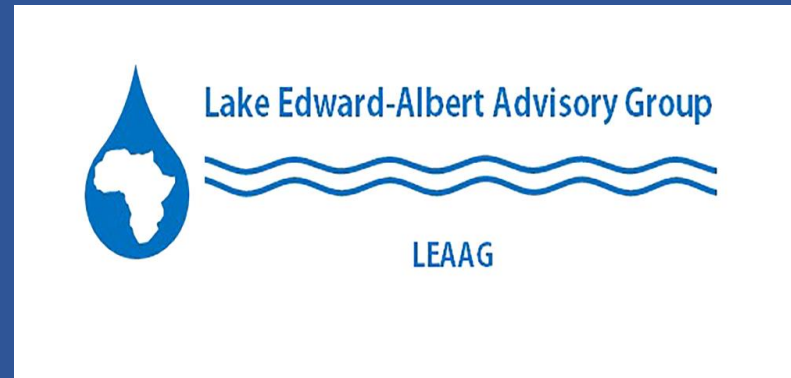


ACARE-Annual Meeting of the African Great Lakes Stakeholders Network



Presenter's Name: MBALASSA Mulongaibalu

Position: Country Leader (DRC)

Advisory Group Name: LEAAG

Day 1 Presentation
Mulungushi International Conference
Center
4-6 February 2025
Lusaka, Zambia



Presentation Outline

- **Biogeography of the Lakes EDWARD & ALBERT**
- **Advisory Group Founding: Goals and Objectives, and membership**
- **2024 Critical Objectives: Priorities, Achievements, lessons learnt and key take-aways**

The Lakes Edward & Albert Basin (LEAB)

⇒ The Lakes Edward-(George) and Albert are located in the AGL Region on the borders between the DRC and Uganda

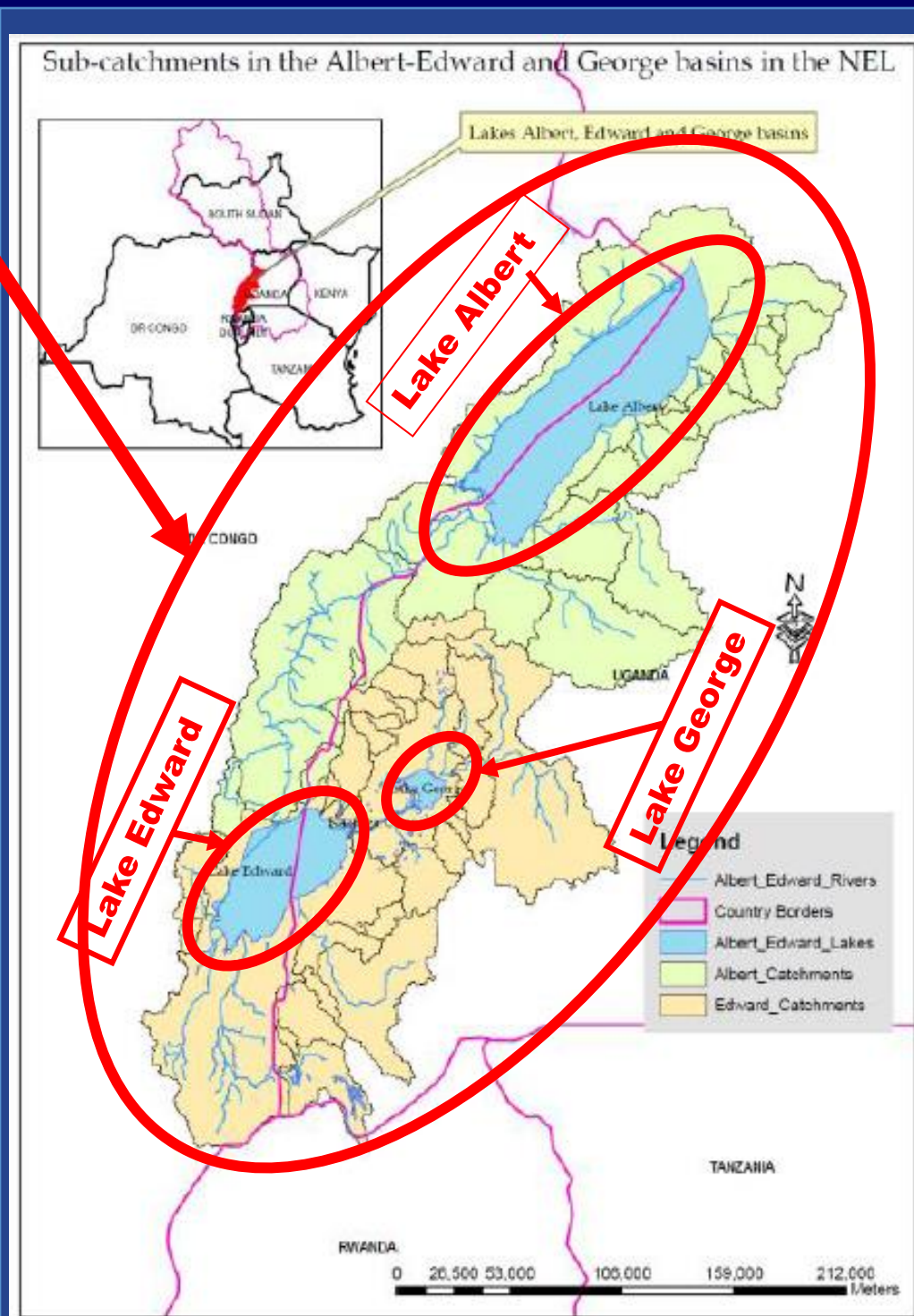
⇒ Support > 6 M people for livelihoods (fisheries, aquacult., water, trade, transport, etc.)

Lake Edward : DRC (71%) & UG (29%).

⇒ ± 81 fish species

Lake Albert : DRC (46%) & UG (54%)

⇒ ± 57 fish species



Biogeography of the Lakes EDWARD & ALBERT

	L. EDWARD	L. ALBERT
Altitude	912	616
Area (Km²)	2325	6800
Volume (m³)	90	140
Max Deph (m)	117	58
Mean Depth (m)	40	25
Temp. Epilimion (°C)	25.2-27.2	27.4-29.0
pH	8.8-9.1	8.9-9.5
TRA (m) SD	1.4-3.0	02-Jun
OD max limit (m)	80-117	58
EC (ohm⁻¹), K20	925	735
Sal (‰, g/l)	0.789	0.597
Fish species	±81	57

Advisory Group Founding and Goal

- - Build on the existing collaboration across boundaries, include players, working on the gaps identified,
- Investigate issues that impact the health of the lakes and the well-being on surrounding communities and
- Suggest solutions.

Advisory Group Founding : Mission and Vision

VISION:

Harmonize research and scientific priorities on the Lakes Edward & Albert

MISSION:

Provide advisory strategies to governments and other institutions on research and sustainable management of Lakes Edward & Albert Resources



Advisory Group membership

Group leader (alternative)
Joyce Ikwaput Nyeko (UG)

DRC country leader
Mbalassa M. (UOB)

UG. country leader
Nakiyende H. (NaFIRRI)

Members

1. Matunguru Joseph (Fisheries and Livestock).
2. Wembo Ndeo Oscar (UoR)
3. Jariiekong'a Uvon Jonas (USB),
4. Musau Ntambwe Eunice (UNIKIS)
5. Kamabale Soheranda Jargy (USB)
6. Cikwanine Kasigwa Dieudonné (UOB)
7. Shalukoma Chantale (ICCN)
8. JC Kambere (ICCN)

Advisors

1. Christian Albrecht
2. Maarten Van Steenberge

Members

1. Atukunda Getrud (NaFIRRI)
2. Okello William (NaFIRRI)
3. Baluku R. (UWRTI)
4. Nankabirwa A. (NaFIRRI)
5. Rugadya Richard
6. Birungi Dorothy
7. Basooma Anthony
8. Bwambale Mbilingi
9. Mary Nantongo
10. Abiriga Daniel
11. Paska

1. Marie-Claire Dusabe

2024 Critical Objectives

- 1. Develop Inventory of the available information for both lakes**
- 2. Comprehensive socioeconomic and value chain analysis of fisheries to identify gaps, challenges and opportunities.**
- 3. Comprehensive stock assessment and water resource monitoring as a basis for sustainable utilization and management (species composition, distribution, size structure)**
- 4. Biodiversity conservation; identifying, creating and protecting FBAs (proposal required)**
- 5. Socio-economics studies to inform livelihood options.**
- 6. Develop a fundable proposal encompassing all fisheries components**
- 7. Increase membership from DRC with Management, policy & decision makers**

2024 Critical Objectives: Key Achievements & Take-aways

- ⇒ Developed Inventory of the available information for both lakes;
- ⇒ Developed a fundable proposal encompassing all fisheries components;
- ⇒ Increased some membership from DRC;
- ⇒ Increased attendances to the monthly virtual (zoom) meetings
- ⇒ Group members participated at various international scientific Conferences and workshops;
- ⇒ Group members participated in different capacity building and training programs.
- ⇒ Joseph Matunguru has completed his PhD

Current AG membership: Country DRC (8 members), Country UG (11members) +1 (Rwanda)

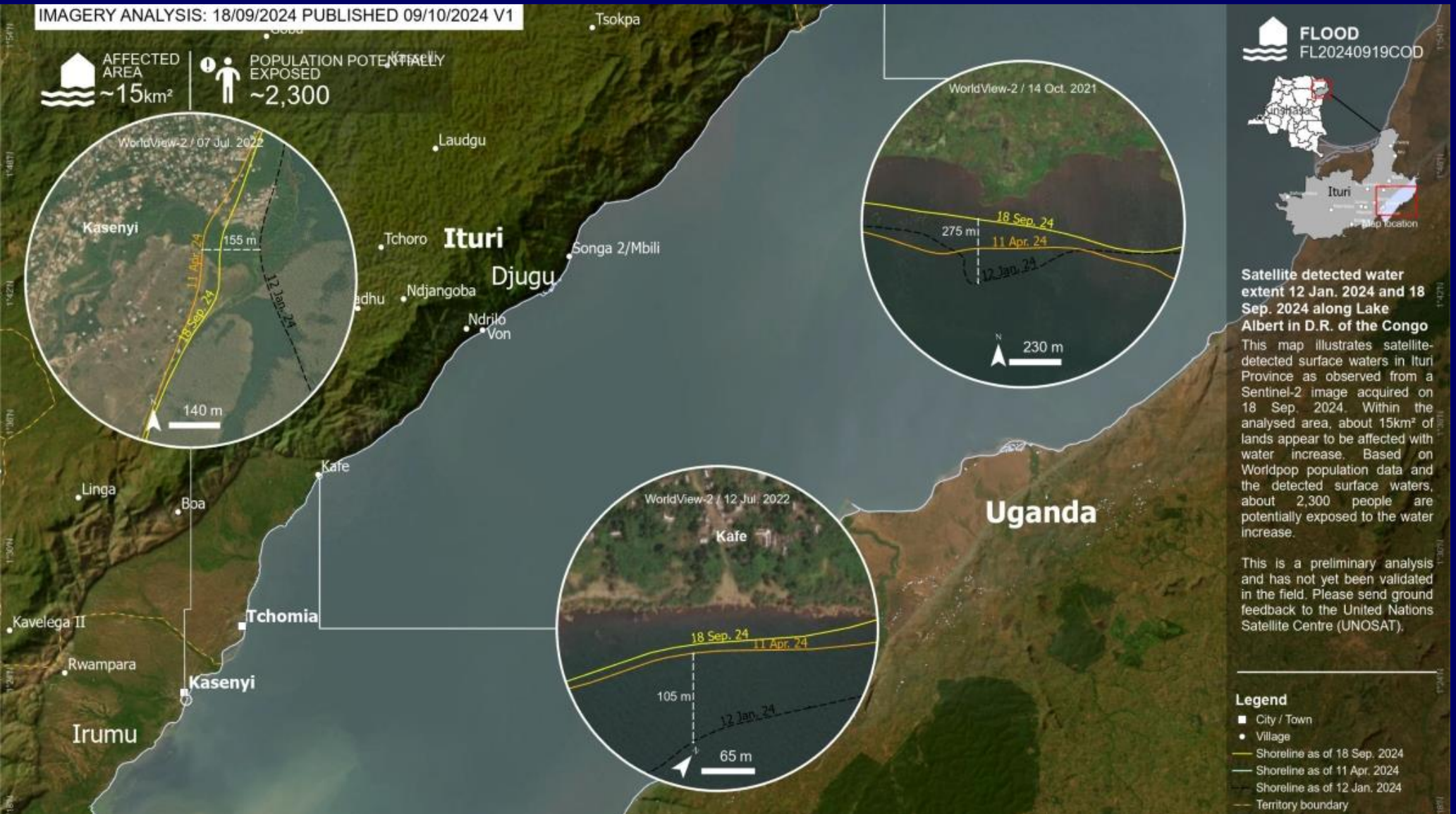
2024 Critical Objectives: Reflections on the Prorities

1. Inventory on the information available for both lakes
2. Food-web and biodiversity of the lakes relatively unknown
3. Gazetting of breeding areas
4. Research should inform when and where to catch specific fishes
5. Socio-economics studies to inform livelihood options – Alternative viable options not well known
6. Mapping the value chain of fisheries
7. Limited data on stock assessment
8. Water resources monitoring is lacking
9. Dissemination of research results

Advisory Group Founding and Goal

- **The challenges facing the basin :**
- **Issues are mainly related to:**
- **Poverty**
- **Weaknesses in policy, laws and institutions**
- **Declining biodiversity and overfishing**
- **Persistence of illegal fishing gears and methods**
- **Degradation of riverbanks and lake shores,**
- **Habitat loss and degradation of critical areas like wetlands and breeding areas**
- **Pollution & water quality deterioration**
- **Invasive weeds**
- **Water level fluctuations and climate change**

Eg. of Water level fluctuations and climate change in DRC side of L. ALBERT



Flooding: From Jan to Sep. 2024: 155m - 275m

- > 30,000 Displaced people
- > 300 dead
- > 12 disappeared fishing villages

Advisory Group Founding and Goal

- **The challenges facing the basin : Cont'd**
- **Mining and oil exploration impacts**
- **Conflicts among fishers and cross-border**
- **Poor post harvest infrastructure and high PHL**
- **Lack of harmonized fishing regulations and laws between the two countries**
- **Lack of coordination of all relevant stakeholders involved in management**
- **Lack of implementation framework of the existing Fisheries laws**
- **Increasing human population and lack of alternative livelihoods has increased illegal fishing activities (Socio-economic vulnerability of fishing communities)**

Priorities to be addressed through the program

- Food-web and biodiversity of the lakes relatively unknown
 - Remote sensing system for African Great Lakes
 - Causes of invasive aquatic weeds on the lakes
 - How aquatic weeds can be converted into useful resources such as biogas
 - How the different sizes of small pelagic fishes can be harvested
 - Gazetting of breeding areas
 - Pollution studies on these lakes versus the increasing population
 - Baseline data to inform management about oil exploration in the Nile Basin lakes
- Socio-economics studies to inform livelihood options

Priorities to be addressed through the program

- Establishment of Hydro-meteorological stations on the Lakes
- Inventory on the information available for both lakes
- Liquid demarcation of national boundaries
- Conduct trans-boundary research for law enforcement
- Dissemination of research results
- Research should inform when and where to catch specific fishes
- Hydrological information
- Environmental and socio-economic aspects of cage aquaculture on the lakes
- Post-harvest losses in relation to the small species (an analysis is needed to come up with sustainable methods of post-harvest handling)
- Mapping the value chain of fisheries

2024 Critical Objectives: Lessons & Areas of Improvement

- 1. Increased knowledge gained about the lake fisheries through joint scientific writing;**
- 2. Increased network of scientific collaboration beyond the lake region**
- 3. Virtual (zoom) meetings are effective communication channels but are always limited by Language barrier**
- 4. Increase diversity of members in terms of professional fields (specialties),**
- 5. Increase funding raising efforts through writing and submitting fundable proposals (Delayed engagement in the fund sourcing and proposal writing)**
- 6. Summer schools for capacity building of members**
- 7. Some members failing to attend meetings because of their personal schedules**



Lake Edward-Albert Advisory Group



LEAAG



Thank you

<https://www.agl-acare.org/advisory-groups>