



Lake Victoria: Local and Trans-boundary Sustainable Development around the Lake

24.10-17.11.2011

International Training Conducted by the Weitz Centre for Development Studies and the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies

Lake Victoria is Africa's largest lake and the world's largest tropical lake. With a surface area of 68,800 Sq. km, it supports a population of about 30 million people, through large scale fishing, agriculture, local industries, tourism and related activities. Lake Victoria is shared by Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, and its catchment area includes Rwanda and Burundi.

The strategic role of the lake and the critical importance of the region to the livelihoods and well being of its 30 million inhabitants and to East Africa's economy and stability are well acknowledged. Lake Victoria and its Basin have been designated by the East African Community (EAC) as an "area of common interest" and a "regional economic growth zone". The region also benefited from various sustainable planning and management initiatives promoted by international development institutions; among them SIDA's Lake Victoria Initiative, UN-Habitat City Development Strategies, UN-Habitat's Lake Victoria's Region Water and Sanitation Initiative, Millennium Cities Initiative and many more.

MASHAV – Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation - is active in the region in areas of agriculture, water, environment, health, education and municipal management and lately signed a MoU with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) for supporting sustainable economic development around Lake Victoria via activities in the fields of water, agriculture and ecosystem support.

The main challenges faced by decision makers around the lake include: rapid urbanization, very high population density (the region surrounding the lake is the most densely populated rural area in Africa); high rate of poverty; poor conditions of sanitation and water provision; controlling water hyacinth, as well as other elements of environmental degradation and pollution, which severely affects fish stocks and other elements of agricultural production; and strengthening waste and energy management in the region, within the context of sustainable development.

Importantly, the trans-boundary nature of the lake, which serves five countries and dozens of localities, poses a significant challenge in achieving sustainable management of the lake. This requires special attention in promoting coordinated action and decision making around the lake. Additionally, there is a need in strengthening local authorities' capacities and their ability to leverage initiatives in these areas to local development, such as in the fields of community development and promoting local economic development

LVRLAC – Lake Victoria region Local Authorities Cooperation – is a natural partner to this international training activity as it is a channel to engage Local Authorities and communities in environmental protection, poverty reduction and sustainable development in the Lake Victoria basin

Participants of the international training will benefit from the experience gained by Israel in trans-boundary water management (mostly in the field of managing the Jordan Valley, the Dead Sea region and the Arava Valley in cooperation with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan), in management of the sea of Galilee basin, in municipal partnerships for sustainable development and in leveraging water, waste and energy initiatives for local development, and other related areas.

Participants will also benefit from the collaboration between the Weitz Center and the Arava Institute. Both have on-going experience in activities around the lake and each will bring its unique expertise – Weitz center in local development and municipal management; and Arava Institute in environmental aspects and trans-boundary collaboration – to the training.

The international training will provide participants with practical tools to enhance the capacities of regional institutions, local authorities and their partners to promote sustainable management of Lake Victoria; to leverage assets and initiatives for strategic local and regional development; and to strengthen partnerships around the lake.

More specifically, the international training should permit participants to benefit from the Israeli experiences in the following areas:

Water management practices: the participants will learn through discussions with leading Israeli experts and study visits to Israel's water bodies on the Israeli experience in freshwater lake management and the development of sustainable agriculture in the catchment area.

Waste management with specifications to water bodies: The training course will examine practices of municipal wastewater treatment; turning waste to energy projects; treatment of non-point source agricultural waste; ecosystem service management; solar energy and more. A special tribute will be given to the employment of these practices under a lake environment.

Transboundary management of water resources: drawing from the Israeli experience, the seminar will examine the required conditions for sustainable management of the Lake, both from the international perspective, and the municipal perspective. Examined topics will include: the search for incentives for cooperation, the challenge of joint monitoring, and channels to ensure coordinated actions among municipalities. The training course will emphasize strengthening linkages among municipalities and between sectors around Lake Victoria, in order to support networking between localities; develop municipal and regional economic development mechanisms and maximize their benefits from utilizing the Lake's catchment area.

Lake front and regional economic development with focus on water, waste and energy: Utilizing local resources to support local economic development: strengthening local economic development, from institutional capacity building, strengthening strategy planning skills and regional planning, to promoting rural and water-based tourism, strengthening SMEs, utilizing local practices as arts and crafts to strengthen household-based development and strengthening agricultural development.

The training involves presentations, workshops, discussions, field trips and meetings with professionals and decision makers. The training also involves personal assignments and formulation of small scale planning projects in small groups.

The first 16 days of the training will be conducted at the Weitz Center in Rehovot (30 minutes south-east of Tel-Aviv) and the final 9 days participants will be staying at the Arava Institute, in Kibbutz Ketura in the Arava desert, 30 minutes north of Eilat.

Selection of candidates

The seminar targets policy-makers and high officials from localities, regional institutions and organizations and ministries directly working within the region; from Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya. Their experience might vary and include topics such as water management, fishing, municipal management, local and regional planning, wastewater treatment, economic development, environmental management, tourism etc.

The selected participants are required to submit prior to the seminar: a short case on waste management // water management // energy – in the context of local sustainable development; as well as projects ideas for further development throughout the training.

Application Process

Candidates must complete the appropriate application forms (including health certificate, declaration etc.) available at the Israeli diplomatic mission in their country, or through the Internet <http://mashav.mfa.gov.il>, www.weitz-center.org. The completed forms should be submitted at the Israeli mission in your area and sent to our office (ronitshp@netvision.net.il) not later than October 3, 2011.

Scholarships

The scholarships includes: 25 days with full board, training, study visits, tourist visits, transport from/to the airport in Israel and medical insurance (not including dental care, eye glasses, pregnancy and chronic illnesses).

Participants have to take into account to book flights for the dates covered by the scholarship (arrival on 23-24 of October and departure on November 17th). All expenses or liabilities beyond this term shall be covered entirely by the participant.

Arrival and transportation

A Taxi Company called "MONI SITON TOURS" will transport the participants to "Reisfeld Residence" of the Faculty of Agriculture, Rehovot, Israel, where the students will stay during the seminar. Transportation will **be free of charge only by this company.**

The MONI SITON TOURS counter is located after the customs, at the gallery of floor 1 of Arriving Passengers' hall, near gate 2.

Insurance during the stay

MASHAV will provide insurance for the participants for the duration of the seminar. The medical insurance will benefit the participants during their stay in Israel, except for dental treatments, pregnancy, eyeglasses, and chronic illnesses. MASHAV, Weitz Center and the "Reisfeld Residence" are not responsible in case of lost or stolen personal belongings.

About MASHAV

MASHAV – Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation - at Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs was founded in late 1957, and is responsible for the design, coordination and implementation of the State of Israel's development cooperation programs. MASHAV concentrates on human and institutional capacity building by sharing Israel's own development experience and expertise, imparting know-how and transferring innovative technologies and tested methodologies adaptable to developing country needs. MASHAV's approach is to ensure social, economic and environmental sustainable development, joining the international community's efforts to implement the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. In events of natural disasters, MASHAV also provides humanitarian assistance and participates in reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts. <http://mashav.mfa.gov.il>

About Weitz Center

The Weitz Center for Development Studies is a leader in capacity building for sustainable development. Our work is dedicated to enhancing the efforts of international agencies, governments, communities, civil society and private sector organizations to achieve positive social and economic change worldwide. Towards this end, we offer high quality training and consulting services, highlighting our practical, assets-based and integrated approach to development. <http://www.weitz-center.org/>

About Arava Institute (www.arava.org)

The Arava Institute for Environmental Studies is the premier environmental teaching and research program in the Middle East, preparing future Arab and Jewish leaders to cooperatively solve the region's environmental challenges. Located in the heart of Israel's Arava desert, the Arava Institute is a unique oasis of environmental education, research, and international cooperation.

Students and researchers at the Arava Institute explore a range of environmental issues from a regional, interdisciplinary perspective while learning peace-building and leadership skills. The studies are international in scope, with a student body comprised of Jordanians, Palestinians, Israelis, and North Americans, as well as other nationalities. The Arava Institute gives Jewish, Arab and other students and researchers a unique opportunity to study and live together for an extended period of time; building networks and understanding that will enable future cooperative work and activism in the Middle East and beyond. Here, the idea that nature knows no political borders is more than a belief. It is a fact, a curriculum, and a way of life.

Additional Information

Any additional information is available at:

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