

TANZANIA

ALIGNING INTERESTS FOR A STABLE WATER SUPPLY IN TANZANIA

The biodiversity-rich lakes, woodlands and National Park of the Rukwa-Katavi landscape in the south-west of Tanzania are under pressure from a steep increase in large-scale economic developments. Aggregated, these developments will have high socio-ecological impact. By improving the quality of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Integrated Water Resources Management and Development Plan, the government can manage these developments. Through this framework, we ensure an opening to communities to bring in their concerns and to be part of the decision-making process.

THE STATE OF THE LAKE RUKWA-KATAVI LANDSCAPE

The Rukwa-Katavi landscape is home to over 1.5 million people and is an area rich in wildlife and biodiversity, containing Miombo woodlands, the Katavi National Park, Lake Rukwa and part of Lake Tanganyika.

Over the last few years, the landscape has experienced rapid changes due to large investment schemes that are promoting economic and infrastructural development. Large areas of forest are being cleared for agriculture. Analysis through Global Forest Watch shows that between 2000 and 2010 the forest cover has dropped from 3.6 to 3.0 million hectares, resulting in a deforestation rate of approximately 1.5% per year. Major roads are being built and power lines are in the planning. Coal mining is scheduled to begin and oil exploration is underway in Lake Tanganyika. Licenses for helium extraction have also been issued for Lake Rukwa.

Poor or no land use planning and illegal activities have resulted in further environmental degradation of the landscape. Unsustainable farming practices, such as slash and burn activities, charcoal production and illegal logging are destroying forests and important wildlife habitats. Illegal cultivation in buffer zones on river banks has led to the siltation of rivers and the shallowing of Lake Rukwa, while irresponsible use of pesticides for agriculture and mercury for artisanal gold mining are polluting the Katuma River. This pollution, coupled with illegal fishing in the lakes, is threatening fish stocks and thus, food security in the region.

A Vulnerability Assessment by the Lake Rukwa Basin Water Board (2015) shows that climate change projections predict an increase in temperature of 1 to 2 degrees Celsius in 2040. Rainfall patterns will become more variable which can result in more prolonged droughts. Water resources are therefore even more under pressure and water availability will reduce.

Together with erratic rainfall that is affecting crop yields, the unsustainable practices are threatening food and water security and local livelihoods, as well as endangering important wildlife corridors, such as of elephants.

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE LANDSCAPE

In a strategic partnership with WWF NL and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IUCN NL facilitates civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Rukwa-Katavi landscape to

lobby more effectively for responsible public policies, implemented by governmental bodies, and for the private sector to align their practices with these policies.

In particular, partner organisations Rukwa Sustainable Development Society (RUDESO), Rukwa Environmental Management Society (REMSO) and the Lawyers' Environmental Action Team (LEAT) have been actively involved in the process of planning a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Integrated Water Resources Management and Development Plan (IWRMD) for the basin of Lake Rukwa. The basin management authority has commissioned a SEA to ensure environmental aspects of the plan, such as climate change and the impact of agro- and mining developments on surface waters and aquifers, are taken sufficiently into account.

Through the active participation of local civil society in the design and implementation of the SEA, this process becomes more inclusive for the communities in the river basin. Communities will be more informed about the issues in the landscape and can play a more active role in decision-making processes. Deteriorating water quality and reduced water availability will affect local populations the most, since they are directly depending on this resource. By ensuring a participatory approach in the IWRMD Plan in the Lake Rukwa river basin, the importance of water for all current and future users (including wildlife), can be emphasized.

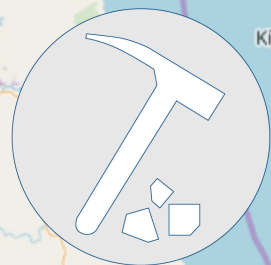


Deforestation
Annually -1.5%

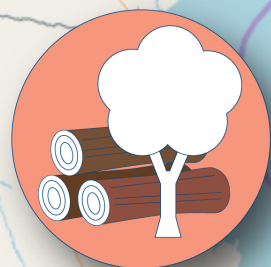


Climate Change
1-2 °C increase

A Strategic Environmental Assessment in the Lake Rukwa River Basin will investigate the different pressures on the landscape. In doing so, the impacts on different goods and services provided by the ecosystem are determined.



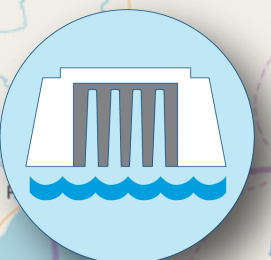
Mining



Deforestation



Agriculture



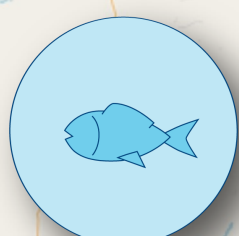
Infrastructure



Climate change



Water quality and
availability



Fish stocks

Rukwa &
Katavi

Elephant
corridor

Divason Abel - Rukwa Sustainable Development Society (RUSUDESOS)

"A SEA will promote the sustainable management of the resources in this landscape, it will look at impacts of decisions made in the IWRMD Plan."

Nkoswe Noel - Rukwa Environmental Management Society (REMSO)

"There are many advantages in carrying out a SEA in the Lake Rukwa river basin. First of all, people in the area will be aware of what is going on. If risks are identified, procedures need to be in place to reduce these risks. If the socio-political aspects of water management are well defined, then the local community will know what they can do."

Grace Shio - Lawyers' Environmental Action Team (LEAT)

"Already during the initial phase of the SEA, communities have been involved. Communities play an important role in this process, and the government has come to acknowledge this."

Saka Muok - Environmental Management Officer at Mpimbwe District Council

"In this river basin, if you capture negative impacts from the beginning and you put some of the measures, you can protect and secure the goodness of your environment. That is why we encourage the process of the SEA, because it cuts across different sectors and activities. If our country was very systematic in assessing that, we will be able to sustainably implement the industrial change in our country."



Photo Fanny Verkuijlen

Grace Shio, from the Lawyers' Environmental Action Team (LEAT) is pointing out a group of hippos hiding in a muddy stretch of a river in Katavi National Park. Poor water management resulted in drying up of rivers in the park, which reduced the hippo population significantly. Through joint efforts of the government and civil society organisations, water will be managed in a more sustainable manner, maintaining the hippo population in the Park.

LINKING WITH THE SDGs

Our work in Tanzania within the SRJS program is closely linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations. By using this framework as a reference we ensure that our approach is in line with the priorities set by the UN, and that we significantly contribute to sustainable development in this landscape.

By supporting the process of the SEA for the Integrated Water Resources Management and Development Plan for the river basin of Lake Rukwa, SRJS ensures its relevancy with the SDG framework by improving conditions for SDGs 6 Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production and SDG 15 Life on Land.

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

6
CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION



To achieve sanitation and access to safe drinking water for all by 2030, increased investment in management of freshwater ecosystems is needed. Through an environmentally sound IWRMD Plan, the freshwater ecosystem of the Lake Rukwa river basin will be protected from further siltation and pollution. As part of the SEA, participation from local communities is key to ensure the implementation of integrated water resource management at all levels.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

12
RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



In the private sector, responsible consumption and production must be promoted through the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources. The SEA process in the Lake Rukwa river basin will assess the limits to the water resource for agricultural production to safeguard the health of the freshwater ecosystem.

15
LIFE
ON LAND



SDG 15: Life on Land

SDG 15 aims at safeguarding all life on land. Deforestation in the Lake Rukwa river basin is deteriorating the water quality in the river and lake. Through the process of the SEA in the basin, the sustainable management of inland freshwater ecosystems, in particular forests and wetlands, needs to be included in an IWRMD plan. Elephants and the hippos in Katavi National Park are one of the flagship species benefitting directly from improved water management. An elephant corridor is an important element in the Plan.

HOW DO WE REACH IMPACT?

Through the active participation of local civil society in the process of a Strategic Environmental Assessment, CSOs can provide input into the Integrated Water Resource Management and Development plan to improve its content.

One of the key features of the SEA is that it uses a consultative and participatory process; stakeholders and potentially affected groups need to be identified and meaningfully consulted to help define the analysis and inform the findings and recommendations of the SEA. Especially women, who cater for charcoal, firewood, subsistence from crops and water, play an important role in this consultation process. Their role in education and consultation in the sustainable use of natural resources should be key in the participatory process.

In order to achieve a management plan that is environmentally sound which ensures sustainable use of the natural resources, the recommendations from the SEA need to be adopted into the IWRMD Plan.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

The government of Tanzania selected part of the Rukwa-Katavi landscape as an 'economic growth corridor', an area where economic developments are a high priority. The voice of local communities and nature is a crucial element in the planning and implementation of such developments, especially regarding decisions on land use and water allocation for the landscape. The SEA is a tool to ensure that the IWRMD Plan for the landscape takes these voices into account. It is important that the recommendations from the SEA are then also put in practice. It requires different stakeholders to adhere to these recommendations, government for implementation, the private sector and local communities for compliance and for civil society to monitor and advocate for best practices.

Ownership of the IWRMD Plan currently lies with the local authorities and stakeholders. An Environmental Management Officer at Mpimbwe District Council mentions that "changes in policies at national level will impact the end result of the SEA and may negatively affect the implementation."

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the SEA need to be respected and complied to at all levels, from local communities up to national government. It is important that the participation of all stakeholders continues from the planning phase to the implementation of the IWRMD Plan. CSOs play an important role in monitoring these processes.



Photo Fanny Verkuijlen