

# EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY LAKE VICTORIA BASIN COMMISSION SECRETARIAT

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Dear Sir

**RE: POLICY IMPACT OF THE LVBC-IIASA PARTNERSHIP UNDER THE WATER FUTURES AND SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE FOR EAST AFRICA AND THE PROJECT ON SCALING OUT RESILIENT WATER AND AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS (SCALEWAYS)**

Reference is drawn to our previous correspondences and discussions on the above subject matter. To better have these discussions on the policy impact of our partnership MoU better documented, I have put forward this summary for your consideration and wider usage.

The Partnership between LVBC and IIASA is anchored on an MoU that was approved by the Sectoral Council of Ministers for Lake Victoria Basin (LVB-SECOM) paving the way for partnership between the two institutions that would ensure LVBC specifically and the East African Community in general taps into the wealth of experience and expertise from IIASA and its partners such as the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). This has been made possible through the two projects that have been or are being implemented under this partnership including: (a) Water Futures and Solutions Initiative for East Africa; and (b) The Project on Scaling out resilient water and agricultural systems (scaleWAYS). These two projects have had beneficial impact on policy and long-term programming for Lake Victoria Basin and the community at large as follows:

- (a) **Providing policy clarity on baseline context with regard to current water resource use status and challenges;** The partnership has brought clarity and better appreciation of where the region is with regard to various competing water uses (agriculture, industrial, domestic) and the associated challenges as well as how various drivers interact to compound the situation. It is on this basis/clarity that most policy options and decisions are then weighed against during policy forums and deliberations including the at the Council of ministers and at LVB-SECOM
- (b) **Providing and widening the range of policy options for development actions and interventions:** Through this partnership, LVBC and EAC has benefited from a wider range of policy options for action and interventions in the region. The recommendations from these two initiatives under this partnership have been used to not only guide / inform policy pronouncements but have also served to give options for actions and interventions. A good example being the policy recommendations that

design of new projects on Adapting to Climate Change in Lake Victoria Basin (ACC-LVB) and the Integrated Water Resources Management Programme for Lake Victoria Basin (IWRM-LVB) leverages on such work and past studies to help the region adequately respond/adapt to climate change. These two projects therefore largely tapped into the findings and recommendations of the report of East Africa Water Scenarios to 2050 during its draft stages since it had snippets of adaptation options. Some of the policy recommendations being considered in design of interventions and actions under LVBC include: (i) Focusing on water scarcity hotspots as is with the case with the ACC-LVB project; (ii) Increasing rain and flood water harvesting; (iii) sustainable agricultural intensification; (iv) leveraging on new approaches and technology for wastewater treatment and water efficiency as proposed under project proposals for LVEMP-III and LVWATSAN-III; (v) shifting from collaboration to cooperation in transboundary water governance; and (vi) exploring potential for ground water to strengthen resilience of the basin as proposed under LVEMP-III project proposal currently under discussion for funding with AfDB.

- (c) **Informing design of new projects and programmes:** There is a direct policy guidance that the ongoing design of the follow-on projects on Lake Victoria Water Supply and Sanitation Programme phase Three (LVWATSAN -III) and the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Programme Phase Three (LVEMP III) be informed by past research studies and reports including the one under the IIASA partnership particularly where water resources and climate change related issues are at play to ensure proper targeting and scoping of interventions under these projects. This way, it is hoped that such projects will contribute to address the real root causes of environmental and developmental challenges facing the basin.
- (d) **Shifting policy focus to the orphaned scope of cooperation:** Under the Protocol for the sustainable Management of LVB, there are 14 areas designated for cooperation among the East African Community Member States. However, over the 10 years of LVBC existence, there has been an over-emphasis on some especially transboundary environmental and natural resources management (more particularly protection and pollution prevention). The partnership with IIASA has however brought a policy paradigm shift to other orphaned areas such as agriculture (more specifically agriculture water, rice and fodder production systems, irrigation, wetlands management among others). As a result of this policy shift, regional cooperation initiatives around these abandoned areas are now being considered and given more emphasis and consideration in policy and programming.
- (e) **Leveraging on Research/Science for Policy Capacity Strengthening:** Under the scaleWAYS project, there has been a deliberate effort to bring on board researchers and scientists from the region and beyond under a platform to discuss and inform policy. The researchers' workshop held in Entebbe in March 2020 provided insight into the role that researchers and scientists working together with practitioners can play to reinforce capacity of policy makers. The Community of Practice (CoP) established there has since been operationalized and will go along way in providing a policy think-tank for various policy organs in East Africa to ensure that policy is informed by research and science moving forward and that it addresses the real problems. Further, through the water system modelling and the East Africa regional vision scenario (EA-RVS) the community has benefitted with capacity strengthening instruments and tools which will for a long time continue to influence how policies for the region are made.

- (f) **Informing the Strategic Planning and Visioning for the Lake Victoria basin and EAC Region in general:** The Mid-term evaluation of the East Africa Development Strategy 2016-2021 and the LVBC Strategic Plan 2016-2021 to a large extent benefitted from the work and partnership between LVBC and IIASA especially under the respective water resources and climate change themes of these development strategies. Based on the proposed water future scenarios and solutions proposed in these works, a lot of revisions were proposed and effected while others will be taken onboard during the next cycle of the regional strategic planning as well as the up-coming mid-term review of the EAC vision 2050.
- (g) **Informing science-based water resource policy and management decisions:** The results of the research work under both the WaFS and ScaleWAYS are helping the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the EAC Partner States (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda) to make science-based water resources policy and management decisions during various regional policy platforms and management meetings. Examples include the directive to conduct a SEIA and SEA studies on the New water Release and Abstraction Policy for Lake Victoria which largely was largely informed by the water future and scenario report. The ToRs for these two studies whose funding is being sought also borrowed a lot from this scenarios report. Other regional initiatives in LVB are also tapping into this rich report to make the right decisions.

The commission is confident that such policy impacts will continue to be derived from not only the scaleWAYS project but also from other such future initiatives/collaborations and thereby immensely contribute to strengthening resilience of this fragile transboundary ecosystem to emerging challenges associated with climate change.

Please accept, Project Coordinator/Task Team Leader, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Dr. Ali Said Matano  
**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**