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# Using foresight as a process for regional policy coordination and alignment in the Lake Victoria Basin

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# Background

- Environmental governance challenges are transboundary
- Require a policy response coherent across national borders
- East Africa: transboundary policy responses are a challenge
  - Regional initiatives: LVBC, LVFO
  - National policies largely disconnected, focused on national development agendas





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- Countries in the Lake Victoria Basin (LVB) region heavily dependent on shared resources (Ntiba et al. 2001; Odada et al. 2004)
- LVB recognized for its globally important biodiversity (WWF 2008)
- Agriculture is the region's main economic sector (World Bank 2016) - expanding agriculture has adverse implications for the region's biodiversity and ecosystem services



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- UNEP-WCMC initiated a two-year project in collaboration with ARCOS and CCAFS
- Objective: *to ensure that land-use related decision-making in the LVB takes into consideration biodiversity and ecosystem services and is based on sound information and on the consideration of trade-offs between food production and conservation goals.*
- To address these issues adequately, policy alignment and coordination across the region is key

## Foresight

- We designed a participatory foresight process to coordinate and align policy responses to future challenges for nature conservation in the LVB
- Foresight methodology can offer a systemic, future-oriented approach
  - Demonstrated potential for bridging jurisdictional boundaries
  - Allows for greater appreciation of systemic nature of future environmental challenges

## Scenario methodology

- Rooted in socio-ecological systems science
- As such, it can help in complex decision-making contexts (Vervoort et al. 2014)
- Exploratory scenarios: multiple plausible futures (Van Notten 2003)
- 1) address uncertainty and complexity, rather than forecasting a single future; and  
2) challenge underlying assumptions in multi-stakeholder contexts by engaging multiple perspectives (Vervoort et al. 2014)

# Methods

## Four phases

1. Inception workshop for policy identification
2. Selection of policies and plans to work on
3. Scenario-guided policy review and regional policy harmonization workshop
4. Close collaboration with governing bodies responsible for the reviewed policies and plans

# Methods

Phase 1 and 2 – inception workshop and selection of policies and plans

Policy theme	Selected focus policy/plan
Food and nutrition security	National Food and Nutrition Strategic Plan (Rwanda)
Agriculture	MoALF Strategic Plan (Kenya) Plan National d'Investissement Agricole (Burundi)
Livestock	National Livestock Policy (Tanzania)
Water	National Water Policy (Uganda)

# Methods

## Phase 3 – session 1

- Participants divided into four groups – consisting of representatives from each LVB country
- Each group focused on 1 policy theme
  - Selected policy/plan
  - Policies/plans on same policy theme from other LVB countries

# Methods

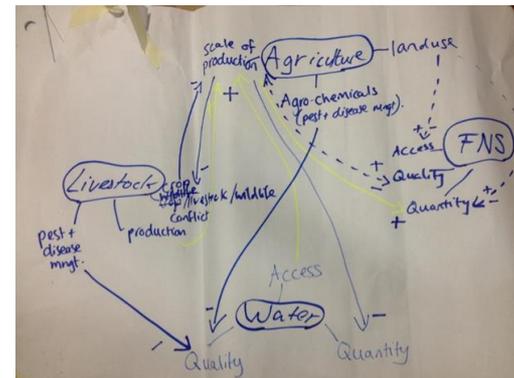
## Phase 3 – session 1

- What can be improved in focus policy/plan?
- What can be learned from other countries policies/plans on the same policy theme?

# Methods

## Phase 3 – session 1

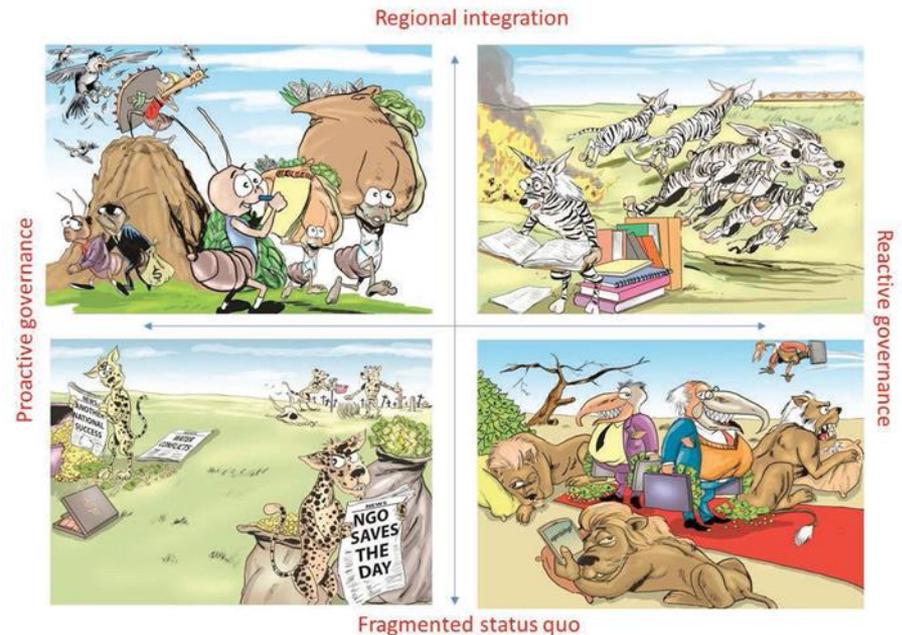
- How can the focus policy/plan harness regional initiatives/EAC level plans and visions?
- What can be learned from policies/plans on other policy themes?
  - Systems approach
  - Conceptual maps on interrelationships between policy themes



# Methods

## Phase 3 – session 2

- Scenario-guided review
  - CCAFS East-Africa scenarios
- Selected policies and plans
- Recommendations from session 1



## Results – Uganda

- Initial insight: policies are perceived as too broad to be critically examined using scenarios
- However, each scenario brought a new idea to strengthen the policy
  - Data availability and evaluation
  - Water policy to guide regional harmonisation
  - Make the policy economically feasible and attractive
- National level workshop: translated recommendations into policy elements

## Discussion

- Novel approach that allows for regional dialogue
- Disadvantages of working on policies instead of implementation plans
- Limitations in terms of time and resources
- Selection policies and plans – dependent on policy cycles
  - Disadvantage turned into a benefit – systems approach
- EAC – coordinating role?



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