IPSI Case Study Summary Sheet

Basic Information

Title of case study *(should be concise and within approximately 25 words)*			
Enhancing livelihoods of Lake Victoria fisher folk through control of the predator Nile perch in Uganda			
Submitting IPSI member organization(s)			
Environmental Protection Information Centre (EPIC)			
Other contributing organization(s) *(IPSI members and/or non-members)*			
Author(s) and affiliation(s)			
Imran Ahimbisibwe (EPIC)			
Format of case study *(manuscript or audiovisual)*	Manuscript	Language	English
Keywords *(3-5 key concepts included in the case study)*			
Lake Victoria; Livelihoods; Native fishery; Nile perch; Uganda			
Date of submission *(or update, if this is an update of an existing case study)*		19 February 2018	
Web link *(of the case study or lead organization if available for more information)*			

Geographical Information

Country *(where site(s) or activities described in the case study are located – can be multiple, or even "global")*									
Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya									
Location(s) *(within the country or countries – leave blank if specific location(s) cannot be identified)*									
Lake Victoria									
Longitude/latitude or Google Maps link *(if location is identified)*									
https://www.google.com/maps/@-1.2660742,32.1035117,8z?hl=en									
Ecosystem(s) *(please place an "x" in all appropriate boxes)*									
Forest	x	Grassland		Agricultural	x	In-land water	x	Coastal	
Dryland		Mountain		Urban/peri-urban	x	Other (Please specify)			
Socioeconomic and environmental characteristics of the area *(within 50 words)*									
Lake Victoria Basin has a population of 40 million, with a population density of 250 people per square kilometer. Lake Victoria is bordered by Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya. The predator Nile perch, which was transplanted in the lake in 1950 by British colonial administration, decimated the population of the native smaller fish, which were traditionally a source of protein and livelihoods for lakeside communities. With the disappearance of significant native fish numbers that feed on algae and detritus, the organic material is left to decay and sink to the lake floor, where its decomposition absorbs the oxygen available for fish in the lake.									
Description of human-nature interactions in the area *(land-use, traditional resource management practices etc. – within 50 words)*									
The Nile perch fishery produces one million metric tons of fish for export per year, but economic benefits flow almost exclusively to foreign companies. The eventual move to introduce the alien species did not give due consideration to the locals who depended on the fish in the lake for their livelihoods and as a source of protein and medicine. The decision deprived the natives of their livelihoods and concentrated economic benefits derived from the newly established fishery among a few foreign companies. Consequently the local fishing community is forced to engage in agriculture on fragile landscapes with far reaching ecological repercussions.									

Contents

Status *("ongoing" or "completed")*	Ongoing	Period *(MM/YY to MM/YY)*	1998 -

Rationale *(why activities or policies described, or information shared in the case study are needed – within 50 words)*

In spite of extensive research on Lake Victoria, no action has been taken to restore fish species diversity in order to sustain the native fishery and livelihoods of 40 million people that depend directly or indirectly on the lake. To a large extent research work is externally conceived and financed, and is silent about the plight of riparian communities and the dying lake that serves as their life support system.

Objectives *(goals of activities or policies described, or of producing the case study – within 50 words)*

EPIC, together with its partners, is developing responses that seek to raise awareness on biodiversity and the humanitarian crisis in the Lake Victoria region. These responses aim to promote recovery of threatened endemic fish species and to support local communities in rebuilding their fishing villages by applying both traditional knowledge and modern science. They are also designed to enable farmers in the surrounding watershed to adopt the Vetiver Grass Hedgerows System to control nutrient-loaded runoff, and to develop skills in innovative entrepreneurship in order to reduce pressure on the fish stock in the lake

Activities and/or practices employed *(within 50 words)*

Planned activities include:

- Training workshops
- Establishment of in-situ conservation sites for native fish species of ecological and economic significance.
- Establishment of large scale Vetiver grass nurseries for the community in the watershed.
- On-going research on eradication of the predator Nile perch.
- Creation of mechanism for information sharing

Results *(within 50 words)*

The study found that economic benefits flow almost exclusively to foreign companies that reap profits from Nile perch exports, while riparian communities face the brunt of environmental degradation and the resulting loss of livelihoods and biological diversity. It can be inferred therefore that restoration of fish species diversity in Lake Victoria is key to solving the current social and economic dilemma in this SEPLS.

Lessons learned *(factors in success or failure, challenges and opportunities – within 40 words)*

Hardly any interventions to date, with the exception of EPIC, recognized the negative impact of Nile perch on loss of biological diversity and livelihoods. Instead, their activities were designed to support the development of the Nile perch industry. This implies that existing interventions are part of the problem in lieu of being part of the solution.

Key messages *(within 40 words)*

The Nile perch fishery tragedy on Lake Victoria represents a gross crime against humanity and a contemporary environmental problem in an international context that has failed to be elevated to the global agenda, due to corporate-financed, misleading, biased research work and conflicts of interests among major stakeholders. The short term economic gains accruing to riparian states do in no manner justify the environmental costs involved.

Relationship to other IPSI activities *(if the case study is related to any other IPSI collaborative activities, case studies, etc.)*

This case study originally appeared in the Satoyama Initiative Thematic Review v. 3.

Funding *(any relevant information about funding of activities or projects described in the case study)*

The Satoyama Initiative National Network Workshop for Uganda was funded by Satoyama Development Mechanism (SDM).

Contributions to Global Agendas

CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets (https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/)

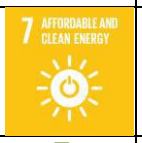
The table below shows based on the self-evaluation by author(s). ● and ■ indicates the "direct" or "indirect" contributions to the CBD's Aichi Biodiversity Targets respectively to which the work described in this case study contributes to.

Strategic Goal A				Strategic Goal B					
■		●			●	■	●	●	
									

Strategic Goal C			Strategic Goal D			Strategic Goal E			
■	●		●					■	
									

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs)

The table below shows based on the self-evaluation by author(s). ● and ■ indicates the "direct" or "indirect" contributions to the SDGs respectively to which the work described in this case study contributes to.

■	●						●	
								
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