

# 11<sup>TH</sup> WORLD LAKES CONFERENCE NAIROBI RESOLUTION

November 4, 2005

This Nairobi Resolution was endorsed by a high-level African Water Ministerial Dialogue on *“Management of Lake Basins for their Sustainable Use: Global Experience and African Issues”* held during the 11<sup>th</sup> World Lakes Conference in Nairobi between October 31-November 4, 2005. According to the UNEP Executive Director, Klaus Topfer, “this biennial World Lakes Conference, held for the first time in Africa, represents a significant step in the efforts of the international community to put our planet on a sustainable development path. It reinforces the commitments of the 170 Heads of States and Government at the 2000 Millennium Summit, renewed by the World Leaders at the 2005 World Summit in New York in September. They have recognized the need for high-level attention and significantly increased resources to achieve the water related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the 2005 Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) targets, in clear recognition that water underpins all other MDGs”.

The Ministerial Dialogue underscored the principles of the World Lakes Vision launched at the Third World Water forum in Kyoto in 2003, the recommendations of the Report of the Lake Basin Management Initiative (LBMI) entitled, “Managing Lakes and their Basins for Sustainable use: A Report for Lake Managers and Stakeholders” launched at the 11<sup>th</sup> World Lakes Conference<sup>1</sup> and the proceedings of the 11<sup>th</sup> World Lakes Conference as important contributions for enhancing equitable access to water resources for ensuring food security, addressing poverty and promoting economic development in Africa.

The Ministerial Dialogue recognizes:

- That lakes, both natural and manmade, are essential elements of the overall water resources system.
- That lakes and lake basins provide many uses for sustainable livelihoods and economic development, and are important natural habitats for global biodiversity, as well as serve religious and cultural values.
- That transboundary lakes provide opportunities for regional integration and cooperation.
- That lakes and their basins are fragile and complex ecosystems under serious stress.
- That lake basins have some unique characteristics often with peculiar management needs.
- The important role of science in informing public policy and management decision making.
- The essential role of planning and sustained financial support for effective lake basin management.

The Ministerial Dialogue reinforces:

- That lake basin management is critical for sustainable development and responsible economic growth.
- The central role lakes and reservoirs play in integrated water resources management.
- The importance of both investments and good governance for sustainable lake basin management and development.
- The need for developing sustainable institutions—from community based to local/National level to Transboundary level management structures.

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<sup>1</sup> It will also be distributed at Ramsar's 9<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP 9) meeting in Uganda from November 7 to 11, 2005 and at the Fourth World Water Forum in Mexico in March 2006.

- The need for sound policies for promoting sustainable lake basin management.
- The essential role of all stakeholders, including the private sector, in the planning and management decision making of lake basins.
- The need for mainstreaming gender in integrated water resources management.
- The cooperative management of transboundary lake basins.
- The use of both scientific and local knowledge to support management decision making
- The need for good planning and mobilization of sustainable financing for lake basin management.

The Ministerial Resolution calls for making integrated management of lake basins a long-term element of:

- Government and public priorities.
- Planning and financing processes.
- Integrated water resources management.
- Habitat and biodiversity conservation programs.
- Economic development programs.

The Ministerial Resolution recommended:

- The strengthening of local capacities for managing lake basins in a sustainable manner
- The establishment of a center for excellence in Africa for promoting a new generation of water and environmental planners and managers with skills in lake sciences, limnology and aquatic and environmental sciences.
- That the UN consider establishing an International Year for Lakes.
- The mobilization of funds for supporting IWRM to meet the MDGs.