

Project Update: May 2013

SUMMARY OF THE 1st AND 2nd FIELD TRIP TO LAKE JIPE TANZANIA

ABSTRACT

Conservation of Jipe tilapia *Oreochromis jipe* and its habitat ecosystem project has received attention at both national and international level due to the involvement of both local communities and environmental journalist to conserve critically endangered *Oreochromis jipe* and its habitat ecosystem in Lake Jipe Tanzania. Since project inception in February 2013, team members conducted two field trips to Lake Jipe. The first field visit to the project site was conducted from 27th February to 2nd March 2013. The second field trip to the lake was conducted from 26th to 30th May 2013. Activities that has been undertaken include: introduction of the project to the village and regional leaders and or local communities and the primary and secondary students; and baseline survey on social economic aspects as well as collection of water quality parameters. Due to the logistical factors, one secondary school (Jipe Secondary School) and one Primary School (Ruru Primary School) were selected for awareness and conservation activities in Lake Jipe. In secondary school, two classes (form two and form three students) were involved in the awareness and Eco-club formation. In primary school, standard five and standard six students were involved in awareness campaign. Also, fishers as well as Village Environmental Committee (VEC) were selected for awareness and conservation activities. Two villages, Kigonigoni and Jipe, were selected for implementing the project. Also Environmental journalist from IPP Media and Radio Sauti Ya Injili visited the field site. Documentary work has also started and still ongoing in the coming field trip. The following is a brief summary of the activities that have already been conducted for the past field visit.

1. ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Environmental education and awareness were provided to the local communities/parents, primary children and secondary students. In Jipe Secondary School, environmental education was provided to 108 students from form two and three classes. In addition, three secondary teachers (two men and one woman) were involved in the environmental education programme in Jipe Secondary. In Ruru Primary School, 68 students from standard five and six were involved during awareness campaign. Also, four teachers were involved during the course of training which could later be realised as means to build their capacity to understand environmental problems facing surrounding areas, further introducing school programmes for environment. Primary and secondary students were given a home work for the coming Poem and Art Competition to be held in June 2013. The theme for this competition is 'Conserve Lake Jipa for our Benefit'.

Awareness education was provided to the Jipe Village Environment Committee (VEC) which constituted 11 people. Also awareness education was provided to 45 local fishermen. Their participation in the education programme not only raised awareness to the environmental threats to *Oreochromis jipe* and its ecosystem but also increased the level of understanding the danger that surrounding communities is going to face if the trend will persist. VEC members

agreed to work with project members in the course of providing education to the local communities especially fishermen.

2. FORMATION OF ECO CLUBS TO THE SCHOOL

After environment awareness campaign to primary and secondary students, invited Environmental Education expert from Mali Hai Club of Tanzania introduced the concept, importance and benefits of environmental clubs to students and their surrounding environment. Also students were informed about the rules of being a member of Mali Hai Clubs of Tanzania. Finally, 80 students from Jipe Secondary School and 44 students from Ruru Primary School agreed to join and form environmental clubs in their schools. Currently, we have Jipe Secondary Environmental Club and Ruru Primary Environmental Club. We have made arrangements to register these two clubs to the Mali Hai Clubs of Tanzania. Mali Hai Clubs of Tanzania is the patron of all environmental clubs in Tanzania. As a rule, members of eco clubs in these schools were also informed that in any area where Mali Hai Clubs work, the area must be green i.e. tree planted and environment conserved.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALIST VISIT

Environmental journalists from IPP Media (Nipashe Newspaper, Radio One and ITV) and Radio Sauti Ya Injili were facilitated by the the Rufford project to the study area so as to observe the threats facing *Oreochromis jipe* and its ecosystems. Information on the ecological danger facing Lake Jipe and surrounding community were expected to publicized in the relevant media to wider audience. After the field visit Nipashe Newspaper publicised the threat facing *Oreochromis jipe* and its habitat ecosystem. Also Radio One through morning programme known as Nipashe (i.e. inform me) publicised the same report for two consecutively days. It was also wonderful that, Radio Sauti Ya Injili through their program known as 'Mazingira Yetu' (i.e. our environment) provided airtime of 30 minutes per week for three weeks consecutively. Through environmental journalist trip, we have received comments, suggestions and solution to the problem from more than 57 people.

4. DOCUMENTARY PRODUCTION

With technical support form Mali Hai Club of Tanzania, two experts came for the production of documentary. All activities regarding projects including awareness campaign to the VEC, student and teachers were documented. Also threats facing *Oreochromis jipe* and ecosystem were documented.