

Lake Simbi Nyaima Eco-Cultural Conservation Project

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August, 2011

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Project Aim;.....	2
3.0 Project Specific Objectives;	2
4.0 Activities.....	2
4.1 Eco-cultural Research and Documentation.....	2
4.2 Training and Capacity Building	5
4.3 Nature Education and Public Awareness	6
5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation.....	7

1.0 Introduction

Lake Simbi Nyaima is a crater lake a few kilometers from the shores of Lake Victoria. The lake is critical transitional refugia of migrating lesser flamingoes from Rift Valley lakes due to its favourable climate and food abundance. Likewise home to diverse resident birds. Luo tribe attaches great importance to the site because of its legendary story. However, anthropogenic activities ; pollution and clearing of fringe vegetation threaten the lake. The situation is exacerbated by lack of any protection regime. This project aim to mobilize local communities and other like-minded stakeholders towards restoration, management and conservation of the lake.

2.0 Project Aim;

- i. To mobilize the grass-root communities for the restoration, management and conservation of Lake Simbi Nyaima.

3.0 Project Specific Objectives;

- a) To undertake eco-cultural research on Lake Simbi Nyaima flora, fauna and cultural attributes to inform its conservation initiatives.
- b) To train and build the capacity of Lake Simbi Nyaima Conservancy Officials and Volunteers on integrated lake ecosystem conservation and conservancy management so as to spearhead conservation initiatives at the grass-root level.
- c) To undertake nature education and public awareness for desired attitudinal and behavioural change among community members and other stakeholders towards the conservation of the lake.

4.0 Activities

4.1 Eco-cultural Research and Documentation

The survey was spearhead by project team and involved local community members, volunteers and officials of Lake Simbi Nyaima Conservancy. It involved baseline-survey and recording flora, fauna and cultural attributes of the lake. Moreover, threats, livelihoods, locals' perceptions and values on the lake conservation were recorded. The baseline information on the lake biophysical and cultural aspects is informing conservation action and evaluation. There was emphasis on birds' survey and this has resulted into Lake Simbi Nyaima preliminary birds checklist which will be populated by future birds survey and counts.



Photo I: Lake Simbi Nyaima



Photo II: Lake Simbi Nyaima



Photo III: Lake Simbi Nyaima Birds Survey



Photo IV: Lake Simbi Nyaima Birds Survey



Photo V: Lake Simbi Nyaima Birds Survey

4.2 Training and Capacity Building

This targeted officials and volunteers of established **Lake Simbi Nyaima Conservancy** .The aim was to empower the target group to be able to spearhead conservation initiatives. The participants were trained on:

- a) Nature restoration
- b) Conservation education and advocacy
- c) Lake monitoring and research
- d) Eco-cultural tourism products development, management and promotion
- e) Natural resources co-management
- f) Tour guiding
- g) Group leadership
- h) Conservancy management and processing or dynamics



Photo VI: Birds Survey Team and Local Tour Guide/Member of the Conservancy

4.3 Nature Education and Public Awareness

The project has managed to undertake 12 nature education and public awareness outreaches for attitudinal and behavioural change for sustainable utilization and conservation of the lake. Most of the outreaches targeted community networks such as markets, beaches and schools and employed applied live drama and puppetry. Our next outreaches will target schools and will employ video shows and outdoor practical or experiential actions.



Photo VII: Drama Outreaches in Local Schools

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

The project implementation trajectory is advancing smoothly and milestones in activities outputs are being recorded. The intervention is gaining momentum in terms of community, local administration and other stakeholders support in an area hardly outreached with nature conservation project except for numerous hit and run projects or intervention ideas which have being in pipeline for prolonged period of time. The final report will illustrate and cover the results of this project in a more detailed and graphic form.