

**Proceedings of the African Great Lakes Conservation Fund Side Event**

**May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**Imperial Resort Beach Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda**

## **Background**

In 2014, the MacArthur Foundation made an award to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to organize and convene the African Great Lakes Conference (AGLC). The first event of its kind in nearly 20 years, this conference aimed to bring together lake basin management authorities, government departments, nongovernmental and community organizations, researchers, and donors to explore sound, long-term management, and mitigation of threats from the unsustainable development of the seven African Great Lake basins. These lake basins include Albert, Edward, Kivu, Malawi/Nyasa/Niassa, Tanganyika, Turkana, and Victoria.

In 2016, the Board of the MacArthur Foundation made the decision to exit the Conservation and Sustainable Development program area. However, the Foundation strived to “responsibly exit” the body of work. To this end, each focal geography was tasked with developing an “exit plan” that would round-out the current investment in these landscapes and honor the Foundation’s legacy in the region.

As part of the exit plan for the Great Lakes of East and Central Africa region, an additional award was made to The Nature Conservancy to create the \$500,000 African Great Lakes Conservation Fund (AGLCF). This fund was ceremonially launched at the AGLC by Hon. Dr. Mary Gorreti Kimono Kitutu, Minister of State for Environment, and represents an opportunity to build upon the recommendations of the conference, and explore opportunities to leverage these funds.

To discuss how best to roll-out the AGLCF, and gain an understanding of other existing or emerging funding program opportunities in the region, a side event was held after the AGLC. This meeting brought together 28 representatives from government ministries, multilateral, bilateral and foundation donor organizations as well as other partners working on relevant issues in the African Great Lakes region, to advise on how best to take advantage of this opportunity. This report is a record of the discussions held and the recommendations made during the side event. A list of participants is attached to this report.

## **Introductions**

All participants were asked to briefly introduce themselves to each other and state which institution they represented. Following the introductions, Dr. Richard Ogutu-Ohwayo of the Fisheries Research Institute, Jinja, Uganda was asked to provide insight as to how the AGLCF could best build upon the recommendations from the AGLC. In summary, Dr. Ogutu-Ohwayo recommended that the Fund focus at three scales: the seven Lake Basins, the Themes of the conference, and Countries. Ken Irvine (IHE) also encouraged building upon existing networks such as the 15,000 alumni of the IHE Delft Institute for Water Education.

## **Working Groups**

The agenda for the side event is appended to this report. The participants were randomly divided into two smaller working groups to debate two central questions 1) How best to implement the AGLCF? and 2) Opportunities for leveraging the Fund.

**Table 1: Presentation of the discussions from Working Group 1: How to use the African Great Lakes Fund to address the conclusions from AGLC?**

Group 1	Group 2
<p>Recommend institutional support of bigger, more institutional grants</p> <p>Aim for a big win through targeted grants. Quick wins in priority areas based on the themes.</p> <p>Spilling resources across 6 themes? The funds available are not that much. These should be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catalyze a network model toward the conservation of the African Great Lakes</li> <li>• Knowledge management is a missing piece</li> <li>• Networking across African Great Lakes; communication improvements.</li> <li>• Thinking through sustainable financing- capture the fund itself (documenting the working fund), valuation/economic piece so you attract government/private sector, and donor mapping or proactive approach.</li> <li>• Across all lakes, and themes -- the way to get to this is create foundation \$500,000 fund to leverage to the future. The project lens might not be the right one.</li> </ul> <p>Small grants – there are lots of options for those. Might argue for slightly bigger grants.</p> <p>Economics and valuation is an area were short of. People, studies, are missing to have an impact. Make it tight and well-planned. Do work and capacity building together—fisheries economists. Leave methodologies behind.</p> <p>Small community institutions already have conservation investment plans.</p> <p>Strive for visible impact. This might require matching;</p> <p>Matching funds will take more time, and we short on time.</p> <p>Community level projects will be too diffuse. Need to focus on laying a foundation for what comes next. Avoid repeating</p> <p>East Africa Great Lakes Observatory- huge website, and ground to a halt. Revitalize existing?</p> <p>Make better use of mobile technology for info gathering and info dissemination?</p> <p>Transfer technology- for example moving the mobile technology of fisheries, from Gulf of Guinea – to be transferred from where it working.</p>	<p>Goal: Catalyze the findings from the Conference</p> <p>Divide the funds? No, these should try for critical mass on projects</p> <p>Principles of how to select. Co-financing. Information management system / platform especially tracking Sustainable Development Goals</p> <p>Sustainability of the action</p> <p>Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) potential leveraging</p> <p>International financial institutions</p> <p>Fund for what? Information platform that TNC has already started tracking CEPF’s interest in agriculture and tracking SDGs (data pull from UNEP)</p> <p>Twinnings?</p> <p>Joint Research?</p> <p>Involve students to fill gaps/technology to fill gaps</p> <p>Fund on-going activities, can’t start from scratch</p> <p>Grant for action or feasibility study</p>

<p>Pilot projects that can be reproduced on other side is key. Downside of soliciting is it might stifle innovation....The more criteria you put the harder it will be.</p> <p>Maybe we should set the stage for innovation, and we certainly need to set the stage for Do not set up anything that isn't going to go past the grant. Or existing institutions that can be focused in way. We need institutional commitment for the outcome.</p> <p>Short list from small group of advisors, then ask for concept notes, then make decisions based on those projects. Bound the grant range, maybe \$75k to \$125K. Priorities for African partners should be given.</p> <p>We have enough information to ask for what we want, we may ask them to co-finance if they can.</p> <p>Maybe 10 groups to submit, but only take 5. We tell them what we want.</p> <p>Make sure we ask for the extension from MacArthur.</p> <p>Hypothetically – July get together; During the project can we do donor mapping? Or some other way to attract further funding.</p> <p>Aim for success and sustainability. Make sure we hedge our bets with diversity. Cover themes and lakes by having overarching project that create foundation.</p> <p>Leveraging technology</p> <p>Action vs. project development and incubation..... maybe you want to try to have both.</p> <p>Restrictions?: must stay with resolution; seems like not too many.</p>	
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It was reassuring that both working groups identified many similar recommendations during the discussions. The overall recommendations from the working group discussions was that the AGLCF should:

- 1) Address some of the critical issues that have arisen from the AGLC given the available time and resources
- 2) Solicit grants rather than have an open call for proposals
- 3) Focus on fewer, larger grants as opposed to several small grants
- 4) Ensure continuation of a network and information exchange
- 5) Build upon existing initiatives and approaches but assess whether new technology can be applied to improve these practices.
- 6) Lay a foundation for a follow-up conference within five years.

However, it was felt that as the grant period for the AGLCF will end in December 2018, that a no-cost extension should be requested from the MacArthur Foundation to allow sufficient time for the sub-grants to be completed and sub-grantees to submit their final financial and narrative reports to TNC. This request has been made, and a positive response was received in late June 2017.

A second question that was put to the working groups was to, “identify opportunities to leverage these funds”. Table 2 presents the summary of these discussions.

**Table 2: Presentation of the discussions from Working Group 2: Opportunities for leveraging the Fund?**

Group 1	Group 2
<p>Fund ongoing activities, not from scratch. Aim for stimulating on Matching funds            Try to link up with donors for leverage- align with CEPF and other donors (CEPF is doing private sector and agriculture)            Sustainability of the action            A fund for what: getting started with the Information Platform, and have it be fed through the grant, in the topics that exist or some refinement. Make sure it links to SDG – data could provide information for SDGs.            Exchange of experience and practices: Networks and twinnings            Research—joint research and research exchange.</p> <p><b>Question—opportunities to leverage:</b>            Africa Solidarity Trust Fund—multi-million fund to do aquaculture and cassava value chains.            AU-IBAR – might be able to provide some funds.            AfDB—funding windows that might be useful.            Africa Water Facility – small scale investment and project. Africa Climate change Fund—help countries access climate change funds. Some adaptation funds included. \$200,000 to \$500,000 – range. Would help with co-finance for individual projects.            European Union—preparing grant of \$10M for this region of East Africa. Not sure the process, will be managed by KfW or GIZ.            French Development Agency- may have some funds for the region. Cooperation project funds for practical projects like water and sanitation, but also for institutional support.            Fish exports to Europe—can we leverage that?            Maybe in the European market we could leverage</p>	<p><b>Alignment</b>            Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund - CEPF, JRS-Biodiversity Foundation,            Big companies with aligned objectives of water management/biodiversity conservation (e.g. Coca-Cola company),            Climate funds: AF, GCF.            GEF implementing agencies,            Bilateral/multilateral donors/Multilateral Development Banks (GIZ, JICA, AFD, AfDB-Africa Water Facility, EC).</p> <p><b>Contribute</b>            National governments            Foundations or charities (either companies, sport associations, etc. e.g.: JRS, Coca-Cola, Virunga)</p> <p><b>Speculative</b>            Companies of big regional economic sectors: coffee, tea, oil &amp; gas,            Vodafone (data and information),            Water and sanitation utilities,            Bottlers,            Virunga co. (hydropower),            Total co. (oil),            Big tourism company (airlines, big hotel/safari),            Chambers of commerce.</p>

<p>this.</p> <p>Walton Foundation—global commitment to make sustainability in fish.</p> <p>Ornamental Fish- Czech Republic is the biggest importer. How do we go after the fish importer. Take them to task on exploiting the heritage of the African Great Lakes.</p> <p>GEF-7, and GEF small grants.</p> <p>Rwanda has a climate change national fund- FONERWA.</p> <p>GCF – if you can get to full proposal maybe you can get money. There are project development funds available. Conversation with UNDP.</p> <p>Problem is that GCF is a national issue, so the hurdles are high (\$15 to \$286M). Have to start with a country, like Burundi, to sign and then take to the other countries and have it signed by the other 3 countries and then maybe you can get \$1B. Need to do better to make a case for the lakes first. Requires long-term engagement.</p> <p>Maybe we have a project figuring out what we can really do to get long-range money – as one of grants.</p> <p>Could the LTA, LVBC, LVFO be a GCF accredited org--- will be a heavy lift, however. Also, can those organizations really handle it.</p> <p>Dutch government funds their political areas. Aid for trade now. They are interested in WASH mainly, but probably opportunity there. DFID, Swedes, Norweigians,</p> <p>Amazon as lungs—so African Great Lakes as the blood. How do we get the word out.</p> <p>Coca- Cola, Pepsi, other beverage companies.</p> <p>TNC, or a project, will have to refine this.</p> <p>study</p>	
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Overall, the consensus from the second working groups is that these funds should:

- 1) Support foundational grants that respond to the recommendations from the AGLC
- 2) Provide resources to initiate planning and fundraising for a follow-up conference in 2-3 years
- 3) Integrate with other investments in the region including both donor aid and private sector.

In moving forward, the AGLCF should avoid duplicating existing efforts that are underway, and pursue opportunities to leverage these funds through direct support to any projects that are supported and through in-kind contributions. Especially, partnering with the bridge funding being provided to the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot through CEPF and any opportunities through the Margaret A. Cargill philanthropies focus on freshwater in Africa.

Following the presentation and the second working group's recommendations, participants were thanked and the meeting was adjourned.

### **Lessons learned**

The side event was successful despite the delay in starting the meeting, largely because the questions posed were relatively clear cut. However, in reflecting on the meeting a few slight changes might have produced clearer results. These are:

- 1) An additional question to the second working group could have been, "What would make the AGLCF attractive to other donors?" This might have highlighted trying to integrate with the current push to recruit data to track progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and Aichi Targets
- 2) Asking the participants to rank the 26 recommendations from the conference may have provided clearer insights as to which recommendations were thought to be most feasible for the AGLCF to support as a follow-up to the conference.

**Agenda for the African Great Lakes Fund Side Event**  
**Friday May 5<sup>th</sup> 14:00-17:00**  
**Imperial Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda**

- 14:00 Welcome and introductions (TNC/JRW)
- 14:15 Objectives of the side event.  
Motivation for seeding the African Great Lakes Fund (JRW)  
High level summary of the conclusions of the AGLC (Richard Ogutu Ohwayo)
- 14:45 How to use the African Great Lakes Fund to address the conclusions from AGLC?  
(Working groups?)
- 15:30 Tea and coffee break
- 15:45 Opportunities for leveraging the Fund? (Working groups?/Round Robin)  
Other donors in the region?  
In-kind contributions?  
Private sector?
- 16:30 Summary of the conclusions from the discussions (JRW to lead)  
Next steps/road map to providing funding?
- 16:45 Closing session.

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**May 5<sup>th</sup> 2017 Imperial Beach Resort, Entebbe, Uganda.**  
**Participants List**

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