective management of their fisheries resources,” says Mr. Godfrey Sengendo, the Regional Coordinator for the LEAF II project.

“The two surveys have provided the D.R Congo government with essential references that will shape preparation of fisheries projects on the two lakes and will also serve as basis for the sustainable development of the D.R Congo fishing sector in general,” says Dr. Sylvain Tusanga, the National Director of Fisheries Resources in the D.R Congo.

Key Findings of the CASs and Frame Surveys

The survey found out that on Lake Albert annual total quantity of fish caught was **31,384.8 tons** which generated revenue of **USD 278,513.50** at beach value. In terms of species, on the D.R Congo side, the *Lates spp*, locally known as capitaine, contributed 22.8 % of annual catch, followed by *Synodontis spp* (12.8%) known locally as likoko. On the Uganda side *Engraulicypris bredoi* and *Brycinus nurse* locally known as ragoogi contributed 56.2% of the annual catch. On Lake Edward, the annual total quantity

of fish caught was **32,092.8 tons** which generated revenue of **USD 62,702.7**. In terms of species, on the D.R Congo side, the catch was dominated by *Tilapia* which represented 36.7% of the catch, followed by *Bagrus spp* locally known as kibonde, representing 32.3%. In Uganda the species were, *Bagrus docmak* known locally as munama, representing 33% of total catch followed by *Protopterus aethiopicus* known locally as mamba at 18% and *Tilapia spp* also at 18%. The survey revealed an increase in fish catch in both Uganda and D.R Congo as a result of improved patrolling and enforcement of fisheries regulations which has aided recovery of fish species and curbed illegal fishing practices.

The Frame Survey recorded a total of **201 landing sites** (107 in Uganda and 94 in DRC) on Lake Albert, **15,285 fishing crafts**, and **48,084 fishers**. It revealed a 49% increase in landing sites on the Uganda side from 2007 to 2017. Fishers also increased by 82% from **15,354** to **27,944**. The survey noted an increase in the number of illegal fishing gear in both countries. On Lake Edward there were **28 landing sites**, **3,535 fishing boats** and **20,475 fishers**. All gillnets recorded were of the legal category allowed on Ugandan side of the Lake. This was attributed to restrictions by Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and recent enforcement efforts by the Fisheries Protection Unit of the Uganda Peoples Defense Forces. However, there were illegal gears (undersize gillnet, cast nets, beach seines and basket traps) on the DRC side in areas out of the Virunga National Park's jurisdiction. The two surveys noted that some of the fishing methods listed as illegal are not classified as such in both DRC and Uganda, and these will be harmonized and enforced this year.

Lessons for DRC and Uganda from the Survey

On the Uganda side of Lake Albert, majority of fish was harvested and landed in illegal destructive gears. While this provides short term benefits, it severely compromises sustainability of the lake resources. Efforts should therefore be directed towards total removal of illegal gears from commercial fisheries. The survey showed that economic importance of large sized species, particularly Nile perch, by far superseded that of the dominant small pelagic; **E. bredoi** and **B. nurse** (sardines) on Uganda portion of Lake Albert. Thus there is need for urgent protection of large bodied fish species from illegal practices such as use of undersize and prohibited fishing gears. A key factor attributed to low value of two dominant small sized fish species **E. bredoi** and **B. nurse** (sardines) is post-harvest practice of processing fish on bare ground which devalued it. Value addition of these small fish species to promote them for human consumption rather than their current predominant use as animal feed will greatly improve their value.

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NELCOM Chairs Congratulate NELSAP-CU

Council of Ministers (NELCOM) meeting in Nairobi at the end of November 2019.

“I take note of the exemplary performance that NELSAP-CU has realized both in budgetary as well as physical performance and urge you to maintain the same high standards so that NEL countries can continue to see, feel and enjoy the benefits of cooperation under the NBI,” Hon. Deo-Guide Rurema said. On his part, the outgoing chair of NELCOM, Uganda Minister in charge of water affairs Hon. Sam Cheptoris noted the exemplary work that NELSAP-CU is doing across the region and

reaffirmed his country's commitment to the Nile Basin Cooperation.

“Uganda attaches great importance to the management of trans-boundary water resources, and during my term as NELCOM chair, I witnessed among others the signing of the bilateral MOU between DR Congo and Uganda and initiation of fisheries projects on the lakes Edward and Albert through NELSAP-CU and the LEAF II project in particular,” said Hon. Sam Cheptoris. The Hon. Minister also noted steady progress of the NBI flagship project, the Regional Rusumo Falls Hydroelectric Project that has improved from 15% in 2018 to 57% as of November 2019.

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the Serengeti National Reserve, require a river flow of between 0.006 m³/s and 0.030 m³/s for the sub-basins, and a total flow of 0.114 m³/s for the entire Lower Mara river basin during a normal year.

Within the Serengeti National Park, the part of the River before the wetland, also referred to as main stem area, requires a flow of 2.4 to 15 m³/s during a normal year. The wetland sections require a flow of 3 to 12 m³/s while the tributaries, require a flow of 0.1 to 0.8 m³/s during a normal year.

On the upper reaches of the river, the relative percentage of the environmental flow requirements in the tributaries was higher due to their general low flows. This is especially the case in dry months. On the other hand, due to physical and knowledge limitations in the most downstream site in the Mara Wetlands, water depth values of 2.7 to 3.3 meters are recommended.

The Process

To conduct this e-flow assessment, NELSAP-CU and GIZ used the following seven step process. Firstly conducted a basin wide situation assessment and alignment process. Secondly, worked with local partners and stakeholders to do resource quality objective setting. Next, they did a regionalization analysis to determine monthly and annual average discharge, minimum and maximum discharge values, annual and monthly flow duration curves, and maximum daily flow frequency of the river. Fourthly, reviewed existing ecosystem and river classification maps used in Tanzania to determine the classification of the assessment areas (main stem, tributaries, and wetlands). This was followed by analysis of alteration in river flow regimes and assessment of flow-ecological-ecosystem-services linkages to determine the flows required in different “building blocks” of the hydrological year. Finally, an e-flow normal year baseline setting and monitoring was set.

Key Messages to Policy Makers

Compliance Monitoring: Environmental flows should be respected to ensure that aquatic ecosystems and important ecosystem services are

protected by the current environmental flow values. Collected monitoring data, should be incorporated into management decision making through clearly defined adaptive management cycles.

Institutional Capacity Building: Alignment of the monitoring activities to institutional capacity (including financial and staff capacity) at three-level system that encompass simple monitoring activities carried out by community groups, more complex monitoring tasks carried out by the Lake Victoria Basin Water Board or other government agencies, and highly detailed monitoring tasks carried out by experts in their fields.

Basin Water Allocation Plan: It is important to incorporate these results into the basin water allocation plan. This plan outlines how available water resources will be divided between the environment, domestic and livelihood needs for people, and for socioeconomic development.

Harmonization: Flow values for the Lower Mara should be harmonized with those of Upper Mara in Kenya through the Kenya-Tanzania MOU on ‘Joint Water Resources Management of the Trans boundary Mara River’ that was signed in 2005. Thus the two countries must renew hydro diplomacy dialogues that may lead to signing of Cooperative Framework Agreement in the future.

Partners Involved in the Assessment

NBI and GIZ provided funding for the field work, guidance, and day to day liaison on the content and process of the Mara e-flow assessment. Field work was conducted by Lake Victoria Basin Water Board (Tanzania) the Water Resources Authority (Kenya), IHE Delft Institute for Water Education (Netherlands) Sokoine University of Agriculture (Tanzania) the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Rhodes University (South Africa) and the University of Eldoret (Kenya) and assisted by the Tanzanian Ministry of Water, the Musoma District Fisheries Department, Serengeti National Park, local government leaders from the wards and villages, members of the water users associations, and community members under the overall technical coordination of NELSAP-CU.



A SECTION OF THE LOWER MARA RIVER IN TANZANIA



NELSAP-CU SENIOR STAFF TOGETHER WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF NBI MEMBER STATES DURING A VISIT TO AGENCE DE L'EAU IN LYON, FRANCE FOR INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING FOR RIVER BASIN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

NEL Member States Receive Capacity Building on Institutional Sustainability for River Basin Planning and Management

In December 2019 representatives of NBI Member states teamed up with NELSAP-CU senior staff on a mission to Lyon, France for experience sharing on 'Institutional Sustainability for River Basin Planning and Management.' The objective of the mission was to strengthen NEL region member countries capacity and provide fundraising guidance to NELSAP-CU aimed at sustaining the institution and at the same time attracting more finances required to implement the NELSAP strategic plan. Member States who participated in the mission to France were Burundi, DR Congo, Kenya, and Uganda. A delegation of 10 experts took part in the mission.

As a follow-up to the mission in France, in January 2020 representatives of the NEL region member states (two per country) from DR Congo, Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda together with NELSAP-CU senior staff participated in a three-day resource mobilization training workshop, held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. About 16 experts participated in that important workshop that was aimed at updating on the ongoing implementation of the NELSAP strategic plan in terms of priorities, estimating costs of projects and attracting finances to implement projects.

Both the mission to France and the training workshop in Tanzania were supported by funding from *Agence française de Développement (AFD)* and *Agence de l'eau Rhône Méditerranée Corse*

(*AERMC*). The events were coordinated by NELSAP-CU with technical support from BRL Ingenierie, an international consulting firm offering specialized engineering services in areas related to water, environment and regional land-use planning.

AFD support was to the tune of 1 Million Euros (200,000 to NileSec and 800,000 to NELSAP-CU). NELSAP-CU received an additional 400,000 Euros from AERMC for capacity development to strengthen NELSAP capacity for river basin planning and management. Among others, this support has generated NELSAP Strategic Plan 2017-2022, NELSAP Resource Mobilization Strategy and guidelines, NELSAP Communication Strategy, trainings on Dam Safety related issues in the NEL region, and procured key analytical tools to enhance NELSAP-CU planning process. Further there is ongoing modelling activity which is aimed at updating the Multi-Sectorial Investment Opportunity Analysis (MSIOA) and assessment of the NELSAP current capacity to deliver given mandate. The mission to France was part of implementation of some of the recommendations in the NELSAP Resource Mobilization Strategy. Both of the sub-activities are expected to be completed by June 2020.

During the nine day experience sharing mission to Lyon, France that was hosted by AERMC, the delegation had useful deliberation on river basin

...continued p.8



REPRESENTATIVES OF NBI MEMBER STATES TOGETHER WITH NELSAP-CU SENIOR STAFF DURING A VISIT TO BRL INGENIERIE IN NIMES, FRANCE FOR INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING FOR RIVER BASIN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

... continued from page 7

management, learning from the Rhone River Basin, which is one of the major trans boundary rivers in the European Union shared between France and Switzerland. The team shared experiences on institutional arrangement of the Rhone River basin management. AERMC shared on its mandate of overseeing the revenue collection; from penalties, water user fees and water abstraction fees across the Rhone River Basin. The river's Board of Directors is technically guided by the Rhone River Basin Management Committee, which acts as Parliament for the water users Associations (stakeholders) who discuss all technical issues before the board makes decisions. Part of the river basin management functions are; water quality, biodiversity conservation, aquatic life, river basin water balance assigning roles to all stakeholders (water user).

During the mission, delegates visited the *Campagne Nationale du Rhone (CRN)* a French electricity generation company mainly supplying renewable power from hydroelectric facilities on the Rhone River Basin. At the CRN they learned about optimization of investment across a river basin (water-food-energy nexus). Delegates visited the *Comite Intersyndical por l'Assaissement du Lac du Bourget (CISALB)* an inter-community syndicate for the sanitation of Lake Bourget, which is one of the drainages of the

Rhone River. At CISALB, delegates visited sites at which biodiversity conservation interventions were executed around the Lake.

The team also visited the organizer's (BRL Ingenierie) headquarters in Nîmes City. The BRL Group Chief Executive Officer, Jean-Francoise Blanchet shared with the team key aspects of management and sharing of water resources in the context of climate change and demographic growth of territories bordering large rivers and lakes. After briefing on the BRLi work and portfolio, delegates visited the Regional Hydraulic Network (RHR) managed by BRLi, which supplies water to 1.5 million people and serves two thirds of irrigated areas of the Mediterranean Coast of France.

The delegates had a chance to attend the Rhone Mediterranean Basin Committee parliament session and learnt on the composition of members and how the Committee President guided the discussions. They witnessed presentation of the Master Plan for Water Development and Management in the Rhone River basin and the 2019 State of the Basin Report. The mission discussed with AFD and AERMC on continued collaboration and support to the NELSAP program. The interactions were positive and both AFD and AERMC indicated their openness to future engagements.

CONTACTS

NILE EQUATORIAL LAKES SUBSIDIARY ACTION PROGRAM (NELSAP CU) KIGALI CITY TOWER, 5TH FLOOR,
P. O. Box 6759, KN 81 STREET KIGALI, RWANDA TEL: (250) 788 307 334 TWITTER: NELSAPCU, FACEBOOK:
NELSAPCU/ HTTP://NELSAP.NILEBASIN.ORG

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