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Theme: Development
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Title: **Regulatory Compliance in Lake Victoria Fisheries**

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Abstract: Lake Victoria is the worlds' second largest and Africa's largest fresh water body and shared by Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The Nile perch was introduced to Lake Victoria in the 1950s and experienced explosive population growth in the 1970s. Since the 1990s landings have been above or about 500 000 tons mainly consisting of three species, the Nile perch, tilapia and dagaa. The open access fishery has experienced a dramatic decline in catch per vessel and to compensate many fishers violate the regulation by using smaller mesh size than legal minimum size. This paper analyzes the causes of regulatory compliance in a developing country context. In addition to traditional deterrence variables such as risk of detection and expected gains from violation, we explore potential reasons for following the rules such as being moral and doing the right thing, obeying the rules due to peer pressure from other fishers, perceiving the regulation as legitimate, and perceiving that they (the fishers) have been involved in the regulation process. We use self-reported data from Tanzanian artisanal fishers in Lake Victoria and focus our analysis on the minimum mesh-size regulation. The results indicate that fishers adjust their violation rate with respect to changes in deterrence variables such as probability of detection and punishment. Fishers also react to legitimacy and social variables, which inter alia means complying more when they perceive the regulation to be legitimate as well as when they are influenced by peer groups. We also find a small group of persistent violators who appear to react neither to normative aspects nor to traditional deterrence variables. These fishers systematically violate the mesh-size regulation and when arrested, bribe their way out of punishment.