Note for the First Regional Project Steering Committee Meeting
29 November 2005, Entebbe

Transboundary Issues that require attention through the Kagera TAMP

Harmonised laws and regulations are needed at national level and across the basin to address the interlinked issues of agriculture, land degradation, biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, protection of international waters and sustainable livelihoods and food security. To facilitate their application, there is a need for local consultation and capacity building to identify community-driven solutions and resolve conflicts between different user groups (herders - farmers; national parks/reserves - local land resource users; agriculture-environment).

- Bush burning: In addition to harmonization of regulations across the river basin, action is needed to enhance control and management of wild fires through improved community awareness, knowledge of alternative uses (and potential value) of common grazing/range lands.
  - In Rwanda where land is in short supply and all biomass is valued there is far less burning than across the border in Tanzania where savanna areas/ grasslands are regularly burned with devastating effects on the resource base (loss of vegetation cover and biodiversity, soil degradation, erosion and reduced ecosystem function e.g. hydrological regime, nutrient cycling, air pollution, carbon emissions.
  - Conservation agriculture practices and zero grazing options provide the opportunity to promote fire control and management as locally available biomass becomes highly valued for soil cover.

- Livestock issues: There is a need for harmonisation of laws and regulations among countries regarding livestock movements, trade and disease control. Guidance is needed on what is being done through existing transboundary programmes (PACE; tsetse control…) and what additional action if any is required through TAMP. Links could be established with AU-IBAR The project could also look at the impact of land use change, converting land in cattle corridors to e.g. ranches, sugarcane and other large scale farms) and its implications for dry season grazing.

- Water resources management - quality and quantity issues: The Kagera IWRM project and water use in agriculture project, both under NELSAP, and LVEMP are addressing water allocations, information, resource management, improved water use efficiency. However there is a clear need for more capacity building on integrated approaches for land, water and biological resources planning and management. It is suggested that mechanisms for close coordination (information sharing, joint planning and PSC) and collaboration (joint training, databases, etc) are required between the projects. Kagera TAMP could provide guidance on integrated management approaches leading to reduced soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution (e.g. horticulture and paddy) and effects on HEP.

- Soil erosion, sedimentation and impacts on wetlands and flood control: It is proposed that a major role of Kagera TAMP is to improve land management practices (cropping, livestock, etc) through for example, conservation agriculture, agroforestry, zero grazing, fodder and rangeland management and above all integrated ecosystem approaches. This should lead to greatly reduced runoff, soil erosion, sedimentation and siltation of wetlands, rivers and inland waters and increased productivity and improved ecosystem function (hydrological regime, nutrient cycling, carbon emissions etc.)

- Health issues related to water quality: In addressing integrated resources management the Kagera TAMP should facilitate consideration of human health and wellbeing issues. For example, poor water quality as a result of high levels of suspended solids, which exacerbates bacteria and water borne diseases (dysentery, typhoid, cholera, bilharzia, malaria), is most easily addressed through improved wetland function.

- Water hyacinth: Water hyacinth control is a major issue in upstream branches of the Kagera river, with its associated problems of asphyxiation and effects on aquatic life, fish stocks and water quality. As there are two existing projects addressing this issue it is proposed that both the NELSAP water hyacinth project and LVEMP address the upstream areas (especially in Rwanda) which are sources of the water hyacinth affecting also downstream areas.

- River bank management: Regulations are in place in all countries however the protected area for example varies from 10m for rivers and 50m for lakes in Rwanda to 100m? for rivers in Uganda. This creates conflicts and problems of enforcement where the river coincides with the border. Kagera TAMP could help improve bye-laws and obtain community suggestions for improved management.

- Wildlife management: There is a need for harmonization of policies and regulations for wildlife movement and hunting, and harvesting of wildlife species (animal and plant). For example, extend the Akagera national park in Rwanda across the border and river into Tanzania; management options and benefit sharing arrangements for communities living close to the parks and reserves. It is proposed that Kagera TAMP address such issues through its sustainable land management plans.

- Impact of refugees on community based management approaches: Refugee movements influence sustainability and investment in land resources management, as well as threats to security, e.g. Burigi-Akagera boundary areas and Lake Mburo National park.

- Charcoal making and sale: To satisfy charcoal needs in certain areas, wood is being harvested and burnt for charcoal across the borders e.g. Tanzania-Rwanda and Tanzania –Uganda. The TAMP could assess the extent of this issue and propose solutions through sustainable community plans and cross-border consultation.

- Crop pests and diseases: Movement of crop products is leading to spread of diseases. It is suggested that TAMP facilitate the identification and exchange of disease resistant varieties and participatory breeding and propagation approaches among communities in the basin.

- Communications is integral to this project and requires attention in all the components to ensure exchange of information between project management in each country. Use of electronic and digital means should be optimized to reduce transboundary collaboration/coordination costs, speed up communications. For example, enhance the use of information through GIS/RS systems at the river basin level, electronic conferencing for committee meetings and consultation. These tools can also be used for early warning on food security across the basin.

- Lessons for TAMP coordination and facilitation could come from ongoing and past projects such as GEF Cross borders project as well as LVEMP, NELSAP, ASARECA, etc.