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LATAWAMA

LAKE TANGANYIKA WATER MANAGEMENT

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EDITORIAL



Dear readers,

Water plays a crucial role in the health and prosperity of the planet and its inhabitants. It is also a key component of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Nevertheless, progress toward these water-related goals remains alarmingly slow.

It was in this context that the United Nations Water Conference was held in New York from March 22nd to 24th, 2023. This conference aimed to set up an audacious action plan to protect our waters, a vital resource for the planet and its inhabitants.

During the conference, the LATAWAMA project's actions, which contribute to the preservation and protection of the waters' quality, were presented.

Indeed, at the launch of the Team Europe Initiative (TEI) on transboundary water management in Africa, co-organized by Belgium and the European Union, the main achievements of the LATAWAMA project were explained.

The importance of setting up an environmental monitoring network for the integrated management of water resources and the preservation of biodiversity was stressed out. The importance of the complementary nature of the "in situ monitoring" and "remote monitoring" approaches was also mentioned, the maintenance of which requires targeted investment and data exchange protocols in collaboration and coordination with regional and international laboratories, universities, and research centers.

Ensuring the financial and technical sustainability of environmental monitoring of Lake Tanganyika and its basin is the challenge that the European Union, through the LATAWAMA project implemented by Enabel, intends to take up by supporting the Lake Tanganyika Authority (LTA).

Through the environmental monitoring network, LATAWAMA aims to identify the types and degrees of deterioration in water quality and to inform the LTA conference of ministers on the strategic decisions to be taken in order to sustainably protect the waters of Lake Tanganyika.

Didier Cadelli, Intervention Manager

Flash news

Automatic sludge pump delivered to Bujumbura wastewater treatment plant

The automatic pump, which was announced at the time of the previous publication, has been delivered to the Bujumbura wastewater treatment plant at the end of March 2023. The pump allows to drain off the sludge from the basins and improves the purification performance of the treatment plant. It will then help to ensure that treated wastewater does not deteriorate Lake Tanganyika's ecosystems. Furthermore, technicians were trained to correctly use the pump. OBUHA's Director of Hygiene and Sanitation appreciates this support, which contributes in the improvement of the plant's operation.

FOCUS

Democratic Republic of Congo: the LATAWAMA project equips Uvira City with a master plan for urban waste management



Kiza Muhato, Mayor of Uvira

The city of Uvira is facing accelerated and uncontrolled urbanization as consequence of a growing population and of a nascent and underfunded public administration. Within this context, the LATAWAMA project is funding the development of a solid waste management master plan for the city of Uvira. The aim is to establish a medium and long term, efficient and sustainable solid waste management service (2030-2050). At the beginning of March 2023, the technical team commissioned by Enabel, the Belgian engineering consultancy ALMADIUS, presented an assessment of the current situation and the scenarios to be considered to equip the town with a waste management and recovery system.

An important group - including the mayor of Uvira, Mr. Kiza Muhato, municipal and provincial departments, representatives of NGOs, civil society, researchers from the Hydrobiology Research Center, and LTA - attended the presentation of the waste management master plan's key aspects. They were able to take part in the debate and to make several recommendations.

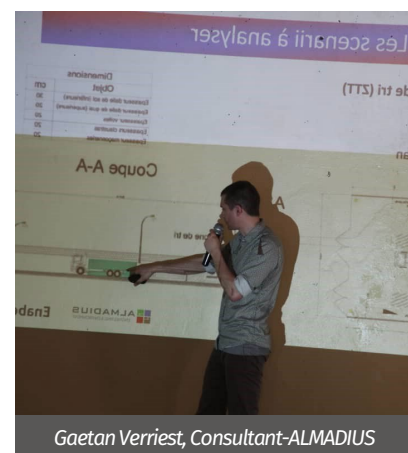


Didier Cadelli, Intervention Manager

The key principles of this waste management master plan are first to collect solid waste and to transport it to a landfill site - that would be built outside the city.

Then, in a second time, the waste will be sorted and recycled. Various pilot recycling projects are envisaged.

To do so, administrative, technical, and organizational support from the town council and civil society, as well as the introduction of environmental awareness sessions and a financing system that takes into account people's ability to pay, will be essential.



Gaetan Verriest, Consultant-ALMADIUS

For now, the master plan is a strategic and technical document that will enable the mayor's office to convince financial backers on the investments needed to guarantee public health, improve living conditions for the population and protect Lake Tanganyika. Kiza Muhato, the town's mayor, confirms: "We're going to make this work our own because hygiene and sanitation are our responsibility".

Burundi: Bujumbura's wastewater collection network digitized thanks to the LATAWAMA project

Thanks to the LATAWAMA project, jointly implemented by the Belgian Development Agency Enabel and the Lake Tanganyika Authority, and funded by the European Union, Bujumbura's wastewater collection network has been digitized. The results of the digitization study were presented to the partners in March 2023. It was emphasized that this represents a further step towards sustainable sanitation in Bujumbura.

Enabel Portfolio Manager, who took part in the presentation workshop, recalled the importance of digitizing the wastewater collection network in a context of demographic growth. "By 2050, two-thirds of the world's population will live in urban areas. Bujumbura will also experience significant population growth, with increased risks of pollution. The ecological stress on the lake will considerably increase. Effective waste water management in Bujumbura is therefore a priority for the lake".

In addition, exchanges between participants, mainly from institutions working in the environmental field, and local administration, enabled to make several recommendations.



Joël Nyanding Ngba, Portfolio Manager/Enabel

PERSPECTIVES

Setting up the Lake Tanganyika water monitoring network: progress is being made.

Setting up a network to monitor the waters of Lake Tanganyika and populating the database remain the LATAWAMA project's priority. On this dedicated page, we briefly review the steps taken toward achieving this objective:

Rehabilitation and equipping of laboratories

In Burundi, the laboratories of the Burundian Office for the Protection of the environment (OBPE) and the Burundian Office for Urban planning, Habitat and Construction (OBUHA) have been rehabilitated and equipped. The latter analyses the purification performance of the Buterere wastewater treatment plant. Both laboratories are now operational.

The Lake Tanganyika Research Unit (LTRU) laboratory in Zambia has also been renovated and equipped, and preliminary analyses are being carried out in the field.

Similarly, the laboratories at the Hydrobiology Research Centre in Uvira are currently being rehabilitated and equipped, and analyses began in April. As for the laboratory of Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute "TAFIRI", it has recently been equipped with analytical equipment and reagents.

Geolocation of sampling sites

Geolocation is carried out using a GPS Aquameter, which geolocates each site visited, specifying its longitude, latitude, and altitude. These coordinates are then entered into the database to provide the geolocation of the sampling sites.

In addition, these data are used to generate administrative maps to spatially identify the sites studied. More specifically, thematic maps are used to show the physicochemical, microbiological, and biological water characteristics of each site. These maps are then used to compare qualitative data of sites with various standards for water use, and to highlight any degree of alteration of the resources.

The first geolocation process was carried out in all four countries.

Sampling

Sampling is carried out by navigating the lake at the mouths of the rivers that make up Lake Tanganyika's tributaries, in the pelagic zone, in the river basins, and along the lake's shoreline. At each sampling point, in situ, analyses are carried out using a multi-parameter probe.

Samples are then collected and placed in isothermal containers, which are sent to the laboratory for analysis. Analysis sheets are then filled in, and the data collected in the field is exported to computers and transferred to the database. Sampling has begun in Burundi, Zambia and in DRC.



Sampling sites geolocation in Bujumbura

4 laboratories to be equipped with solar photovoltaic systems

With additional funding from the Wallonia, the LATAWAMA project has just launched public procurement procedures to provide solar photovoltaic equipment to the 4 laboratories. These are TAFIRI in Tanzania, CRH in the Democratic Republic of Congo, LTRU in Zambia, and the OBUHA laboratory in Burundi.

A permanent power supply is essential for the smooth running of the laboratories. This is why the laboratories involved in the Lake Tanganyika monitoring network and in monitoring the purification performance of the Bujumbura wastewater treatment plant will be equipped with solar panels. This constant source of energy will ensure optimum and continuous operation of the laboratories.



LTRU roof where solar panels will be installed



The CRH roof where solar panels will be installed

TESTIMONIES



H.E.M. Claude Bochu, EU Ambassador in Burundi

As the first phase of the LATAWAMA project reaches its end, H.E.M. the Ambassador of the European Union in Burundi looks back at the results and prospects of the project.

Since 2019, the European Union has been funding the LATAWAMA regional project, jointly implemented by Enabel and the Lake Tanganyika Authority. At a few months before the end of the first phase, what is your assessment of the project?

The main aim of LATAWAMA's first phase is to lay the foundations for setting up an environmental monitoring network for the waters of the basin. In each country bordering Lake Tanganyika, a national laboratory has been rehabilitated and equipped with all the equipment needed to analyse the quality of the lake's waters. The laboratory staff have been given support to enhance their knowledge and analytical skills, and a water sampling and analysis protocol has been jointly drawn up. The laboratories now regularly collect and analyse water samples, the data from which is then checked and analysed by the project team. The ultimate aim is to make this process independent, with even greater involvement from the Member States and the LTA. Furthermore, thanks to the advocacy work carried out as part of the LATAWAMA project, a computer and database expert was recently recruited by LTA for this purpose, demonstrating the commitment of the basin authority and the four riparian countries to ensuring that the project's achievements are sustained.

LATAWAMA has also enabled pilot projects to be developed in all five countries in the Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu basin. Initiatives to improve wastewater and solid waste management have been developed in Bujumbura (Burundi), Kigoma (Tanzania), Mpulungu (Zambia) and Uvira (DRC). In Rusizi (Rwanda), activities to develop the Rusizi river catchment area are also underway. Master plans and waste management strategies have also been drawn up in towns that previously had none (Mpulungu and Uvira), which will facilitate the development of other projects in the future.

Despite having a limited budget, the LATAWAMA project has been able to develop large-scale activities. We are delighted with these achievements, which is why we have decided to continue our support for the protection of biodiversity in the waters of Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu.

The European Union is planning to finance the second phase of the LATAWAMA project. What encourages you to maintain your support in protecting the waters of Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu?

The spectacular rise of water levels over the past few years highlights the importance of initiating a quantitative lake water monitoring system and of developing an early warning system. This is why we consider essential to guarantee the continuity of the LATAWAMA project in order to introduce sustainable and innovative approaches to address the challenges of waste management and water pollution in Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu. This new phase, which will start at the beginning of 2024, is part of the Team Europe transboundary water management initiative, which brings together the efforts of the European Union and its Member States to improve the management and protection of water resources (rivers, lakes, etc.) shared by several countries.

Many challenges related to the preservation of transboundary waters remain. Do you have a specific message for the riparian community and other partners?

The Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu basin is a global treasure, thanks to its exceptional biodiversity. We must all do our part to protect it. The support provided by the European Union and other development partners, while substantial, is only temporary and limited in time. Riparian countries must therefore spare no effort to strengthen cross-border coordination and cooperation, consolidate the leadership of regional basin authorities and progressively increase their national contributions. These joint efforts will ultimately guarantee the sustainability of the activities developed and the lasting protection of this unique biodiversity.

H. E.M. Claude BOCHU, Ambassador - Chief of the European Union Delegation in Burundi