Cranes as Flagships for Promoting Use of Wetlands as SEPLS

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Purposes of this Presentation

- Make the point that cranes and / or other flagships can be used to promote sustainable use of wetlands (Management as SEPLS)
- Offer some suggestions about actions that can be undertaken to manage wetlands (and their catchments) as SEPLS

Basis of the Presentation

Nature and Livelihoods' recent (May & June 2014) study titled

"***Mapping Threats to Grey Crowned Cranes in Eastern Uganda: A Rapid Survey of Populations for Conservation Action***"

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Cranes of the World (Family Gruidae – 15 Species)

Why Cranes as Flagships?

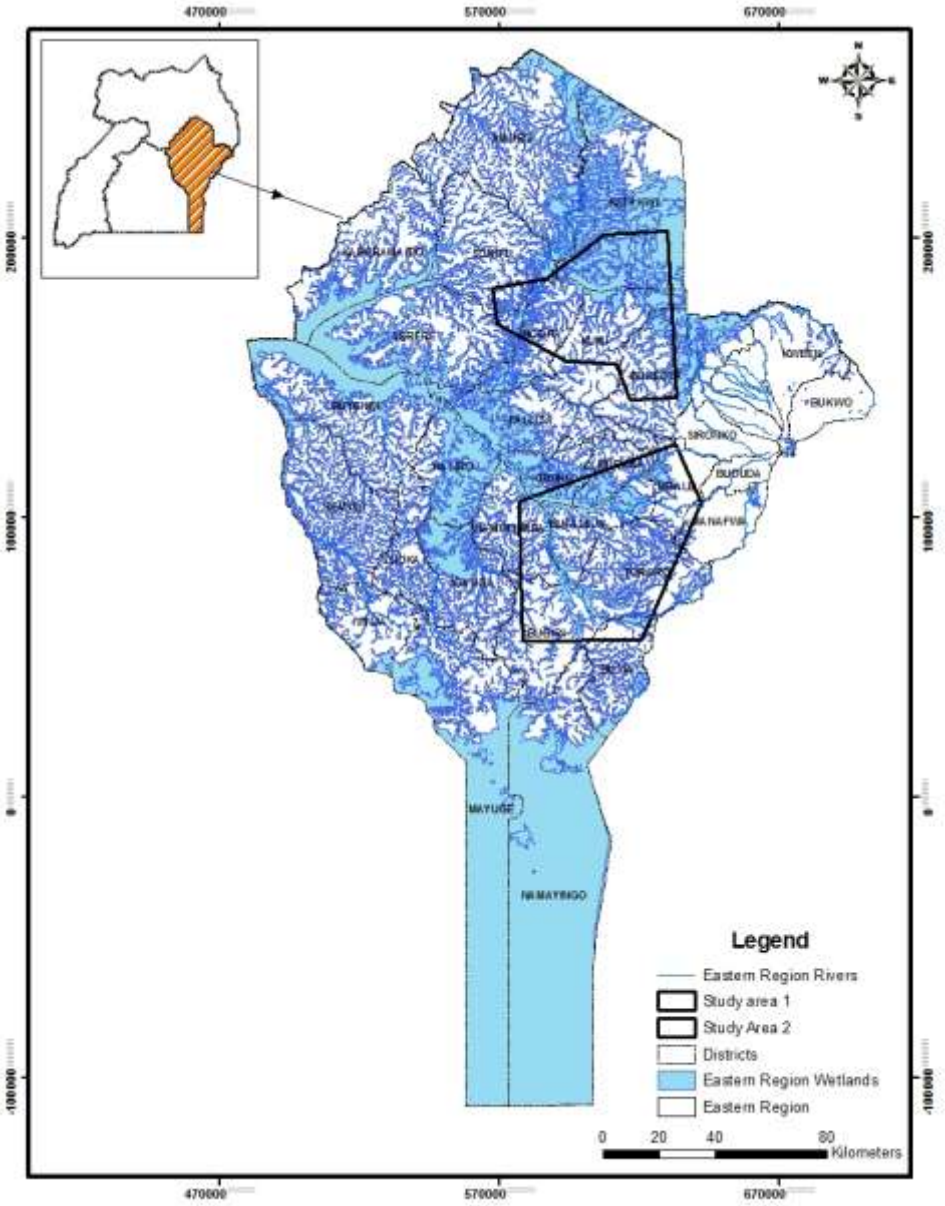
- Near global distribution
- Wetland dependence
- A threatened taxon
- Easily connect with the public hence cultural symbols

Crane Species	Main Habitat	IUCN Category
B. Crowned	Wetland	Vulnerable
B-necked	Wetland	Vulnerable
Blue	Grassland	Vulnerable
Brolga	Wetland	Least Concern
Demoiselle	Grassland	Least Concern
Eurasian	Wetland	Least Concern
G. Crowned	Wetland	Endangered
Hooded	Wetland	Vulnerable
Red-crowned	Wetland	Endangered
Sandhill	Wetland	Least Concern
Sarus	Wetland	Vulnerable
Siberian	Wetland	Cr. Endangered
Wattled	Wetland	Vulnerable
White-naped	Wetland	Vulnerable
Whooping	Wetland	Endangered

Cranes of Uganda (3 Species)

- Wattled Crane (seen once)
- Black Crowned Crane
- Grey Crowned Crane
  - Fastest declining species
  - Uplisted by IUCN from “Vulnerable” to “Endangered” in June 2012

Map of Uganda (inset) and Location of the Study Sites (in main map)



Threats to Cranes

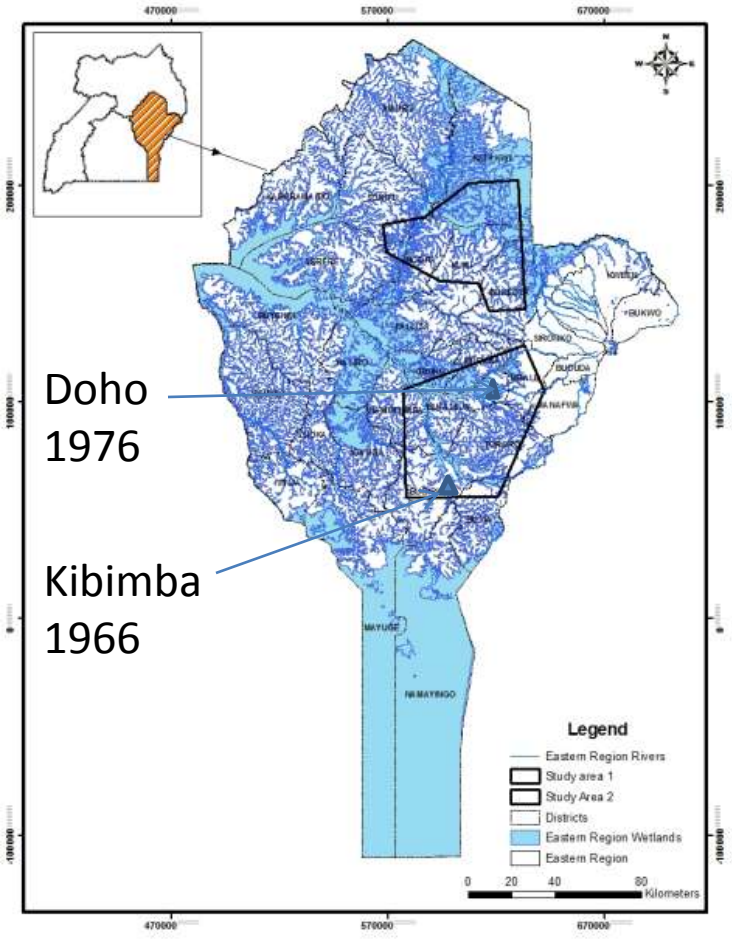
- Poisoning
- Trapping
- Chick / Egg collection
- Insecure roosting sites
- Continuous human presence in wetlands
- Wetland burning
- Roosting tree loss
- Wetland farming

Categories of Wetlands Considered by this Presentation

- Wetlands that are not reserved for sustenance in their natural states in their own right or as parts of wider ecosystems and as such are open to diverse human uses, managed or unmanaged

Wetland Farming: a Rising Trend in Uganda

- Soil fertility decline in the uplands
- Exceptional fertility of wetland soils
- Need to harness water in wetlands to compensate for dry periods
- Rising subsistence needs (as a result of human population growth)
- Pursuit of economic growth



Direct and Indirect Benefits of the Wetlands to the Local People

Unfarmed Wetlands

- Water supply
- Fishing grounds
- Fish nurseries
- Pasture provision
- Recreation value
- Nutrient accumulation
- Microclimate moderation
- Water table recharge
- Repositories of biodiversity

Farmed Wetlands

- High agricultural output - including year-round production and widening range of products
- =Increased food security
- =Increased income to farming households

Crop Types

Manifestations of Negative Impact of Wetland Farming

Reduced Nutrient Retention Capacity

Diminished Recreation Value?

Manifestations of Negative Impact of Wetland Farming

Value as Sources Of Pasture is Diminished

Fish Production Value is Diminished

Manifestations of Negative Impact of Wetland Farming

Value as
Sources of Water
Is Reduced

WETLAND WITH NO WATER

Value as
Repositories
Of Biodiversity
Is diminished?

Lessons from Observations of Impacts and Sustainability of Wetland Farming

- Wetland farming may boost the livelihoods of subsistence farmers in the short term
- Indications of unsustainability may begin to manifest in the long term
- Unless measures for sustainability are devised, it is likely that in the longer term the rural house holds dependent on these wetlands will end up in a worse situation than they started out with

Some Actions for Sustainable Use of the Wetlands (i.e. use as SEPLS)

Limited to Wetlands

- Establishing buffers of natural vegetation in farmed wetlands
- Restoring degraded wetlands / wetland edges & changing use
- Optimizing use of natural amenity and other intrinsic values
- Detailed assessment of suitabilities (i.e. resiliencies / vulnerabilities) of different wetland types to farming
- Establishing wetland-specific best practice guidelines

Covering the Wider Landscape (including catchment areas)

- Improving soil management
- Promoting water harvesting
- Developing / promoting crops tolerant to drier soil conditions
- Developing / promoting pest-resistant crops
- Promoting improvement in agricultural extension work

Conclusions

- Where they occur, cranes can serve as flagships for promoting management of wetlands as SEPLS
- Wetland services can also serve as such flagships
- There is urgent need to devise and implement actions to promote sustainable use of the wetlands surveyed

END

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!