Partnership Interventions for the Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for Lake Tanganyika

UNDP/GEF Project on Lake Tanganyika
DRC Component – Sustainable Catchment Management Activities in the Uvira Region

Uvira is situated in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Kivu Province. Socio-economic development in the region has been greatly disrupted due to prolonged and tragic ethnic conflicts. High densities of people have concentrated in the Uvira region during conflict periods. In 2008, the region counted 452,360 inhabitants, with an average density of 110 people per km^2.

Poverty is rampant, and many people have sought to maximise short-term benefits of natural resource use as a survival strategy. Hillsides in the region are very steep, and with increasing human population densities they have become heavily deforested with extensive soil erosion, loss of nutrients, and declining agricultural productivity as a result. Major flash floods have carved steep channels through the Uvira catchment area, and sedimentation has had significant negative effects on aquatic biodiversity.

The UNDP/GEF Project on Lake Tanganyika works together with the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) to take a holistic approach to water resource management in the Uvira catchment area, embracing wide stakeholder participation.

www.lta.iwlearn.org

The DRC Component of the UNDP/GEF Project on Lake Tanganyika focuses on strengthening government and local institutions with capacity to improve catchment management, and offering tools to farming communities in the region in order to adopt sustainable and restorative forestry and woodlot practices. The project furthermore promotes the uptake of fuel-efficient stoves and alternative energy sources.

The Project Management Unit (PMU) was established in Uvira in September 2010, and substantial progress has been made since then.

Three sub-catchments were selected and characterised with support from the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF).

Campaigns were conducted to raise local awareness about deforestation and forest management issues in relation to local livelihoods and conservation of biodiversity in Lake Tanganyika. Training was conducted on best agricultural and agroforestry practices and soil management techniques, as well as on bushfire prevention approaches.

So far, 80,000 trees have been planted on selected sites, covering 32 ha of new woodlots. The second planting season was officially opened on 17 September 2011, and met with great enthusiasm from the local community. This season, the project aims to plant 1 million trees and rehabilitate 120 ha of old forest management areas.

To ensure sustainability, the PMU is developing sub-catchment management plans and monitoring systems together with the government institute Centre de Recherche Hydrobiologique.

For more information, see Lake Tanganyika Authority web site:
www.lta.iwlearn.org

The UNDP/GEF intervention is part of a multi-partner programme that is implemented with support from African Development Bank, Nordic Development Fund, ICRAF, IUCN, WWF, FAO, UNEP/NIGLAS, and the Governments of Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Tanzania and Zambia.

We work in close collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, including fishermen, farmers, industry, the private sector, management, research and educational institutions as well as governmental institutions.

Together we take a basin-wide, integrated approach to environmental management, uniting people to build sustainable livelihoods and protect their environment.

UNDP/GEF Project on Lake Tanganyika

Regional Project Coordination Unit
Lake Tanganyika Authority
Secretariat
Route Principale, Kigobe Nord
P.O. Box 4910 Ngagara
Bujumbura, Burundi
Tel: + 257 22 22 27 56 60
E-mail: undpgef@lta-alt.org

Front: The Kalimabenge River runs through a heavily deforested and eroded area and contributes significantly to sedimentation in Lake Tanganyika (photo by Saskia Marijnissen). **Back, clockwise:** Steep hills in the Uvira catchment; River entering Uvira; Lake Tanganyika in the background (photos by Emilie Smith); Uvira tree nurseries for reafforestation programme (photo by Charles Kahindo); Workshop with ICRAF to characterise the catchment (photos by Emilie Smith); Planting trees (photos by Alain Gashaka).