



JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE BLUE ECONOMY SECTORS OF UGANDA

22 February 2023, Speke Resort Hotel Munyonyo-Kampala, Uganda

The Africa Blue Economy Strategy was adopted by the African Union Heads of State and Government in February 2020 having identified development of the Blue Economy as a priority towards achieving the aspirations of 'the African Union Agenda 2063. At the regional level, IGAD developed a Regional Blue Economy Strategy and its Implementation Plan to guide the Blue Economy implementation at regional level while increasing cooperation and regional integration, and strengthening support to the Member States to effectively translate policies into concrete actions. In the IGAD context, the Blue Economy (BE) encompasses both marine and fresh water environments. It thus translates to the sustainable use and the conservation of oceans, seas, coastlines, lakes, rivers, wetlands and groundwater.

Uganda's Vision 2040 which is aligned to the African Union Agenda 2063, envisions "a transformed society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years", to be implemented through Six 5-year development plans. Under the third National Development Plan (NDP III), Uganda intends to harness and sustainably utilise the country's natural resources for socio-economic development for the benefit of the current and future generations.

Uganda is endowed with abundant natural resources including lakes, rivers and wetlands which comprise Blue Economy resources, covering 20% of her surface area. These BE resources have been estimated to have a potential of generating an annual value of USD 25 Billion if exploited and developed in a concerted manner and sustainable manner. Currently, however due to lack of institutional capacity and given the

socio-cultural context, these BE resources generate less than 20% of their potential. To realise the potential of the BE and maximise the benefits for wealth creation within Uganda, requires that the multiple links between the BE sectors be strengthened through the development of a BE Strategy.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Water and Environment, which is the BE Focal Ministry, with the support of IGAD, organized a three-day validation and adoption workshop of the National Blue Economy Strategy from 20th-22nd February 2023 at Speke Resort Hotel Munyonyoi in Kampala. The first two days involved a review by technical officers from the BE thematic sectors of Water & Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Maritime Transport, Tourism and Wildlife, Energy and Mineral Resources, and Foreign Affairs to finalize the strategy and prepare a declaration.

This third day has been dedicated to the Honourable Ministers of: Water & Environment; Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries; Works and Transport; Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities; Energy and Mineral Development; and Foreign Affairs to adopt the Goals and Objectives to guide the planning and development of the Blue Economy sector in Uganda as a basis for the National Blue Economy Strategy.

The vision of the National Blue Economy Strategy is an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that significantly contributes to Uganda's socio-economic transformation and growth. The objective of the BE Strategy is to guide the development of an inclusive and sustainable blue economy to significantly contribute to national socio economic transformation and growth.

The Strategy has the following four core goals:

Goal 1: Strengthen capacities, skills and knowledge management of relevant institutions and actors for enhanced prioritization and development of the Blue Economy

Goal 2: Develop laws, policies, programmes, strategies and innovative approaches for resource mobilization for the acceleration and implementation of priority Blue Economy interventions.

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Goal 3:Upscale scientific and evidence based advocacy and awareness across government and other stakeholder categories to raise the profile and relevance of the Blue Economy to national development and transformation.

Goal 4:Establish national governance and coordination platforms to ensure that the processes and practices through which the Blue Economy resources are developed, managed and utilized are jointly decided upon and regulated.

Therefore, we, the Ministers responsible for the Blue Economy, hereby on 22nd February 2023, adopt theabove vision, strategic goals and objectivesfor the National Blue Economy Strategy of Uganda (2023 – 2027). This Strategy will be the platform for inter-sectoral engagement and planning of the development of the Blue Economy resources, related industries and sectors in Uganda.

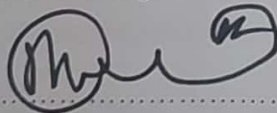
DONE AT KAMPALA, UGANDA this 22nd Day of February 2023.



Hon. Aisha Sekindi
Minister of State for Water and Environment (Water)



Hon. Dr. Rwamirama Bright Kanyontore. Ph.D
Minister of State for Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (Animal Industry)



Hon. Fred Byamukama
Minister of State for Works and Transport, (Transport)