



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



**PRESS STATEMENT ON PLUMMETING PRICES OF
FISH IN UGANDA**

By

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FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND FISH PRICES IN UGANDA

1.0. BACKGROUND

- i. The fisheries sub-sector in Uganda contributes significantly to the National goals of Poverty reduction, Economic growth and National Economic Development.
- ii. The subsector has over time experienced decline in fish catches in the major water bodies leading to resource use conflicts. Driven by the increasing population and the corresponding demand for fish in the region and international markets, the use of indiscriminate methods have led to overfishing.
- iii. There is still trade in illegal unregulated and unrecorded (IUU) immature fish.
- iv. The fisheries sector continues to suffer with weak governance in terms of legal and institutional frameworks that are important in leading the sector to sustainability. Fish conservation measures and co-management arrangements remain weak yet they are key in resource sustainability.
- v. The annual production from capture fisheries for 2018 was estimated at 345,802 tons down from 398,000 tons in 2017 and 461,000 tons in 2015.
- vi. Dear Stakeholders, while fish catches from Lake Victoria have started increasing, fish catches from other water bodies are still going down because of lack of enforcement activities. The Fisheries Protection Force has been concentrating on Lake Victoria and is just moving out to other water bodies. It is hoped that the fish catches for 2019 will be much higher.
- vii. While exports to international markets rose from 4,751 tons worth US\$5.308 M in 1991 and peaked at 36,616 Mt valued at US \$143.618 M in 2005 the export revenues have declined because of declined fish catches. A number of fish processing factories closed with only 6 operating at the beginning of 2018 rising to 10 by October 2018.

2.0 DECLINING PRICES OF FISH

- i. Dear stakeholders, concerns have been raised at Parliament level and by the Association of Fishers and Lake Users on the ever falling fish prices with fishers planning to put down their tools and stop fishing and supplying fish to factories.
- ii. It is important to note that prices of fish in Uganda like any commodity are dictated by supply and demand both on the domestic market and international markets.

- iii. On the domestic market, there has been increased catches of Tilapia following improved fishing methods as a result of improved enforcement activities. While this is positive, the increased supply has naturally led to the decline of fish prices following the law of demand and supply.
- iv. The prices of Nile perch are governed by the demand in the international markets. Currently, the orders in the International market have reduced and so have the prices per kilogram. At the beginning of the year the price per kilogram in the international market averaged US \$ 5.8 per kilogram but this has been steadily falling with the average falling as low as US\$2.94 per kilogram.
- v. At local level, the factories are offering prices ranging from 11,500/= per kilogram for fish of 1.5 – 2 kg and up to 35,000/= for bigger fish. The price of Nile perch in the local market is dictated by the price of fish maw. Fish with fish maw cost more per kilogram than fish where fish maw has been received.
- vi. The prices of other species have remained unchanged and overall, Uganda is still offering better prices in the region compared to Tanzania and Kenya
- vii. It is also reported that there is an influx of Tilapia fish in the region from developed countries but not the case in Uganda although it passes enrooted to DRC hence reduced market at regional level
- viii. The fact that in past immature fish was being smoked or sundried for the regional markets and now that the current enforcement regime has curtailed this practice, such fish mass which is expected to have now increased (i.e. allowed to mature) is now supply locally.

3.0 MEASURES IN PLACE

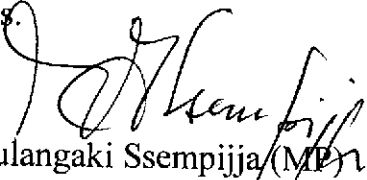
Dear Stakeholders, my Ministry is still committed to addressing challenges that arise in the fishing industry working with all stakeholders both in the public and private sector. **The following measures/strategies are being implemented:**

- i. Guidelines for trade in artisanal processed fish have been developed to guide regional trade in smoked fish and this will open up market avenue with high shelf life fish products
- ii. Guidelines for fish maw handling and trade have also been developed and issued to stakeholders with the purpose of providing for a streamlined value chain flow and involvement of all actors, with minimum standards for any gutting facility for fish at local market level and including facilitating government revenue generation.

- iii. The Ministry has updated the lists of all fish processing establishments and submitted to international markets with a view of expanding our market for Nile perch
- iv. In collaboration with Walimi Fish Cooperative Society a Fish market has been opened at KCCA market at Wandegaya for farmed fish and a cold chain system is required to facilitate marketing of quality fish in Kampala but can also act as a regional market access point.
- v. Initiatives are on to promote certification and eco-labelling (branding) of our fish products so that they can access higher products at international level
- vi. The Ministry has a new National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy, approved by Cabinet in 2018 and strategies there in are being implemented on top of the above aiming at improving the fisheries subsector along the whole value chain and working with all MDA and stakeholders.
- vii. The Ministry is promoting improved fish production technologies to ensure low cost of production and hence facilitate levelled completion in the market

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Ministry calls upon all stakeholders especially the fishing community and fish processors to desist from actions that may disrupt and interfere with the market accessibility. Stakeholders in the fisheries subsector will continue to be engaged on equitable benefit sharing from the fishing industry while cautious of maintaining our market by observing high standard of quality and safety of fish and all fish products.


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