



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES

NATIONAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE POLICY

“Optimising benefits from Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources for Socio-Economic Transformation”

Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries
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JULY 2017

GLOSSARY

Aquaculture: the planned and controlled farming of aquatic organisms including fish, molluscs, crustaceans and aquatic plants for nutrition, income and livelihoods.

Cage culture: is the rearing of fish and other aquatic organisms in closed systems immersed in water for purposes of rearing the organisms in captivity in open water bodies.

Closed seasons: Closed seasons prevent people from fishing at certain times of the year to protect fish species at vulnerable times in their life cycle, such as spawning areas.

Fish Breeding and Nursery areas: These are areas where fish lay (spawn) their eggs and nurse their young ones

Critical habitat: critical habitat is vital to the survival or recovery of fish species. The habitat may be an identified breeding site, nursery area or feeding ground. For species at risk, these habitats are of crucial importance, and must be identified and included in recovery strategies or action plans

Aqua parks: An area producing at least 5,000 tons of fish per year purpose-built for aquaculture research, education and commercial development.

Production systems: referring to a method of aquaculture production on land or lake farming systems at various scales.

Integrated fish farming: System of producing fish in combination with other agricultural/livestock farming operations centred around the fish pond.

Extensive fish farming: Raising fish under conditions of little or incomplete control over the growing process and production conditions where their growth is dependent upon endogenously supplied nutrient inputs.

Fish Breeding Area: are particular places in water where fish spawn and nurture their young ones.

Fisheries: refers to the industry or occupation devoted to the catching, processing or selling of fish, shell fish or other aquatic animals.

Fisheries Management: The integrated process of information gathering, analysis, planning, consultation, decision-making, allocation of resources and formulation and implementation, with enforcement as necessary, of regulations or rules which govern fisheries activities in order to ensure the continued productivity of the resources and the accomplishment of other fisheries objectives.

Fishing Capacity: The maximum fishing input or effort to produce outputs or catch.

Fishing Effort: The total number of fishing boats, fishing gear and equipment, manpower and time required for effective fishing in a given area.

Intensive fish farming: Means raising fish under controlled growing process and production conditions where their growth is completely dependent on externally supplied fish feed.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|---|
| ASSP | Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan |
| AU | African Union |
| BMAU | Budget Monitoring and Accountability Unit |
| CAADP | Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program |
| CBD | Convention on Biological Diversity |
| CCA | Climate Change Adaptation |
| CITES | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora |
| COMESA | Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa |
| EAC | East African Community |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| GAPR | Government Annual Performance Report |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HACCP | Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points |
| IG | Inspectorate of Government |
| LVFO | Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MAAIF | Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries |
| MDAs | Ministries, Departments and Agencies |
| MIS | Management Information System |
| MoFPED | Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development |
| MT | Metric Tons |
| NAADS | National Agricultural Advisory Services |
| NAES | National Agricultural Extension Services |
| NaFIRRI | National Fisheries Resources Research Institute |
| NAGRIC | National Agriculture Genetic Research Centre |
| NAP | National Agriculture Policy |
| NARO | National Agricultural Research Organization |
| NDP | National Development Plan |
| NDR | National Development Report |
| NEMA | National Environment Management Authority |
| NEPAD | New Partnership for African Development |
| NFP | National Fisheries Policy (2004) |

| | |
|--------|---|
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NPA | National Planning Authority |
| OAG | Office of the Auditor General |
| OBT | Output Budgeting Tool |
| PBB | Programme Based Budgeting |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SPS | Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards |
| TPM | Top Policy Management (of the Ministry) |
| UNBS | Uganda National Bureau of Standards |
| UFMCSU | Uganda Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Unit. |

FOREWORD

Uganda is endowed with rich natural fresh water resources. Almost 20% of her surface area is covered by fresh waters with various species, suitable climate and high potential for increased fisheries and aquaculture production. There are five major lakes and over 160 minor lakes; rivers; wetlands, water reservoirs, valley dams and ponds whose potential if well harnessed can generate over 1,000,000 metric tons (MT) of fish per annum (ASSP 2015-2020). However, the current production is only 460,000 MT of capture fisheries and 100,000 MT from aquaculture. This under-performance in the capture fisheries is attributed to limited regulation and enforcement of laws and guidelines which has led to use of illegal destructive gears that catch immature fish. In addition, aquaculture is constrained by limited investment in fish farming; high cost; limited access to high quality fish seed and feed; and inadequate extension services. Both capture and aquaculture production systems face challenges of high post-harvest losses; inadequate human, technological and infrastructural capacity at all stages of the value-chain leading to low production and productivity overall. This policy will go a long way in addressing these challenges.

Government has been working with all stakeholders to address these challenges through the implementation of the National Fisheries Policy (2004). Thirteen (13) years have passed since this policy came into effect and various changes have occurred. This policy is therefore an update of the 2004 policy but now includes a stronger emphasis on aquaculture which is critical in bridging the gap in fish production in light of declining stocks from the wild. This policy will significantly support the creation of decent employment; and lift up household and national incomes; food and nutritional security. The Vision of this policy is “**A modern, productive, profitable and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector**” .

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of various stakeholders who supported the Ministry in this process at both national and local level including: Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project (LVEMPII); Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); and World Fish Centre who facilitated the elaboration of this policy, its regulatory impact assessment and costed implementation strategy and plan. Their concerted effort will be required to implement this policy in order to make our vast fish potential contribute optimally to improved household food and nutrition security, and incomes as well as exports for our growth, economic development and structural transformation.

.....
HON. VINCENT BAMULANGAKI SSEMPIJJA (MP)

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRY AND FISHERIES

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Global, Continental, Regional and National Context

The world's population is expected to reach 9.2 billion people by 2050. To feed this population, food production will need to double with effort made mainly in developing countries. As the world's demand for white instead of red meat continues to rise, fish is one of key products highest on demand globally. In 2013, alone, fish accounted for 17% of global intake of animal protein and 6.7% of all protein consumed making fish the largest traded food commodity worldwide. The world per-capita fish consumption reached a record high of 20kg per capita in 2014¹. This compares very lowly to Uganda's 8-10kg per capita consumption per annum. The Sub-Saharan Africa fish per-capita consumption was 17.2kg in 2010 but has declined gradually and will average 5.6kg per capita per annum between 2010-2030 meaning that the demand for fish over the next decade will rise drastically.

According to the World Fish Centre², there is growing recognition that fisheries policies have been driven primarily by environmental and economic research agenda of developed countries and their conservational research organizations. As a result, there has been less emphasis on using policy to regulate the production side, maintain sustainable supplies and strengthen the role of fisheries in food supply system as a panacea for food security and economic development. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 13, 14 and 15) that succeeded the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September 2015, highlight the critical importance of fisheries and marine life in changing production and consumption patterns, reducing poverty and hunger, creating employment and improving livelihoods in general.

Globally, the stock of fish has drastically declined due to overfishing and Governments are required through international commitments to address this challenge. In this regard, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was adopted by consensus at the 28th Session of the FAO Conference in October 1995. The Code has a strong persuasive effect on administrators, policy makers and lawmakers of states who are member of FAO. In addition, Uganda upholds the FAOs voluntary guidelines which provide a global consensus on principles and guidance for small scale fisheries governance and development under a co-management arrangement.

¹FAO SOFIA 2016 Report

²World Fish Policy Brief 2013

Uganda is a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) of 1992; the Convention on wetlands signed in Ramsar, Iran in 1971 – which is an intergovernmental treaty, that provides the framework for the national action and international co-operation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was entered into by states to regulate the international wildlife trade worth billions of dollars annually. Unregulated trade had caused massive declines in the numbers of many species and ecological biodiversity. The treaty gives support to this policy as it contains a number of clauses relevant to conservation and trade in endangered fishes.

At the continental level, the African Union established a Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture to facilitate a coherent policy development environment for sustainable management and development of fisheries and aquaculture in the AU Member States including Uganda. The AU policy framework is from a realization that while potential is vast for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa, the real challenge is to create an enabling environment that provides fishers and fish farmers with incentives and confidence to invest in fisheries resources. At the same time, there is caution to focus on elimination of wasteful destructive over-capacity and move towards a progressive recovery of fish stocks and to improve safety of quality of fish on the market³. Uganda is signatory to the Malabo Declaration of Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) compact that calls for a Commitment to enhancing resilience in livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other shocks. This is in addition to the NEPAD–Partnership for Africa Fisheries (PAF) which calls upon member states to leverage key partnerships through research and foreign direct investment to introduce new technologies and innovations that have worked elsewhere, to elevate the levels of sustainable production and quality of fish and aquaculture products.

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) is an intergovernmental partnership of 10 Nile Basin countries of Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, The Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, with Eritrea participating as an observer. The NBI's shared vision is “ *To achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources*”. Uganda fishing and aquaculture relies on Lake Victoria, Kyoga and Albert, which are all part of the Nile. It is important that further pollution of these waters does not take place hence the importance of co-operation through NBI. NELSAP is one of the regional investment programs of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). The NELSAP mandate is to facilitate Basin States in preparation, structuring, transaction advisory support, finance mobilization and

³AU Paper on Wealth Generation Opportunities of African Fisheries

negotiation, and implementation of cooperative/consultative investment projects. NELSAP is covering issues on lake Albert and Edward and is harmonizing policies and legal frameworks on the 2 lakes.

At the regional level, the East African Community (EAC) Treaty requires Governments to recognize and promote aquaculture as a distinct enterprise in order to optimize its economic contribution. The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) calls upon all the EAC countries to support the regulation, management and development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector and invest in interventions that ensure sustainable production that enhance food security, increase incomes and contribute meaningfully to poverty reduction. The objectives of the convention for the establishment of the LVFO were to foster cooperation among the parties; harmonize national measures for the sustainable utilization of the living resources of Lake Victoria; and, develop and adopt conservation and management measures.

This policy is an actualization of the requirement to align to the East Africa Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy (2016).

Uganda has potential to provide 1,000,000 MT of fish from the current 460,000 MT. The target in the National Development Plan 2014/15-2019/2020 is 300,000MT for aquaculture alone. If Uganda exported just half of the projected annual potential (i.e. 500,000 MT at a price of \$4.1 per kilo), it would add \$2.1 billion per annum to Gross Domestic Product. This would be higher than all non-oil Ugandan exports combined.

1.2 Legal Institutional and Policy Framework on Fisheries and Aquaculture

The 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (as Amended) Section XIII notes that the State shall protect important natural resources, including land, water, wetlands, oil, fauna and flora on behalf of the people of Uganda. In addition, the Constitution under Objective XXII the State is mandated to ensure food security and proper nutrition in order to build a healthy state. This policy is therefore a fulfilment of this constitutional mandate. The Vision 2040 launched in 2010, envisages a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country. The goal is to change the country from a predominantly low income to a competitive upper middle-income country within the next 25 years. According to this Vision (paragraph 99), Uganda is one of the leading producers of fish, however, the sector is grappled with wide-reaching challenges related to weaknesses in the legal, institutional and policy framework which has been a disincentive to investments in the sector.

The Vision 2040 is being implemented under six (6) National Development Plans (NDPs) and the second National Development Plan (NDP II) 2015/16-2019/20 is currently being implemented under the theme: “strengthening Uganda’ s competitiveness for sustainable wealth creation, employment and inclusive growth”. Under the NDP II, five priority areas have been identified as the core drivers of Uganda’ s development with the highest multiplication effect on the economy – the first of which is agriculture (that includes animal industry, crop and fisheries). This is in recognition that agriculture plays a cardinal role in employment creation, poverty reduction and production of raw materials – which is a key contribution to industrialisation and economic transformation. In 2013, the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries developed an overall National Agricultural Policy (NAP) framework whose vision is “ a competitive, profitable and sustainable agricultural sector” that will be realised by transforming the sector from subsistence to commercial agriculture. This framework is being implemented through a series of supportive sub-sector policies – one of which is this Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy. This policy will directly contribute to these NAP strategies, as well as outcomes envisaged in Vision 2040 and NDP II. The NAP and the NDP II as well as the NEDP prioritised 12 flagship commodities including fish.

As a regulated industry, the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector requires relevant laws and regulations to ensure compliance, strategic development and fairness among all stakeholders and protection of fishers and fish farmers. Government will, therefore, review, develop and enforce appropriate laws, regulations and relevant protocols. The elaboration of this policy which is a holistic update of the 2004 policy, comes at a time of heightened public awareness of the need for a sustainable use of fisheries resources and the potential for aquaculture development.

The National Fisheries Policy of 2004 has guided management and development of the fisheries resources in Uganda. It has contributed to realization of positive changes in the sub-sector; most especially, in the diversification of commercial species and their utilization; growth of investment in commercial aquaculture including introduction of intensive non-pond culture systems such as cages; growth in regional markets for fish and exploration of the Asian markets among other changes. Government through this policy shall continue to strengthen the policy and regulatory frameworks so that institutions charged with implementation promote and implement interventions that will drive the sector forward.

THIS POLICY COMES AT A TIME OF RENEWED GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO INCREASE SCRUTINY OF INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO MITIGATE SUCH IMPACTS. TO THIS END, THE NATIONAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE POLICY WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE BILL (2017) WITH GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS TO ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

2.1 Uganda Fish Stock and Resources

Almost 20% of Uganda's surface area of 241,550 sq.km equivalent is covered by open fresh water resources comprising of major and minor lakes, rivers, wetlands and water reservoirs among others which raise its potential for fisheries and aquaculture development. The Fisheries sub sector overall contributes to the livelihood of nearly 5.3 million people. Fish forms an important part of the diets of people, being a major source of critically required animal protein diet for about 17 million Ugandans. It is estimated that about 72% of fish produced in Uganda is consumed locally leaving about 28% of the produced fish for export. The contribution of fish to total animal protein intake is estimated at 50% (Fisheries Annual Report 2010)⁴. However, the per capital fish consumption is still low at 10kgs per annum (MAAIF, 2010) compared to the 17 kg recommended by the World Health Organization

2.1.1 Capture Fisheries

The overall production from capture sources is still dominated by Nile Perch Nile Tilapia and, small pelagics (Mukene Ragogi Muziri) as the main commercial species. The total production from capture fisheries have averaged 410,000 MT between 2005 and 2015 against an expected potential of over 700,000MT. With the current decline in fish stocks, critical fish species are getting endangered and may become extinct if proper management measures to ensure conservation are not affected. Already some species such as *Labeo victorinus* (Ningu) and *Citharinus citharus* (Mpoi) are endangered requiring deliberate effort to preserve them.

2.1.2 Aquaculture

Aquaculture has been practiced in Uganda since the 1940s, and has registered steady growth. Production is estimated to have increased from about 5,000 MT in 2004 to over 100,000 MT in 2014. The target is to raise production from aquaculture to 300,000 MT by 2020 and is capable of 1,000,000 MT. The present production from aquaculture includes mainly production from small-scale fish farmers, emerging commercial fish farmers and stocked community water reservoirs and minor lakes. The prevailing business opportunities have created a recent expansion in aquaculture, which has transformed about 30% of the ponds into profitable small-scale production units.

There is an estimated number of 20,000 ponds throughout the country with an average surface area of 720m² up from 500m² per pond in 2014. Production ranges between 1,500 kg per hectare per year for subsistence farmers to 15,000 kg per hectare per year for emerging commercial fish

⁴See source

farmers. Aquaculture production has grown from 5,000 MT in 2004 to over 100,000 MT by the end of 2014 (and increase of 1,700%) and currently is estimated to be 120,000 MT per annum (MAAIF, DiFR 2016-17). Over the last five years there has been a prominence in other production methods mainly cage farming and a growing interest in commercial aquaculture which requires a lot of initial high investment cost. For instance, in 2006 when cage farming began, there were less than 50 cages. This has since risen to over 3,000 cages currently on Lake Victoria and other water bodies. A 6x6x6 cage (216 m³) with proper feeds yields between 7-8 tonnes per cycle. Investing in similar 42,000 cages would generate the targeted 300,000 MT in a year. The aquaculture sector has attracted a significant number of local and foreign investors who can be supported to ensure mass production. However, the current challenges facing aquaculture mainly include: limited access to quality fish seed, feed and aquaculture extension services as well as start-up capital among others.

2.1.3 Aqua parks development

Currently aquaculture production is non-market oriented and small holder dominated that has led to low production and productivity. The current level of production does not meet both local and external demand despite the existing potential. Hence the need to have an intervention of aqua-parks which include production, handling, value addition and marketing supported by PPP arrangements to increase production. This will attract investment and transform current farmers from subsistence to profit oriented commercial producers through cost effective methods, technologies, and business management skills. Already feasibility studies have identified one water-based aqua park site in Mwena in Kalangala and the land-based site in Apac. The policy will ensure environmental concerns are mitigated and aqua parks are sustainably developed and managed.

2.2 Fish Production and Productivity

Uganda is endowed with fisheries resources. However, the overall production from capture sources is still dominated by Nile Perch, Nile Tilapia and small pelagics (Mukene, Ragogi and Muziri) with annual production averaging 410,000 MT per annum. There has been steady growth in aquaculture sector where production is estimated to have increased from about 5000 MT in 2004 to over 100,000 MT in 2014. The target is to raise production from aquaculture to 300,000 MT by 2020. Ninety percent (90%) of aquaculture is contributed by Nile Tilapia and Catfish. About 1,200,000 million people are engaged in capture fisheries, and an estimated number of 53,000 are in aquaculture. About 5,000 people are employed in fish industrial processing. The Fisheries sub sector overall contributes to the livelihood of nearly 5.3 million people

2.3 Post-Harvest Management, Value addition and Quality Assurance

Fish is a highly perishable product and requires sustainable cooling systems at all harvest sites to preserve its quality. The current trends indicate that post-harvest losses range between 15-20% mainly due weather dependent and poor handling technologies. The challenge has been the high cost of cooling facilities as well as the price of ice itself (now on the rise) in most fish farming hotspots. This is mainly due to the limited scale of private investment in this sector (partly due to a low demand and high electricity tariffs). As a remedy, fish farmers hire trucks with ice blocks that preserve the fish from farm to market and for intermittent storage and transportation periods.

2.4 Fisheries and Economic Sector

2.4.1 Employment

About 1,200,000 million people are engaged in capture fisheries. In addition, there are 5,000 people are employed in fish industrial processing. Over 1.2 million people are directly dependent on the fisheries sector as their main source of household income.

2.4.2 Food and Nutrition

Fish forms an important part of the diets of people, being a major source of critically required animal protein diet for millions of Ugandans. The contribution of fish to total animal protein intake is estimated at 40-50%. The main consumed species are Nile Tilapia (52%) followed by Nile perch (15%), Mukene (8%) and others (25%). However, the per capital fish consumption is still low at 10 kgs per annum compared to the 17 kg recommended by the World Health Organization. It is estimated that about 72% of fish produced in Uganda is consumed locally leaving about 28% of the produced fish for export.

2.4.3 Domestic and Export Revenues

Overall, the fisheries sub-sector is estimated to contribute 12% to the agricultural GDP and 2.5 % to the National GDP. Overall, there has been a steady increase in fish exports since 1991 when the value of fish export was \$5.3m until 2005 when this rose to \$143.6m. Being one of Uganda' s export base between 1991 and 2005, its export value has since declined by 13% i.e. from \$143.6m in 2005 to only \$124.3m in 2015. The exported volume declined from 36,615 MT in 2005 to just 18,555 MT in 2015 (a 49.3% decline). There has been a steady decrease in exports to international markets attributed to reduction in stocks of Nile perch in the lakes (especially low material available for fish factories declined by 50%), increasing market standards requirements and growth of demand in local and regional markets. Capture fisheries declined from 461,000 MT (worth US\$ 712m) in 2014 to 396,000 MT (worth US\$ 593m) in 2015 and further to 391,600 MT (worth US\$570m) in 2016.

It is important to note that the reason for the increase in the export value was as a result of enhanced access to the European Market that was guaranteed when Uganda was declared as a harmonized country in 2001. Uganda had traded as bilateral trade partner with EU countries and after meeting EU quality assurance requirements, Uganda accessed the entire EU market. The unit price has risen steadily from (\$3.9 per kilo) in 2005 to (\$6.05 per kilo) in 2015. In addition, the export of maws has been recorded since 2011 and a similar rise in value has been observed by the fish maws.

2.4.4 Trade and Marketing

There is growing regional market for fish which does not require stringent food safety and quality standards as the case for fish exports to EU and other markets in developed countries; that can be exploited to promote trade in the region and increase the volume of exports and foreign exchange earnings. Ever expanding markets for fish and fishery products at national, regional and international level provides impetus for investment in fisheries and aquaculture. Overall, commercial lending rates due to the presumed high risk in agricultural financing are high. For instance, aquaculture is an emerging enterprise, and most commercial banks are still wary of lending to fish farmers due to the risks involved. This limited access to finances has left costly options for farmers to access capital inputs (such as icemakers, cold chains and packaging) and other investments needed to commercialize fish farming. This has become a disincentive for beginners. This situation has been compounded by high taxes some local governments have imposed on fish farmers especially those engaged in cage farming.

2.5 Fisheries Management and Governance

Before decentralisation, fisheries in Uganda was run on the classic centralised model, with teams of out-posted regional and local officers policing the use of the resource and offering advice and support to fishing communities. The Centre decided policy and drafted laws to support implementation. Decentralisation has tended to weaken the positive side of the former solely command and control system as the price for addressing the negative aspects. Fisheries governance over the years has seen changes from command and control to co-management.

The establishment of co-management under the 2004 fisheries policy saw the establishment of Beach Management Units to co-manage the fisheries resources with government in partnership with other stakeholders. Local Governments and the resource users are now more directly responsible for the resources in their administrative areas and consultation is becoming the norm. However, along the way, there arose parallel fisheries enforcement agencies which led to breakdown in law and order in the fisheries sector. In addition, implementation of national laws may be subservient to local interests in the absence of an objective observer with clear roles and mandates.

As a result of this, Government established **an agricultural police unit** to help in enforcement of fisheries regulations. Following the Presidential Directive of November 2015, the activities of law enforcement by the Agriculture Police, BMUs, and the technical Fisheries Officers were suspended. As an interim measure, fish landing site committees were put in place but were not able to execute their mandate due to lack of police support. Eventually, Government put in place a Fisheries Protection Force consisting of Army Officers to carry out fisheries enforcement until a concrete solution is arrived at. Alongside the Government, the private sector has also set up a self-monitoring model to promote sustainable fisheries utilization.

2.6 Legal and Regulatory Policy Framework

The MAAIF Development Strategy and Investment Plan (DSIP 2011/2015 which has now been succeeded by the Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan ASSP) enabled the restructuring of the institutional framework for fisheries management and development where the former Department of Fisheries Resources was elevated to the Directorate of Fisheries Resources (DiFR). The DiFR now operates through the three departments for: Fisheries Management and Development, Fisheries Regulations and Control and Aquaculture Management and Development. The mandate of the Directorate through the departments is to " Support, Promote, Guide and Regulate the fisheries sub-sector, so as to improve quality and increase the quantity of fish and fishery products produced for domestic consumption, food security and export" . This mandate is to be achieved through collaboration with other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), private sector, development partners, civil society, training and research institutions, local governments, fishers and farmers'

associations who are involved in guiding and supporting all fisheries and aquaculture development initiatives. The following legal frameworks have guided the regulation of the fisheries and aquaculture subsector:

- The 1995 Constitution (as amended)
- Fish and Crocodile Act (1964) later realigned and renamed to become the Fish Act CAP 197 (2000)
- Statutory Instruments have been developed under Section 35 of the Act and these include the Fish (Fishing) Rules, 2010; the Fish (Amendment Act) 2011 that provides for the utilization of resources; the Fish (Fish Quality Assurance) Rules, 2008; the Fish (Aquaculture) Rules, 2003; The Fish (Beach Management Unit) Rules, 2003 revised in 2016; Fish (Fish Permanent closed areas) Rules 2009.

The 1964 Fish Act is obsolete and cannot adequately cater for the current realities including: the changed fishery structure; aquaculture development; limiting of overcapacity and ensuring community involvement in enforcement. There have been tremendous changes in the technological landscape some of which require regulation. Due to the institutional arrangements, the measures under these regulations have punitive clauses that are not deterrent enough to bear impact. There are in addition, governance challenges within the Beach Management systems that have hindered implementation. The limited capacity of the district local governments has not enabled effective implementation of laws, rules and guidelines. The existing guidelines and SOPs are outdated and require revision and amendment. While the Fish (Amendment) Act, 2011 is in place, its implementation in so far as the creation of the Fisheries Fund to allow for retention and reinvestment of funds from fees and levies to enhance fisheries regulation, management and development has not been implemented because it is in contradiction with the Finance Act.

The challenge in the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector has been the inability to strengthen and enforce regulations in place which has created a system that is currently abused by sale of low protein feeds, poor quality seed and other inputs (some have tampered labels); multiple trade permits for cross-border trade, among other issues. Regulations also need to have punitive clauses for agents that flaunt them. The current stop-gap measures by Government to minimize irregular fishing practices need to be succeeded with more enduring enforcement mechanisms through the established institutional framework at all levels.

2.7 Research and Appropriate Technology

Fisheries research is conducted by the National Fisheries Resources Research Institute (NaFIRRI) under NARO. However, there are limited facilities to effectively meet the research need. There is only one capture fisheries research centre at NaFIRRI in Jinja and one aquaculture research centre

at Kajjansi. This is against the need of four aquaculture and five capture fisheries research centres. Due to limited infrastructure and resources research has concentrated on large water bodies especially Lake Victoria leaving out the 160 small lakes whose potential needs to be exploited. While value addition has been prioritized, however, there is limited infrastructure for product development and value addition within research institutions, community and private sector. It is also important to note, that there has been limited research on socio-economic aspects of the fisheries and the impact on communities.

Additionally, research funding to enable running of fish breeding programmes, fish feed formulation, nutrition and disease management remains low. There is need to support research innovations and intellectual property rights in addition to a deliberate effort to increase the number of researchers. An agricultural extension policy is in place with structures being established. This will form a basis for transfer of appropriate research technology once infrastructural, technological and human resource gaps are addressed.

2.8 Human Resource Capacity and Development

While Uganda is implementing a new policy on agricultural extension under the Directorate of Agricultural Extension Services, extending support to both farmers and farmer support institutions will need staff with core competences and skills to transform farmers from subsistence to commercial. Currently, there are few fisheries and aquaculture scientists and technicians, in the wake of highly demanded expertise to support the sub-sector at all levels. Government recently approved a degree programme in fisheries and aquaculture in universities curricula. This has increased the availability of required professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills. There is also one Fisheries Training Institute offering certificates and diploma in fisheries and aquaculture.

2.9 Financial Resources and Sources

Over the last decade, there has been limited funding that has been allocated to the fisheries sub-sector as a whole. Though the government funding has increased from 2.1 billion in the previous years to 9.2 billion in 2013/2014, this has remained static amidst a requirement of 34 billion. The fisheries subsector gets extra financing from development partners averaged at UGX 1.5 billion annually. This has remained the same over the past five years and its sustainability is limited to project life cycle. The allocations for aquaculture within the Production and Marketing Grant (PMG) towards fish farming are very dismal and grossly inadequate averaging 1.5 million per district per annum. With such lean financial resource base, achieving the fisheries and aquaculture management and development targets becomes difficult.

2.10 Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change

Climate Change as result of extreme climatic variations has created real concerns for environmental sustainability for fishing and especially aquaculture. This has occurred at a time when most of Uganda's fisheries are currently in a poor condition for a variety of reasons including over-exploitation and environmental degradation. For instance, anchoring of suddes to create virtual breeding areas as a result of lowering of the water level. El Nino rains have seen a rise in water contamination at a time when fishing takes place on shore lines (see example from the study of Bilharzia around fishing shores). There is need for a paradigm that is focused on both biological aspects of fisheries and on social and environmental concerns.

2.11 Fish Biosafety and Disease Control

The growth of aquaculture production has resulted in significant movement of live fish within the country and the neighbouring countries. These activities pose a danger of spreading diseases in the country, region, and beyond. Disease outbreaks although common in aquaculture have in the recent been reported in the wild fish population. The recent epizootic ulcerative syndrome (EUS) outbreak caused major losses to wild fish harvests in southern Africa in the Chobe-Zambezi River system an occurrence that poses a threat to Uganda given the extensive hydrological patterns and trade in the region. In Uganda, there are occurrences of fish diseases that include white spot in ponds. As production is intensified there is likelihood for disease outbreaks. The developments are happening at a time when there is scarcity of knowledge and limited capacity on the epidemiology of fish diseases. Biosecurity in Uganda is even more critical because of its borders on Lake Victoria and is near the beginning of the Nile River system; thus, any introduced disease could quickly spread throughout a large portion of North and East Africa. Because of the critical location in the Nile River water shed and the actively developing aquaculture industry, it is imperative that Uganda develops a strong biosecurity system for aquatic animal diseases. In addition, there are increasing threats of water contamination as a result of illegal activities around water bodies and poor agronomic practices.

2.12 Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Information System

There is a partly functional Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Information System (FAMIS). Over all, the source of information for the sub-sector is both fisheries surveys (catch assessment, frame survey and hydro acoustic and trawl surveys as well as aquaculture surveys) and administrative data. However, the fisheries surveys are limited in scope and timeliness while the administrative data is more of estimates and adhoc in submission. In addition, due to the manner of acquisition, the cost of the surveys is high. Information is gathered and summarized using manual

questionnaires and forms which are susceptible to manipulation, loss and difficult to process, store and use. There is need therefore to develop electronic means of data acquisition.

3.0 POLICY PROBLEM STATEMENT

Over the years, there has been observed decline in fish catches and fish diversity in Lake Victoria and other water bodies in Uganda. Various factors have been attributed to the declining fish diversity and catches including: excessive fishing effort; use of destructive fishing gears; fishing in nursery and breeding areas; rapid increase in demand for fish leading to over-capacity all coupled with weak legal and institutional framework, inadequate information to guide management decisions as well as limited investment in aquaculture. Declining fisheries have far reaching socio-economic consequences including loss of income and livelihoods unemployment food and nutritional insecurity, conflict for fish at community national and regional levels and reduced exports.

Although the Government has been implementing the National Fisheries Policy since 2004, some policy areas remain not fully implemented including the proposed institutional arrangements. The Policy did not adequately provide for investments needed to boost aquaculture as complementary source of stock from capture fisheries. The policy was implemented alongside the Fish Act (1964) which had un deterrent penalties. The limitations in its enforcement has seen a spike in irregularities in fisheries until the unsustainable situation compelled H.E the President to intervene to regulate activities on major lakes in November 2015. In addition, there has been weak technological, logistical, financial and human resource capacity of the institutions in charge of fisheries and research to regulate the sector on all water bodies. Low public and private investment in aquaculture (fish farming) has caused low access to quality fish seed, feed, processing and marketing support services.

Higher growth rates are required to meet the planned targets and hence the need for further investments in the sector. Unless these challenges are holistically and decisively addressed, the current status-quo will hinder Uganda from meeting her development goals, the aspirations within the Vision 2040; the EAC and AU objectives as well as targets under the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

3.1 Justification of the Policy

The rationale for this policy is derived from the Uganda Vision 2040 and NDPII; global UN Sustainable Development Goal 2 on End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; as well as Goal 14 under 14.7 which calls for increase to the economic benefits to least developed countries from the sustainable use of fisheries resources, through sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture.

Fisheries has been identified as the easiest production activity to be carried out at a household level, hence a path way to improved nutrition and food security, income generation, and poverty reduction. Aware of the potential in the fisheries and aquaculture, Government put in place the National Fisheries Policy in 2004 to provide an overall policy direction for the sector. However, this policy has not been fully implemented due to a number of institutional, technical, financial and logistical challenges at all levels.

After 13 years, the 2004 policy has been overtaken by events mainly: Comprehensive National Development Policy Framework 2009 that ushered in the Vision 2040 and the National Development Planning dispensation with new targets for the fisheries sector; the National Agricultural Policy (2013) and the ASSP; international commitments that Uganda has made both regional and international as well as the emergence of aquaculture as a critical impetus for bridging the gap left by dwindling stocks in capture fisheries.

This policy is needed to drive the sector enhance its contribution to overall food production in Uganda over the next decade. This policy will be a strong basis for attracting public sector and investor financing into the country to support research, human capacity development, transfer of technical knowledge and practical experience from global best practices.

MAAIF is desirous of utilizing facilities at various fry centres and the laboratory capacity at NaFIRRI/NARO, to support extension services and increase technical expertise at national and district level and increase research collaboration with the private sector. For aquaculture, this policy shall support the private sector to produce high quality fish seed, feed and other products according to the laid out quality standards.

The policy is required to premise the passage of regulation to apprehend players that contravene quality standards while incentivizing processes to show case and promote best practices. As local production is boosted, the quality will be elevated and cost reduced (especially for feeds) through

increased number of feed mills that produce adequate hatchery feed. This will reduce the current level of reliance on imported feeds.

Lean production has limited farmed fish trade mainly to the local market with minimal quantities traded across borders to Kenya, South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo. As fish stocks rise over the duration of the implementation of this policy, MAAIF will work with the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives to expand the market infrastructure and streamline trade procedures to benefit farmed fish trade locally, regionally and internationally. This will require construction of cold chains, fish handling and storage facilities and supporting the general live-fish marketing infrastructure including a marketing information system. A special emphasis will be laid on promoting of fish associations and cooperatives by linking them to domestic and export markets.

As the world grapples with the adverse effects of climate change, this policy will be implemented to support initiatives that ensure wetland conservation and catchment protection, use of renewable energy sources, clean production during processing and resource preservation to avoid product waste. This is also in line with Goal 12 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. To ensure sustainability investments are needed to avoid negative environmental and social consequences while optimizing economic and social benefits, appropriate policies and long term planning are required.

With globalization and regional integration, markets now demand effective regulation and administrative arrangements to ensure quality and safety of fish. This makes this policy imperative in steering the sector forward to ensure that fisheries resources are managed, exploited, developed and utilized in a manner that optimizes the benefits for the posterity of the next generations.

4. VISION, MISSION, GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1 Vision

The National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy Vision statement is:

A modern, productive, profitable and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector

4.2 Mission

The policy mission is:

“To transform the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector to high productivity through improved governance and use of appropriate technologies for sustainable development”

4.3 Goal

The policy Goal is:

“To increase fisheries and aquaculture production to 1.7 million tonnes annually so as to contribute to food security, nutrition and economic growth.

4.4 Guiding Principles

This policy shall be guided by principles derived from the country' s experience and analysis of bottlenecks and opportunities within the existing fisheries and aquaculture sector. These include:

Principle 1: Participatory Approach

The policy will be implemented to serve all categories of stakeholders in the sub-sector. The provision of services will be carried out in a well-coordinated manner that ensures public, private and other non-state actors' involvement in the enhancement of the sector in a way that does not preclude anyone who abides by this policy and related regulations.

Principle 2: Social and Equity

Beneficiary targeting will be based on the principles of equity and fairness. Fisheries and aquaculture development will include the active participation of women, youth, orphans, disabled and any other vulnerable groups. There will be equitable benefits sharing, opportunity for representation and decision-making processes in a non-discriminatory manner. Industries should underpin strong local communities and at the same time provide benefits to the community.

Principle 3: Transparency and Accountability The policy will be implemented in such away that it is easy for others to see what actions are performed with intentional sharing of information. Accountability to the political and administrative systems in addition to client communities will be ensured.

Principle 4: User Pays Principle

Those who benefit from or use natural resources as fishers or fish farmers must contribute to the cost of managing the resource which will be levied as user charges by appointed authorities.

Principle 5: The Precautionary Principle

Fisheries and aquaculture management shall be premised on scientific evidence as it applies to the Ugandan context and the lack thereof should never be premise for failure to act in face of risk of serious or irreversible harm to fish stocks and or habitants.

Principle 6: Sustainable Development

The policy seeks to ensure that the management and development of fisheries and Aquaculture sector takes into account concepts of both inter and intra-generational equity. The policy will ensure sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources while maintaining fish availability for both present and future generations, and without degrading the environment.

Principle 7: Human Rights and Inclusiveness

The policy recognises access to food, legal access to resources and equitable allocation of fishing rights as fundamental rights contributing to improved human well-being.

Principle 8: Collaboration and Partnership

The private sector shall be seen as complementary to the public sector in terms of developing the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector.

5. POLICY AREAS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

In order to inspire the transformation of the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector and to make it responsive to the challenges at all levels of the value chain, the following shall be the core policy focus areas, objectives and strategies.

5.1 Fisheries and Aquaculture Management and Governance

- **Policy Statement:** *Government shall review the governance of the fisheries and aquaculture subsector with a view of strengthening the capacity for the management of fisheries resources in a more professional manner, based on science and research. This could be achieved by strengthening the Fisheries Directorate and creation of a Fisheries Technical Committee composed of technical people with co-opted others to advise the Minister on Policy and Performance of the Sector.*

5.1.1 Policy Objective

To strengthen coordination organization, management and development of the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector

5.1.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Strengthen legal and institutional Framework for Fisheries and Aquaculture policy implementation
- ii. Strengthen and facilitate co-management Institutions both at regional, national, sub-national and community levels with clear roles and responsibilities;
- iii. Recentralise the management of fisheries with district local government fisheries staff transferable and answerable to the centre;
- iv. Establish lake-based management plans with lake-based regional offices
- v. Strengthen and promote best stewardship practices over the fisheries and aquaculture resources and assets and account for their effective use and management at all levels;
- vi. Promote use of high technology systems for monitoring fishing activities on water bodies;
- vii. Strengthen regional and international linkages for efficient management of fisheries and aquaculture resources especially of transboundary waters; and
- viii. Promote inter-sectoral partnerships and collaborations with supportive agencies and institutions for proper coordination of fisheries and aquaculture resources
- ix. Provide for the formation of Uganda Association of Fisheries Professionals to partake to an extent possible in the provision of expertise and advocacy in the fisheries sector in Uganda.

5.2 Research and Appropriate Technology Transfer

Policy Statement: *Government shall promote social, economic, environmental, and technical research into specific issues pertinent to fisheries, including the development of appropriate technologies in response to fisheries and aquaculture development and management needs*

5.2.1 Policy objective

To manage and develop fisheries and aquaculture resources management guided by the best scientific evidence

5.2.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Support applied research agenda from time to time in fisheries and aquaculture outlining themes for consideration;
- ii. Harmonize procedures for commissioning of applied research by fisheries and aquaculture management institutions at all levels of governance to enable them effectively discharge their functions;
- iii. Enhance the capacity of National Fisheries Resources Research Institute NaFIRRI to undertake its mandate in fisheries and aquaculture research;
- iv. Undertake research in new species of commercial interest in aquaculture;
- v. Ensure effective dissemination of research findings to guide management and stakeholders; and
- vi. Support the private sector and other grassroots stakeholders and communities to standardize local and indigenous technologies.

5.3 Human Resource and Capacity Development

Policy Statement: *Government shall support education training to build a sustainable critical mass to drive the technical advisory and management of fisheries and aquaculture, through development of curricula tailored to local needs; supporting agricultural extension through awareness campaigns and establishing regional level information resource units.*

5.3.1 Policy Objective

To sustainably increase human resource, knowledge, skills and expertise among staff and other actors throughout the entire fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector.

5.3.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Strengthen the human resource capacity for fisheries and aquaculture sub-sectors at all levels including absorption of graduates from Fisheries Training Institutions as frontline extension staff;
- ii. Establish the necessary infrastructure to facilitate the operations and management of fisheries and aquaculture;
- iii. Strengthen the Fisheries Training institute at Entebbe to handle training of stakeholders along the fisheries and aquaculture value chain;
- iv. Retooling of existing field extension staff to match with the changing sector;
- v. Guide and encourage training of fit-for-purpose human resource in fisheries and aquaculture;
- vi. Encourage collaboration among institutions involved in fisheries training

5.4 Production and Productivity

Policy Statement: *Government shall ensure adequate fish stocks through, conservation of critical habitats, effective regulation and fishing capacity management, stock enhancement and control of aquatic weeds. Equally, steps shall be deliberately taken to promote commercial aquaculture through ensuring proper site selection, availability of quality fish seed and feed, management of aquatic diseases and promote public infrastructure for water for fish production.*

5.4.1 Policy Objective

To promote and sustain availability of adequate fish for domestic, regional and international markets

5.4.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Enhance the fish stocks in Ugandan water bodies through restocking and protect critical fish habitats such as breeding and nursery grounds;
- ii. Regulate fishing capacity on all water bodies by setting up allowable fishing effort, institute closed fishing areas and seasons on all major water bodies;
- iii. Support local governments to enact and enforce ordinances and bye-laws regarding fishing practices and aquaculture production;
- iv. Make functional and manage all government regional fish fry centres to support aquaculture across the country;
- v. Develop effective production of quality fish seed and feed through Public Private Partnerships and co-operations;
- vi. Identify and demarcate suitable ecological areas for ponds and cage development, and regulate aquaculture development in the country;

- vii. Advance the involvement of women, youth and less advantaged members of society in fisheries resources management; and Establish public private partnerships with private sector to enhance service provision for fisheries and aquaculture sector.

5.5 Post-Harvest Management, Value addition and Quality Assurance

Policy Statement: *Government shall guarantee quality, wholesomeness and safety of fish and fish products for human consumption and market access. Additionally, government shall ensure quality seed and safety of fish feeds for sustainable development of aquaculture.*

5.5.1 Policy Objective

To promote value addition, quality and safety of fish and fishery products on the market as well as improving the value chain system.

5.5.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Support better fish handling, preservation, processing, value addition and other fisheries and aquaculture infrastructure under a PPP arrangement;
- ii. Maintain the different products placed on the markets meeting appropriate standards;
- iii. Strengthen existing institutional systems for the inspection and quality control of fish and fisheries products, fish feeds and fish seed and aquaculture inputs;
- iv. Establish and maintain effective information systems to monitor post-harvest losses taking account relevant social and economic aspects;
- v. Harmonize enforcement regimes that include quality and safety systems based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) and certification measures to meet international standards;
- vi. Take measures to avoid the contamination of fish seed, fish feed, fish and fishery products both before and after harvest; and
- vii. Support establishment and accreditation of Uganda fisheries laboratory.

5.6 Trade and Marketing

Policy Statement: *Government shall register and promote all actors along the fisheries and aquaculture value chain and link them to regional and international markets.*

5.6.1 Policy Objective

To increase the value and volume of fish traded internally regionally and internationally.

5.6.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Promote diversification in fish products for domestic and international markets;
- ii. Regulate import and export of fish and fisheries product;
- iii. Regulate import and trade in fishing gear and equipment
- iv. Strengthen infrastructure for domestic, regional and international trade; and
- v. Collaborations with other MDAs especially Trade and UNBS to regulate fish quality and safety issues for both human and animal consumption.

5.7 Environmental sustainability and climate change

Policy Statement: *Government shall secure the long-term future of the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector that contributes to a sustainable development.*

5.7.1 Policy Objective

To support fisheries and aquaculture management practices and technologies that are environmentally friendly and climate resilient.

5.7.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Promote and enforce environmentally friendly fishing and aquaculture practices both on water and on land for sustainability and posterity of the sector in collaboration with the Ministry responsible for water and environment;
- ii. Liaise with other relevant agencies in regulating sand mining, other mineral exploration and pollution inducing activities in water bodies, wetlands and catchment;
- iii. Promote the management of invasive aquatic weeds and other invasive species;
- iv. Implement community level activities on climate change adaptation (CCA) and periodically review their impact on the health of the ecosystems that support fisheries and aquaculture; and
- v. Build Capacity for environmental management and climate change adaptation within the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector in collaboration with other MDAs.

5.8 Fish Biosafety and Disease Control

Policy Statement *Government shall establish and implement fish health and biosecurity protocols as a security measure to protect biological diversity of fisheries and the life support system. This will involve verification, building the requisite infrastructure and capacity to detect and deter water contamination, and other illegal practices.*

5.8.1 Policy Objective

To prevent and control the introduction of pathogens, disease-causing organisms and contaminants as well as invasive species within the fisheries and aquaculture sector

5.8.2 Policy Strategy

- i. Support Fish Biosafety initiatives and Disease Control Mechanisms
- ii. Build capacity of stakeholders

5.9 Commercialization of Aquaculture through Aqua parks

Policy Statement: *Government shall invest in the development of aqua parks under a PPP arrangement to increase a competitive, market oriented and profitable, environmentally responsible aquaculture industry.*

5.9.1 Policy Objective

To create a conducive investment environment through aqua parks to increase fish production and productivity.

5.9.2 Policy Strategy

- i. promote commercialization of aquaculture through aqua parks development

5.10 Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Information System (FAMIS)

Policy Statement: *Government shall improve management information systems to ensure effective and efficient collection, compilation, analysis, storage and dissemination of information for planning, management, monitoring and evaluation purposes.*

5.10.1 Policy Objective

To promote availability of effective monitoring systems, adequate and relevant information for planning and decision-making

5.10.2 Policy Strategy

- i. Establish a robust functional FAMIS to guide management and development;
- ii. Map out all stakeholders involved in fisheries and aquaculture value chains;
- iii. Establish a mechanism for dissemination of fisheries and aquaculture information.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

6.1 Gender and Development

Government will ensure that women, men, youth, children, the elderly and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are full beneficiaries of this policy and that they are not marginalized in its implementation. Government will address this through equity in employment, access, tenure, and participation in all interventions as well as equal benefits sharing that accrue to fisheries and aquaculture. Government shall ensure that reformed institutional structures promote the active participation of women, men and the vulnerable groups to ensure sustainable social and economic development.

6.2 Natural Resource Protection and Conservation

This policy will be implemented consistent with the National Environment Management Act and cognizant of the need to preserve Uganda's heritage for current and future generations. The impacts of climate change on agricultural production include erratic rainfall, frequent droughts, floods, higher temperatures and occurrence of more destructive and drug-resistant pests and diseases. Interventions envisaged under this policy will ensure better use of climate smart technologies to adapt and mitigate adverse effects of climate variability; thereby enhancing the resilience of the fisheries and aquaculture systems.

6.3 Intellectual Property Rights

This policy will be implemented in tandem with other policies and laws that protect communities' intellectual property rights over their traditional beliefs systems and resources. Government will encourage patenting of endemic fish species.

6.4 Media and Communication

Awareness creation of the optimal utilization and benefits maximization of fish will be ensured through extensive media and communication campaigns targeted at both national, community and family levels. Media houses and public outreach channels will be used to take this message to all.

6.5 HIV & AIDS and Water Borne Diseases

In the past decade it has become evident that HIV/AIDS related diseases among fisher men and in communities. HIV and AIDS continues to be a challenge for the fishing communities in Uganda. It is estimated that in some areas the HIV/AIDS prevalence is at 22% higher than the 7.2% national average. This places fisher folk among groups that are regarded as being at high risk categorized as KP/PP (key populations and priority populations). Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS stems from complex,

inter-dependent courses that may include the mobility of many fisher folk, their access to diary cash income in an overall context of poverty; their demographic profile (young and sexually active) and the ready availability of commercial sex in many landing sites. Also significant are cultural factors related to fishing as high risk and low status and uncomfortable occupation which lead to high risk sexual behaviour practices. In addition, exposure to waterborne diseases and malaria along with poor sanitation and limited access to medical care also combine to increase susceptibility to infection.

7. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries will rally all stakeholders to support the implementation of this policy through an institutional arrangement that will deal with multi-sectoral issues at all levels of the value chain. Implementation will be carried out within the confines of the National Agricultural Policy 2013 and its Agricultural Sector Strategic Plan (ASSP) 2015-2020. This policy will pave way for a comprehensive amendment of the Fish Act cap 197. 2000. The following factors will be critical in setting up functional institutional arrangements for effective policy implementation:

- i. Establishment of a well-coordinated inter-sectoral linkages and alignment to strategies and plans at national, regional and international level;
- ii. Effective regulatory framework for fisheries aquaculture management and development;
- iii. Appropriate and adequate human resource at the Directorate level, District Local Governments and the private sector levels for improved production, productivity and profitability in supporting various aspects of the value chain;
- iv. Investment in research and innovative technologies;
- v. Acquisition of adequate modern and appropriate Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure and technologies along the value chain to ready Uganda for modern fish production and trade systems;
- vi. A well established Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Information System so that evidence is generate to improve policy planning, budgeting and reporting of performance based on indicators identified;
- vii. Adequate and sustainable financing mechanisms to ensure flexibility and responsiveness to fisheries illegalities;
- viii. Supportive research and development as well as investment in fisheries and aquaculture support infrastructure; and
- ix. Understanding and appreciation of environmental sustainability and climate change adaptation issues among all stakeholders

Given the institutional and technical challenges faced by the fisheries and aquaculture sector, Government will review and strengthen the Directorate of Fisheries Resources to make it more flexible and responsive. The Directorate shall be supported through creation of a Fisheries Technical Committee composed of Technical Officers with co-opted others from relevant

Commented [O1]: The NARO Council referred to in the Cabinet extract does not handle fisheries management.

stakeholders to evaluate the performance of the sector in a timely manner and offer the relevant guidance to the Minister for further. The strengthened directorate will:

- i. Provide the overall direction for the management and development of the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector at all levels;
- ii. Oversee the operations of the Fisheries Protection Force backed with establishing laws with punitive measures on fishing and aquaculture illegal practices; and
- iii. Provide an enabling environment for investment in the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector to unlock the untapped potential for growth and posterity.

This will lead to achievement of the following outcomes:

- i. Delivery of a better service for the same or less cost;
- ii. Reduction of cost to Treasury by increased revenue generation and/or reduced costs;
- iii. Greater freedom to manage and clear accountability;
- iv. A results (client) oriented focus;
- v. Opportunity to commercialise operations where services are demanded;
- vi. Release from some Civil Service rules and regulations regarding operational flexibility;
- vii. Exercise of freedom over staffing levels and structures including flexibility over salaries and conditions;
- viii. Powers to recruit and promote and to discipline;
- ix. The right to accumulate reserves and to retain earned income;
- x. A legal entity that can sue and be sued and can acquire and dispose of property.

7.1 Fisheries Protection Force

In line with making the Directorate more responsive a Fisheries Protection Force will be required with the role of protecting fish and their environment, fish products and aquatic flora and fauna against fisheries malpractices, and generally to enforce the provisions of fisheries laws. The FPF requires armed personnel to facilitate operations against illegalities. Therefore, the staff of the FPF shall be Fisheries Officers with specialised training in security related operations.

7.2 Human Resource Capacity

In addition to the Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Unit, the current directorate structure and human resource capacity will be strengthened to link and work better with the Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Unit. Lake based Management structures will be established to link better with grassroots communities. An Independent Fisheries Advisory Council will be set up under the Ministry to review and advise on policies in relation to the co-ordination of fisheries management in relation to the aquatic environment and human

Commented [O2]: Cabinet advised to create an independent council of technical officers to evaluate the performance of the sector in a timely manner and offer the relevant guidance to the Minister for further management.

dimensions; the allocation and access to fisheries resources; intergovernmental agreements and arrangements related to fisheries; research, education, capacity development and the management of fisheries resources; management plans and resources for the development of the fisheries sector.

7.3 Funding and Finances

The need for sustained funding mechanisms for fisheries management and development cannot be overemphasized, as this is instrumental in ensuring social and economic benefits to resource users and the country as a whole. Implementation of cost recovery systems as a means to finance fisheries management is crucial. The establishment of the Fisheries Fund in Uganda is provided for by Article 153 (2) of the Constitution, Section 22A of the Fish Act and Section 9 (1) of the Public Finance and Accountability Act 2003. The Fish (Amendment Bill) Act, 2011 provided for the establishment of the Fisheries Fund and allowing the retention and use of fees received by the Chief Fisheries Officer from the issuance of licenses, permits and other fisheries activities under the Act for the effective development and management of the fisheries sector. Appropriate revenue sharing between the centre and local governments will be agreed upon.

While the Finance Bill No. 4 (2013) imposed a levy on fish exports originating from or caught in the fishing waters of Uganda (Large fish species (fresh, salted or smoked) at USD 05 cents per kilogram Free On Board (F.O.B); fish bladder (Maws) at USD 20 cents per kilogram Free On Board (F.O.B); Small pelagic (Mukene, Muziri, Ragoge and Nkejje) at USD 02 cents per kilogram for export; industrial by-products (fish frames, fat, skin, fish off cuts and fish oil) at USD 02 cents per kilogram for export), the levy is being collected by the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) and remitted to the Consolidated Fund. If a Fish Levy Fund is established it will be the right home for the fish levy and will allow plough back as per the Fish (Amendment Bill) Act, 2011.

The sources of funding for the Fisheries Fund will include the current levy on fish exports projected at 3.5 billion (with Ug. Shs. 2.1 billion from international exports and Ug. Shs.1.4 billion from regional exports), issuance of licenses and permits on vessel and trucks, /truck licences (10.9bn). If the regional trade and trade in fish maws is regularized and with improved collection and MCS to ensure compliance the revenue collection can tremendously increase.

Whereas the main commodity from the fishery is fish, other resource users, including; hoteliers, beach owners, boat owners, flower farms and miners, petroleum companies around the lake,

factories that release wastes into the lake and ecotourism services will in future be looked at sources of revenue for the fisheries fund. It is envisaged that the fisheries fund will also attract funding from Donors in terms of donations and grants totalling Uganda Shs. 6bn. This puts the projected total fund to be collected estimated at 15.12bn annually less the projected 6bn from Donors

Local governments will retain fees from local fish taxes accruing from the fisheries of their jurisdiction like fish movement permit, trading licenses, service levy, parking fees and landing fees. The consolidated fund will retain funds collected in excess of anticipated estimates. Subventions will be made to the Fisheries Protection Unit and the Fisheries Resource Council that are proposed structures for strengthening the Directorate.

7.4 The role of MAAIF

The mandate of the MAAIF as it relates to Fisheries will apply to this policy. This mandate is to *' support, promote, guide and regulate the fisheries sub-sector so as to improve quality and increased quantity of fish and fisheries products for domestic consumption, food security and export' .* MAAIF will elevate the status of the Directorate of Fisheries Resources to a semi-autonomous Directorate and shall overall oversee in function with an effort to strengthen the institutional function of fisheries and aquaculture management. There will be five broad areas under which MAAIF will serve this mandate:

i. Regulation, Coordination, M&E and Reporting as well as Financing

- a) MAAIF will review policies, plans, legislation, guidelines, standards and by-laws supporting fisheries and aquaculture at all levels including those developed by non-state actors both local and international;
- b) Account to the President, Cabinet, Parliament and the Sector Working Group as well as the National Platform on Fisheries and Aquaculture on sector performance;
- c) Mobilize resources (both technical, financial and logistical) to monitor activity on water bodies and enforce standards and further develop the sector.

ii. Research, Extension, Advisory and Training Services

- a) DFR will generate the research agenda and NaFRRI will support academia, research organizations and the National Genetic Research Centre (NaGRIC) to generate and disseminate appropriate, safe, cost effective fisheries and aquaculture technologies;
- b) DiFR will undertake inspection of all seed production by NaGRIC and the private sector

- c) Work with Directorate of Agricultural Extension Services to empower farmers to embrace new technologies through protracted demand based extension, advisory and training services.
- d) DFR will train and professionalise fishers and value chain actors aimed at professionalising the with a requirement for fisheries best practice certificates

iii. Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chain Development and Commercialization

- a) Support efforts to restock water bodies, multiply fish seed and ensure access to improved fish seed and feed as well as fish disease control commodities;
- b) Promote collaboration for fisheries production and marketing zones including aqua-parks to achieve economies of scale.

iv. Quality Assurance

- a) Regulate and monitor all actors and ensure adherence to this policy and laws as laid out and work with UNBS and other entities ensure compliance to national, regional and international standards.
- b) Support traceability through strengthened responses by supporting disease, pest and vector control systems.

v. Support to Local Governments

- a) Promote the interests of Local Governments generated from routine inspection, coordination of fisheries and aquaculture initiatives projects and programmes.
- b) Provide technical assistance, support supervision and training to technical fisheries, promote fishers and fish farmer producer groups and associations and facilitate initiatives to build them institutionally.
- c) Strengthen human capacity in both quality and quantity to manage fisheries and aquaculture work at district and local governments including: strengthening District Production and Water offices in their work to reach out to fishers and fish farmers adequately and expeditedly in resolution of issues affecting fisheries including disease pest and vector control.

vi. Registration and Licensing

In order to reduce over capacity and promote sustainability of the resource, and resolve resource use conflicts, DFR will

- a. Controlling fishing capacity through conduct of annual registration of fishers, famers and input dealers along the value chain working closely with DLGs
- b. Vetting and licensing of fisher and other fisheries related businesses

- c. Controlling entry in the fishery through use of modern Fishing Vessel Identification Plates and an effective monitoring system including use of radar systems in fish breeding areas.
- d. Undertaking mobile licensing technologies for hard to reach areas including linkage of licensing process to the National Identity Card Registration Agency.

7.5 Role of District Local Government

The core functions of the districts and lower-local governments shall be to:

- i. Implement the national policy and associated regulations and ensure application and monitoring of at district and local level;
- ii. Develop and pass fisheries and aquaculture ordinances and by-laws based on the national law but tailored to specific needs of the local situation to regulate fish quality, marketing, local taxation (and other fees) and other aspects to advance fisheries and aquaculture;
- iii. Work through the extension system to provide technical assistance, support supervision and training to technical fisheries, promote fishers and fish farmer producer groups and associations and facilitate initiatives to build them institutionally.
- iv. Mobilize, increase awareness and empower fish farmers and fishers to protect fisheries production and natural resources and implement adaptation measures to the adverse effects of climate change.

7.6 Support to the Private Sector and Non-State Actors

MAAIF will strengthen the National Fisheries and Aquaculture platform to include all key stakeholders including the private sector, other non-state actors (NGOs, CSOs) and Development Partners. This National Platform shall meet on a bi-annually basis to discuss issues facing fisheries and aquaculture and devise means and ways to resolve them as well as introduction of new practices to elevate the sector. MAAIF will support this platform to be set up not just at the national level but also in all districts with substantial fish and farmed fish capacity and potential. These platforms shall play the following roles:

- i. Mobilize fishers and fish farmers to access services including financial products, inputs, markets and market information; and training for associations and cooperatives;
- ii. Contribute to policy and strategy formulation as well as drafting of supposed regulations and guidelines as need arises;

- iii. Share good practices and alternative approaches to fisheries and aquaculture and propose ways for their uptake at the national level. The platform shall advise MAAIF on ways to lift the quality of service to advance the sector towards regional and international standards;
- iv. Drive the advocacy to facilitate enforcement and adherence to aspects that mitigate adverse effects of climate change, as well as supporting investments for sustainable fishing.

7.7 Ensuring benefits for Communities and Households

Government will ensure that Districts, Sub-counties and Communities collaborate in management of shared fisheries and aquatic ecosystems for the benefit of families. Households will be expected to take the lead in husbandry of their resources especially near water shores and wetlands and do so in ways that do not degrade the environment. They will be expected to use these resources sustainably and respond to guidelines as laid out in the law while contributing ideas on how to advance the sector in ways that optimally benefits their livelihoods.

7.8 Linkage to other Institutions to Implementation

The Vision and Mission of this policy cannot be achieved by MAAIF alone. It will need support from various MDAs, development partner, private sector and other key players and their roles are vital for successful implementation of this policy. In this regard, the table below enlists the roles of various institutions and agencies and roles they are envisaged to play during the implementation of this policy:

This policy shall be implemented through a sector-wide approach that involves both state and non-state actors at both central and local government levels. An elaborate and costed Implementation Plan has been designed as a reference point to guide the implementation of this policy. Effective implementation will necessitate two types of coordination mechanisms:

- i. An internal coordination mechanism to deal with policy implementation within the central government and District Local Government structures;
- ii. External coordination will entail creating functional linkages between MAAIF, and other Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDA' s) and non-state actors to develop a sound and vibrant fisheries and aquaculture sector.

To this end, Government will strengthen and put in place appropriate organizations and institutions to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as envisaged under this policy.

In the Ministry this policy will be coordinated by the Top Policy Management (TPM) for consistence, coherence, and alignment to the overall National Agricultural Policy. Resources. There will be a Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy Implementation Unit housed in the Directorate of Fisheries that will ensure smooth implementation of the policy at all levels and provide the necessary guidance to District Local governments. In turn all feedback and accountability from the local governments will be submitted to this Unit for analysis and compilation of quarterly reports on the state of performance.

MAAIF shall provide external coordination of all projects and programs that fall under Directorate of Fisheries Resources. Key to this process will be the work to coordinate and support implementation done by the private sector at individual, group, cooperative and other organizational levels. This will leverage the expertise of the private sector and CSOs to drive production, productivity and profitability of fisheries and aquaculture up the value chain.

7.9 Fisheries and Aquaculture Management System (FAMIS)

Government shall improve management information systems to ensure effective and efficient collection, compilation, analysis, storage and dissemination of information for planning, management, monitoring and evaluation purposes. Data collection tools and systems (electronic and GIS based) will be required for conducting CAS, FS, hydroacoustic surveys.

Table 1: Illustration of Policy Linkages with other MDAs and Non-State Actors

| Institution/Agency | Role and Responsibility |
|---|--|
| 1) Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support financing of the Policy Implementation Plan and the mobilization of resources from within and outside the budget - Embed fisheries production, value addition trends, marketing volumes and performance forecasting in the national statistics development plan and its implementation - cooperatives |
| 2) Ministry of Trade and Industry and Cooperatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the private sector to establish, rehabilitate, improve marketing infrastructure (including cold chains) for fish at strategic points for optimal access by producers, processors, traders and consumers - Support trade negotiations and eliminate barriers to trade - Facilitate cross-border trade that is supportive of local traders with same incentives as envisioned under the EAC Customs Union Protocol |
| 3) Ministry of Water and Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support water resources protection through the enforcement of the National Environment Management Act - Support development of aquaculture through issuance of water permits - Ensuring water quality in major water bodies |
| 4) Ministries of Defence, Internal Affairs and Justice and Constitutional Affairs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support in enforcement of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Amendment Bill through sensitization, deterrence of illegal activities and monitoring to ensure compliance with set measures as laid out in the law - Strengthen punitive action so that abuse of the law is dealt with and actions to apprehend culprits reduce illegal fishing and bad aquaculture practices |
| 5) Ministry of Lands Housing and Urban Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate processes for the establishment of the aqua-parks to be the kick-start of fish farming in Uganda - Streamline land acquisition to support fish farming and sustainable use of wetlands – working with NEMA and Ministry of Water and Environment. |
| 6) Ministry of Works | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the road networks especially those to landing sites and |

| Institution/Agency | Role and Responsibility |
|--|--|
| and Transport | <p>other fish farming hotspots to ease transportation of fresh fish (aware of it being a highly perishable product).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to installation of navigation aid equipment for safe navigation on water bodies |
| 7) Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote appropriate interventions to avail energy and associated services to fisheries and aquaculture. - Expand the current capacity for the country to tap into mineral resources to produce oil, lime, which have key importance in generating inputs that support agriculture as a whole. Some of the fish feeds come from crops whose increased production lowers its cost. - Ensure there are appropriate interventions that guard against oil spills that could be detrimental to fisheries and aquaculture |
| 8) Ministry of Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlight the benefits of fish production and consumption as it related to physical health during health education campaigns - Include fish production and consumption in the Food and Nutrition Policy and ensure its implementation |
| 9) Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen community mobilization and empowerment through various interventions that include youth, women, PWDs, and women to optimally benefit from fisheries and aquaculture development - Promote implementation of efforts to curb child labour within the sector |
| 10) Ministry of Information and Communication Technology as well as Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote agricultural research innovation as it relates to fisheries and aquaculture. - Recommend procedures and protocols to deal with varieties developed through the use of biotechnology - Provide competitive grants for scientists willing to undertake fisheries research programs. |
| 11) Ministry of Education and Sports and the broader academia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orient the curriculum for inclusion of new fisheries and aquaculture developments in research and educational training - Support demonstration and innovations dissemination |
| 12) Media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate messages that promote protection and |

| Institution/Agency | Role and Responsibility |
|--|--|
| 13) Fish and Fish Farmer Organizations | <p>enhancement of fisheries and aquaculture akin to its preservation and benefit sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocate for broader inclusion fish and aquaculture issues in the respective district budgets and from CSOs, NGOs and development partners - Mobilize farmers to join fishers and fish farmers' organizations and cooperatives and strengthen their roles at each stage of the value chain; and participate actively in capacity building initiatives - Strengthen group dynamics and corporate governance principles for accountable and ensuring fish and fish farmer - Contribute to fisheries resources sustainability through the self-monitoring initiatives |
| 14) NGOs and CSOs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobbying and advocacy - Policy monitoring - Translation of the popular version of the policy into local languages - Institutional development and capacity building for co-management structures especially at the grassroots - Contribute to financing of awareness campaigns |

7.10 Enforcement, Rewards and Sanctions

The implementation of this Policy will require strict enforcement and sanctions to deter those involved in various malpractices including overfishing; sale or supply of counterfeit fish seed, feed and products. MAAIF will work with other stakeholders to ensure enforcement, vigilance and apprehending of culprits is done as a deterrent to those engaged in irregular practices. The Fisheries and Aquaculture Bill and the regulations therein shall be enforced both at national and regional levels. In addition, local governments will be supported to pass ordinances and by-laws with reward mechanisms to entities, groups or individuals that protect and conserve the water bodies on one hand; and punitive measures for entities, groups or individuals that contravene these laws on the other. This Policy will contribute to the operationalization of community intellectual property rights through relevant legislation so that rights-holders and conservationists are rewarded appropriately to incentivise quality production and those that uphold best practice.

8.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

8.1 Routine Monitoring

In line with the National Public Sector M&E Policy (2013), the implementation of this policy will be reviewed and monitored at various levels per quarter and reporting made after a mid-term review and final evaluation on its performance. The UFAA shall monitor the performance at the district level and among the private and non-state actors basing on reporting they receive on quarterly basis. MAAIF will track high level key performance indicators (KPIs) and use this information in reporting to Parliament and Cabinet on sector performance.

To guide the monitoring and evaluation of the policy, indicators will be developed and agreed upon at all levels. Periodically, stakeholders will be brought together to reflect on the implementation of the policy and provide input on improvements of indicators and the methodologies for reporting on them. MAAIF will utilize the existing management information systems to track performance right from the community level, to district and zonal levels and feed this information into the national repository hosted by Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Information System (FAMIS). Further reporting will be linked to the Budget Monitoring and Accountability Unit (BMAU) of the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) as part of the routine sector monitoring. Other M&E systems to which reporting will be aligned shall include: the community Barazas under the Office of the Prime Minister, work done under Inspectorate of Government (IG), National Development Report (NDR) that reports on the implementation of the NDP; oversight by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) that annually submits the National Audit Report to Parliament; and the Government Annual Performance Report (GPAP) of the Office of the Prime Minister at a bi-annual and annual basis.

8.2 Evaluation

To evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the various programmes, interventions under this policy, MAAIF working through the Directorate, will conduct analytical works on district and national level performance and feed these results into the Annual Sector Performance. MAAIF will undertake period reviews of this policy including a baseline survey, scheduled policy reviews, mid-term and final evaluations for both this policy and its implementation strategy. There will also be processes that ensure reviews are routinely undertaken under the Government Evaluation Facility under OPM.

9. FINANCING AND ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

9.1 Financing Mechanisms

Government shall mobilize resources to finance this policy through the national budget framework. This is in line with the Public Finance Management Act (2015). To ensure sustainability of financing, Government will revitalize mechanisms to mobilize resources from within the sector including internally generated resources such as: fish levies, registration and licensing fees, inspection fees, testing fees and fines. These resources shall be managed to support the operation cost of the proposed strengthened Directorate as well support to its decentralized structures to increase their capacity to supervise, regulate and be responsive to some of the needs of stakeholders at that level. In the event that resources are insufficient in financing of the implementation strategy designed to guide the operationalization of this policy, Government will seek support from all stakeholders including development partners.

9.2 Accountability Systems

Ensuring adequacy of financing for fisheries and aquaculture activities is a key start of the accountability mechanism. At the national level, the Directorate shall work with and through the Fisheries Management Committees at all levels to ensure proper planning and budgeting is undertaken annually within the Ministerial Budgeting Framework and that of Local Governments. Activities and associated budget expenditure assignments will be reported upon within the Programme Based Budgeting Tool (PBB) that replaced the Output Based Budgeting tool (OBT).

The Directorate shall ensure that accountability mechanisms are aligned to the Office of the Auditor General requirements for both internal and external audit and reported to all duty bearers so that they are accountable on all commitments. At the district level, the office of Production and Marketing will be accountable for implementation of this policy and in close contact with sub-county coordination structures. The Ministry will be expected to be responsive to the recommendations stipulated in the Annual Auditor General' s Report supported to Parliament and to gradually ensure that all accountability mechanisms are functional and adhere to by all stakeholders.

10 COMMUNICATIONSTRATEGY

In line with the Government Communication Strategy (2011), concerted efforts will be made to ensure that this policy is explained to, and understood by, all stakeholders. To begin this process, MAAIF, will design a user-friendly popular version of this policy and translate it into local dialects to ease communication and enhanced awareness. National and district level staff will be tasked to popularise this policy as it is implemented and provide feedback through the M&E and supervision systems that will be established.

Awareness creation will be a critical emphasis that will including working closely with the national agricultural extension mechanisms to reach out to fisheries and fish producer entities at all levels with accurate and effective information they require. In addition, there will be broadcast of information through various channels. These will include: one-on-one meetings with extension service staff at the local levels; village meetings organized by the district and sub-county fisheries authorities; Radio and Television (with emphasis on use of social media and related application to reach stakeholders faster as now is an efficient modern day communication mechanism); distribution of leaflets other demonstration chats translated in local languages and some displayed at public places; circulation of pull-outs from the national and local newspapers; bulletins and journals as well as discussions and workshops convened at community meetings, district and national levels. Only approved and authorized content will be permissible for relay.

In all these communication systems – a two-way system will be devised where on one the hand Government explains the aspirations of this policy while on the other hand, feedback from stakeholders is obtained. Results of these engagements will be communicated to contribute to efforts to build the capacity of both public and private organisations to ensure efficient and effective fulfilment of functions and mandates. International best practices, innovations and new developments will be communicated expeditiously to all stakeholders so that they become more responsive to stakeholder needs and ensure continuous improvement at all stages of the value chain. Communication will also include exchange visits within Ugandan local government, within the region and global to support uptake of local, regional and global best practices.