



ASSOCIATION OF FISHERS AND LAKE USERS OF UGANDA (AFALU)

Mukono Town, Verona House, First Floor
P.O. Box 32384, Kampala-(U) Tel: +256 414 290710. Mob: +256 392 945457, +256 775 774872.
Email: afalu1@gmail.com

*Check
To send this
to the Committee
of ATN.R.*

*8/11
PS*

*See I and
we deal
KH
CLA*

PETITION TO THE **EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)** **SITTING AT KAMPALA,** **JANUARY 2014.**

KEY ISSUES:

1. INSECURITY ON BORDER WATERS.....3
2. UNCONTROLLED FISHING BY NON EAST AFRICANS.....5
3. MISTREATMENT OF UGANDANS BY OTHER MEMBERS.....5
4. ILLEGAL/DESTRUCTIVE FISHING METHODS.....7
5. SPECIAL THANKS TO EALA.....8

A. FORE WORD.

- i. AFALU (Association of Fishers and Lake Users of Uganda) is an indigenous grass root association of fishers and fishers Associations in Uganda comprising of the fishing community in Uganda established in 2002 to champion the cause of the common fisherman in Uganda. It is built on the core principle of unity and promoting sustainable fishing through discouraging and fighting improper, illegal and destructive means of fishing so as to keep the lake sustainable. It is upon that background that our membership is restricted to fishermen and women who practice lawful, acceptable and sustainable fishing methods and any engagement in illegal fishing disqualifies one from our membership.
It is a corporate body Registered as an NGO(Non Governmental Organization) under the laws of Uganda.
- ii. We are pleased, as the grass root Ugandan men and women utilizing the largest resource that is shared amongst the three founding member countries of the East African community (to which you are the legislative arm) that being the waters of Lake Victoria which is shared by Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.
- iii. We are appreciative of the efforts the three countries have undertaken to ensure that the lake is sustainably utilized. These efforts include(but not limited to) the establishment of Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) with its headquarters here in Uganda through which systems like Beach Management Units were set up and such uniform systems have gone a long way in harmonizing the fishing sector on Lake Victoria and ensuring sustainability of our employment to which we are thankful.

- iv.** However, there are certain issues which we think are pertinent to be deliberated upon by you, as the regional assembly so that the governments sharing the Lake can take appropriate action or even give explanations for the same.
- v.** These issues are mainly; the insecurity on the border waters, uncontrolled fishing by individuals from non member states and unchecked mistreatment of Ugandans by citizens of other member states.
- vi.** We are hopeful that at the end of this petition, you shall be able to understand our plight and be able to deliberate upon the same before the end of this session for the betterment of the Lake Victoria fishing community in the region.
- vii.** The petition is detailed in the foregoing pages.

1. INSECURITY ON BORDER WATERS.

- 1) As an association, we have on several occasions received complaints from our members working on the borders mainly in Uganda Waters near Lemba Island (of Kenya) about the insecurity on the waters.
- 2) Robbery of our fishing equipments and fish is the order of the day and in some cases, murders are committed in the process of these robberies.
- 3) The robberies are common because there is a weakness in controlling fire arms entering into the East African Community resulting into possession of guns and hand held bombs by occupiers of the community especially those from the war-torn Somalia.

- 4) This calls for more scrutiny of such entrants because if member countries do not act quickly and effectively, we are most likely to lose more lives and property to this controllable situation.
- 5) In the year 2013, we received a complaint from one of our members NALUGGYA ANNET of Lemba that four (4) of her workmen were killed in a robbery and the highly probable suspects were Tanzanians but all efforts to bring the culprits to justice have since been in vain.
- 6) It is therefore our humble prayer that the assembly encourages member states to provide more patrols all over the border waters and to set up mechanisms that can apprehend and bring the suspects to justice.
- 7) Several complaints have been made against Tanzanians by our Members at Kasensero and Ggabiho at Uganda-Tanzania border. Theft of fishing equipments, armed robberies are normally committed against Ugandans and Justice is not obtained as expected since tracing the culprits inside Tanzania has left many of our members arrested.
- 8) Although the Tanzanians are free to fish in Ugandan waters, many of our members have been dragged to Tanzanian courts for merely following up their fishing vessels and nets in Tanzania. That has left our members isolated and wondering the relevancy of the community that is aimed at creating brotherhood and co-existence within the region.

2.UNCONTROLLED FISHING BY NON-EAST AFRICANS.

- 1) Member states have loopholes in to safe guarding our waters from non member citizens which leaves us in great losses on investments and insecurity.
- 2) This group is mainly dominated by Somalis who are common at the Kenya-Uganda border stationed at Lemba island most of whom are armed. This makes them unruly, sometimes use the arms to scare off their debtors who supply them goods and services and use improper fishing methods to which enforcement officers are fearful of apprehending them.
- 3) Worse of all, the enforcement officers are taken up by huge bribes offered by these foreigners and thus act contrary to their roles which is to our detriment.
- 4) The financial losses result from the fact that the fish which would have been fished by East Africans is fished by non East Africans and at the end, it discourages investments and promotes unemployment amongst East Africans.
- 5) Our prayer to the assembly is to deliberate on the same and direct member states to ensure that the waters are kept safe from non member citizens and where they are to come in, to come in with proper working permits, un armed so that they can comply with the set regulations and laws concerning fishing on Lake Victoria.

3.MISTREATMENT OF UGANDANS BY OTHER MEMBER STATE CITIZENS & AGENCIES.

- 1) On the Lake Victoria water borders, several of our members are mistreated and harassed by citizens and government agencies of member states which is contrary to the spirit of the East African Community.

- 2) Honorable EALA members, water transport especially using conventional means of boats(canoes) which have no directory campuses combined with the ever changing Lake weather can easily make a fisherman get lost and many find themselves in Tanzania and Kenya waters. Unfortunately, our fellow East Africans normally treat these lost individuals with mistrust and end up harassing them and most of them end up in jail.
- 3) In some situations, boats and nets are blown by heavy lake winds to far areas of the Lake and end up in Tanzania and Kenya but a Ugandan tracing the same is treated with mistrust and end up being arrested. The police in the two countries have always not helped Ugandans even where our members' fishing equipments are found in possession of the Kenyan or Tanzanian citizens. This has occasioned great financial losses to us.
- 4) Well aware that Uganda never issued national Identity cards, authorities from Kenya and Tanzania usually demand the same and many of our members have been detained, prosecuted and convicted which has led to their imprisonment and being fined.
- 5) At Lemba(Kenya-Uganda border), an employee of one of our members MAYANJA JUNIOR was arrested for lack of an identity card and when he was taken to court, he was charged with moving without an Identity Card and fined Kenya Shillings 20,000 or face imprisonment and he is up to now imprisoned because he has no money for the fine.
- 6) The same applies to Tanzania where many of our members from Kasensero and Ggabirow are languishing in Tanzanian prisons mainly for lack of National Identity cards which have never been issued by our government and which other member states are aware.

- 7) That manifests the fact that despite the growth of the community, our members are still considered foreigners in the member states of Tanzania and Kenya and are arrested by the respective police forces over the same.
- 8) That treatment is the opposite of the hospitality we and the Ugandan authorities extend to our fellow East Africans.
- 9) We therefore pray that member states appreciate the absence of Identity cards for Ugandans and therefore not victimize us for the delays in by the Ugandan government.

4.ILLEGAL/DESTRUCTIVE FISHING METHODS.

- 1) AFALU has always stood by sustainable fishing methods and at all times shunned illegal, non sustainable and destructive fishing methods because such are disastrous to our employment of fishing and generally to the economies of the three countries that share Lake Victoria which earn a reasonable sum of foreign exchange from fish exports.
- 2) However, more regional efforts are necessary if the vice that is destroying the lake is to be curbed. Joint operations by all member states especially on border waters shall help much in eliminating destructive fishing.
- 3) Unlike Uganda which is land locked, the two countries of Kenya and Tanzania are not and it becomes easier for illegal fishing gear dealers to import the same through the ports which later find their way on Lake Victoria without necessarily going through the Uganda custom system.
- 4) Destructive Fishing nets like monofilaments which are prohibited everywhere find their way to Lake Victoria through such ways.

- 5) The fact that we use the same lake means that destruction from one side spreads to the whole Lake hence the disaster affects all of us.
- 6) Our prayer is to advise member states to put more emphasis on prevention of importation of illegal fishing gears and carry out joint water operations on border waters to curb the vice.

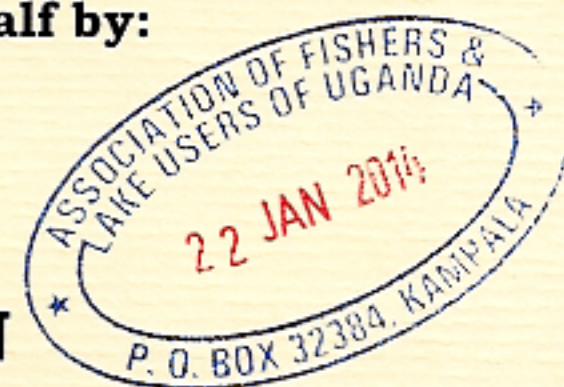
5.SPECIAL THANKS TO EALA

- 1) In conclusion, we are thankful of the efforts the assembly puts in ensuring that the East African Community citizens' livelihoods are improved.
- 2) We are hopeful that our prayers shall be answered positively and in affirmative and our promise is that if they are worked upon, then the community shall be real and more sustainable to all citizens and stakeholders.
- 3) Thanking you.

This petition has been prepared by AFALU National Executive Committee and signed on the committee's behalf by:


MUBIRU JOHN

AFALU NATIONAL CHAIRPERSON



A Copy of this petition has been sent to:

1. Lake Victoria Fisheries Association (LVFO) secretariat.
2. The Department of Fisheries Entebbe, Uganda.
3. Uganda Fish Processors and Exporters Association (UFPEA).
4. Uganda Parliamentary committee on Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries.
5. Uganda Parliament Fisheries Forum.