Fisheries Statistics for Lake Victoria, Tanzania

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Co-management of Lake Victoria Fisheries

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Abstract

Time series fisheries statistics data mainly from Frame Surveys, Catch Assessment Surveys and Fisheries Annual Statistics Reports for Lake Victoria from 1967–2016 were collected from the Fisheries Development Division in Tanzania. These surveys and reports comprised relevant information and data on fish catches and fishing effort. The data were analysed and used to describe variations and trends in the number of fishers, number of fishing crafts, fish weight, catch per boat, total number of gillnets, beach seines, longline hooks, outboard and inboard engines. Frame Survey results showed an increasing trend in the number of fishers and fishing crafts, with the highest number of fishers and fishing crafts being 109,397 and 31,773, respectively in 2016. Longline hooks increased from 2,200,901 in 2000 to 8,163,119 hooks in 2016. In general, the catch per unit effort (CPUE) for all species was high at 39 mt/boat/year in 1967 and decreased to 8 mt/boat/year in 2014. However, CPUE for Lates niloticus has increased since the late 1980s, with the highest CPUE of 19.22 mt/boat/year being recorded in 1995, and from 2000 it decreased gradually to 7 mt/boat/year in 2014. As the fisheries statistics show an increase in fishing pressure over the years, it is evident that there is a sign of overfishing. For that matter, effective fisheries management is needed for the three riparian states to safeguard the sustainable use of fishery resources in the lake and to provide data that can be used in the evaluation of the fisheries objectives.