

# Water security for East Africa

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## Summary

Water is critical to leveraging development opportunities. The LVBC and IIASA have joined forces to co-develop and use science to analyze current and future water-related challenges and find solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The collaboration, underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding, has been supported by subsequent *Research for Development* projects including:

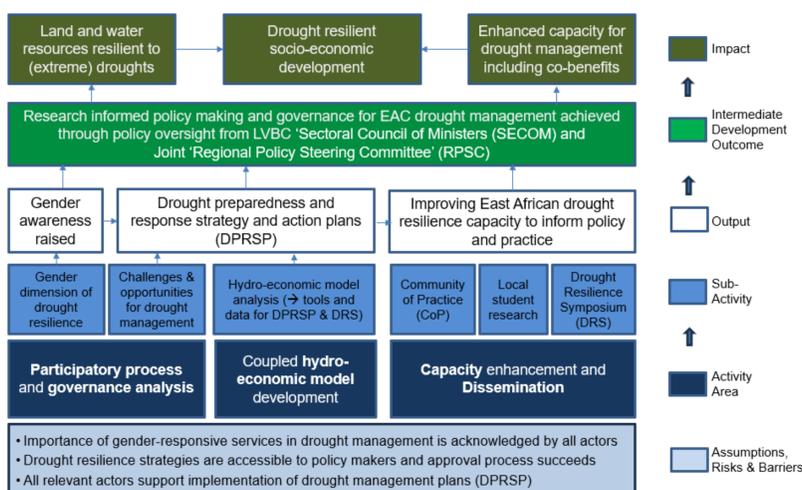
- Water Futures and Solutions for East Africa (2017-2019)
- Scaling Resilient Water and Agricultural Systems in East Africa (ScaleWAYS, 2019-2022)
- Resilience to extreme drought events in East Africa (INTERVENE; since 2024)

**LVBC-IIASA synergies:** IIASA, an international research institute excelling in forward-looking assessment studies, and the LVBC, a transboundary water commission of the EAC, harness mutual benefits in stakeholder-informed, scientific systems modelling to test the feasibility and robustness of solution pathways for sustainable water management in East Africa.

## Impacts

- The above projects informed the ‘Water quality policy for the Lake Victoria’ and ‘Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM)’ policy, which were approved by the Sectoral Council of Ministers of the Lake Victoria Basin.
- Scientific knowledge is anchored in a Community of Practice (CoP) coordinated by the LVBC. The CoP convenes a pool of experts and practitioners for knowledge exchange and capacity strengthening, to increase the visibility and outreach of the research results and enhance the impact of the CoP members in resilient water and agricultural systems.
- ScaleWAYS and INTERVENE analysis receives guidance from and supports programming for the basin and informs policy making by the Lake Victoria Basin ‘Sectoral Council of Ministers’ and ‘Regional Policy Steering Committee’. These forums are convened by LVBC, meet bi-annually and include relevant ministers and technical experts of all EAC member states.
- Strengthen data and modelling capacity of LVBC by enhancing and complementing LVBC’s data and information systems.

### INTERVENE Theory of Change (ToC)



The ToC summarizes the intervention logic of the *Research for Development* project “Resilience to extreme drought events in East Africa” (INTERVENE).

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## Multilateral partners

**Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC)**, Kisumu, Kenya

The mandate of LVBC, a legal entity of the East African Community (EAC), is to promote, facilitate and coordinate activities of different actors towards sustainable development and poverty eradication of the Lake Victoria Basin.

**Water Security Research Group (WAT), Biodiversity & Natural Resources Program, IIASA**, Laxenburg, Austria

The WAT mandate is to provide the scientific foundation needed for addressing water security across scales and to help bridge science-policy-practices gaps in water management by leading integrated assessments of water resources towards a water secure future.



Image credit: Robert Burtscher

## Facilitators and challenges

Local stakeholder integration informs science to better achieve implementation of project results. A **Theory of Change** guides research questions and scale activities to deliver meaningful Impact.

**Challenges** include: (i) Divergent national interests and Priorities, (ii) Varying institutional and legal frameworks, (iii) Reluctance to share data due to political or security concerns coupled with inadequate standardization.

The following **enablers** help to overcome these challenges: (i) Shared environmental and economic interests manifested in designation of the basin as a common economic growth zone; (ii) Enabling and harmonized institutional and legal framework that support regional collaboration, and coordination mechanism for joint planning, monitoring, and implementation of regional projects.



Stakeholder Workshop: “Solutions for a water secure East Africa in 2050”, Entebbe, 4-6 December 2017