



HOMA BAY COUNTY

FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT POLICY

HOMA BAY COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF BLUE ECONOMY,
FISHERIES, MINING AND DIGITAL
ECONOMY
COUNTY FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE
DEVELOPMENT POLICY
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GLOSSARY

Aquaculture: the planned and controlled farming of aquatic organisms including fish, mollusks, crustaceans and aquatic plants for nutrition, income and livelihoods.

Affirmative action: include actions undertaken to correct cultural and historical gender imbalance, physical segregation and regional disparities in-order to promote equity.

Aquarium Fish: means any fish including brood, fry or ova thereof which are or maybe intended for capture by or sale to any person or purpose or displaying in a tank or aquarium.

Aqua parks: is an aggregation of fishponds or cages in a specific designated area on terrestrial land or water body or ponds or dams in marine or freshwater bodies for aquaculture research, education and commercial development.

Beach Management Unit: means an organization of fishers, fish traders, boat owners, fish processors and other beach stakeholders at designated fish landing sites who depend on fisheries activities for their livelihoods.

Cage culture: is the rearing of fish and other aquatic organisms in closed systems immersed in water for purposes of rearing the organisms in captivity in open water bodies.

Closed seasons: Closed seasons prevent people from fishing at certain times of the year to protect fish species at vulnerable times in their life cycle, such as spawning areas.

Critical habitat: critical habitat is vital to the survival or recovery of fish species. The habitat may be an identified breeding site, nursery area or feeding ground. For species at risk, these habitats are of crucial importance, and must be identified and included in recovery strategies or action plans.

Extensive fish farming: Raising fish under conditions of little or incomplete control over the growing process and production conditions where their growth is dependent upon endogenously supplied nutrient inputs.

Fisheries: refers to the industry or occupation devoted to the catching, processing or selling of fish, shell fish or other aquatic animals.

Fish Breeding Area: are particular places in water where fish spawn and nurture their young ones.

Fish Breeding and Nursery areas: These are areas where fish lay (spawn) their eggs and nurse their young ones.

Fishing Capacity: The maximum fishing input or effort to produce outputs or catch.

Fishing Effort: The total number of fishing boats, fishing gear and equipment, manpower and time required for effective fishing in a given area.

Fisheries Management: The integrated process of information gathering, analysis, planning, consultation, decision-making, allocation of resources and formulation and implementation, with enforcement as necessary, of regulations or rules which govern fisheries activities in order to ensure the continued productivity of the resources and the accomplishment of other fisheries objectives.

Gender Sensitive lens: Taking the existing differences between women and men into account when analyzing a situation or when developing specific approaches or programmes.

Integrated fish farming: System of producing fish in combination with other agricultural/livestock farming operations centered around the fish pond.

Intensive fish farming: Means raising fish under controlled growing process and production conditions where their growth is completely dependent on externally supplied fish feed.

Production systems: referring to a method of aquaculture production on land or lake farming systems at various scales.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EAC	East African Community
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FMIS	Fisheries Management Information System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
KEBS	Kenya Bureau of Standards
KFP	Kenya Fisheries Policy
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CBROP	County Budget Review and Outlook Paper
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program
BMU	Beach Management Unit
BMAU	Budget Monitoring and Accountability Unit
AU	African Union
ASDS	Agriculture Sector Development Strategy
KMFRI	Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute
LVFO	Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MT	Metric Tons
NDP	National Development Plan
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAG	Office of the Auditor General
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards

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We extend our sincere gratitude to all individuals and institutions whose invaluable contributions made the development of the Homa Bay Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy possible. Special appreciation goes to the County Government of Homa Bay for its leadership and steadfast commitment to sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development.

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We also extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Neto Augustino, former Member of Parliament for Ndhiwa Constituency, and Prof. Dorothy Amwata, Dean, School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Murang'a University of Technology, for their technical and logistical support in the realization of this policy.

We also express our deep appreciation to the WorldFish team, under the leadership of Dr. Rahma Adam, Senior Scientist and Socio-Economic Inclusion Impact Lead, for providing the technical expertise and financial resources that made it possible to develop and complete this policy document for the County Government of Homa Bay. Other people that we would like to thank for the support at WorldFish is Dr. Marleen Schutter, Dr. Eddie Alison and Brenda Gwada for their technical contribution.

This policy reflects a shared vision to harness the full potential of Homa Bay's aquatic resources while ensuring environmental sustainability, economic growth, and social inclusion.

Last but not least this fisheries and aquaculture development policy of Homa Bay county is made possible by the contribution of the Ukama Ustawi: Diversification for Resilient Agribusiness Ecosystems in East and Southern Africa (ESA) CGIAR initiative, the Aquatic Food Systems CGIAR initiative, the Scaling CGIAR Science program and the Sustainable Animal and Aquatic Foods CGIAR Science program. CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future. CGIAR science is dedicated to transforming food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis. Its research is carried out by 13 CGIAR Centers/Alliances in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations and the private sector. www.cgiar.org. We would like to thank all funders who support this research through their contributions to the CGIAR Trust Fund: www.cgiar.org/funders.

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FOREWORD



H.E. Gladys Atieno Wanga
Governor, Homa Bay County

Homa Bay County is endowed with one of the richest freshwater ecosystems in Africa—Lake Victoria. For decades, our fisheries and aquaculture sectors have served as the backbone of local livelihoods, food security, and cultural heritage. As we chart a new course toward inclusive and sustainable development, it is imperative that we transform these sectors into engines of economic growth, innovation, and environmental stewardship. This Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy marks a bold step toward realizing the aspirations of Kenya’s Vision 2030, which identifies the blue economy as a key driver of national transformation. It is also firmly aligned with the Homa Bay County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2023–2027, which prioritizes sustainable natural resource management, value addition, and youth employment.

The policy provides a comprehensive framework to modernize fisheries, promote responsible aquaculture, reduce post-harvest losses, enhance market access, and create green and decent jobs for the people of Homa Bay—particularly for youth and women. It emphasizes community empowerment, gender inclusion, climate resilience, and public-private partnerships as foundational pillars of a thriving blue economy. Through this policy, we aim to unlock the full potential of our aquatic resources while safeguarding the ecological integrity of Lake Victoria.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all stakeholders—fisherfolk, researchers, development partners, and county officials—whose insights, dedication, and collaboration have been instrumental in shaping this policy. Your contributions reflect our shared commitment to building a prosperous, food-secure, and environmentally conscious Homa Bay County.

Let this policy serve not only as a roadmap but also as a call to action. Together, let us harness the promise of our waters to uplift our people and secure a sustainable future for generations to come.

PREFACE



Sarah Malit, County Executive Committee Member Blue Economy, Fisheries, Mining and Digital Economy

As the County Executive Committee Member for Blue Economy, Fisheries, Mining, and Digital Economy in Homa Bay County, I am proud to present this Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy—a strategic blueprint to guide the sustainable development of one of our region's most vital sectors.

Homa Bay County, nestled along the shores of Lake Victoria, is home to thousands of fisherfolk and aquaculture entrepreneurs whose livelihoods depend on the health and productivity of our aquatic ecosystems. Yet, in recent years, we have faced mounting challenges: overfishing, climate change, habitat degradation, and a widening gap in access to modern technologies and markets.

This policy is a response to those challenges—and a bold step toward a more resilient, inclusive, and prosperous future. It builds on recent initiatives such as the gender-sensitive fisheries baseline study conducted in partnership with WorldFish, which highlighted the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women in our fishing communities. It also aligns with our county's broader Blue Economy Strategy, which emphasises infrastructure development, regulatory enforcement, and capacity building to unlock the full potential of our freshwater and wetland resources in Homa Bay County.

We are also encouraged by private sector innovations, such as Victory Farms' establishment of a hatchery capable of producing 30 million tilapia fingerlings annually in Suba South. This investment not only addresses Kenya's national fish deficit—estimated at 450,000 tonnes—but also signals the transformative power of aquaculture in our local economy.

This policy is grounded in the principles of sustainability, equity, and innovation. It outlines actionable strategies to enhance fish production, improve value chains, promote responsible aquaculture, and empower women and youth in the sector. It is both a call to action and a commitment to stewardship.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all stakeholders—community leaders, researchers, development partners, and government agencies—who contributed to this policy. Together, we will ensure that the waters of Homa Bay continue to nourish livelihoods, drive economic growth, and sustain future generations.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Homa Bay County is endowed with rich natural freshwater resources. The county covers an area of 4,267.1 km², inclusive of the water surface, which on its own covers an area of 1,227 km². The County's weather is suitable for high potential and increased fisheries and aquaculture development. The County enjoys the largest surface area of Lake Victoria in Kenya (approximately 55% of Kenya's surface area of Lake Victoria) compared to the Counties of Siaya, Migori, Kisumu and Busia. It has rivers, wetlands, water reservoirs, valley dams and ponds whose potential, if well harnessed, can generate many metric tons of fish. However, the current production is only 39,000 MT of capture fisheries and 130 MT from aquaculture. This under-performance in the capture fisheries is attributed to limited regulation, lack of proper enforcement of laws and guidelines, which has led to the use of illegal, destructive gears that catch immature fish. In addition, aquaculture is constrained by limited investment in fish farming; high cost of inputs; limited access to high-quality fish seed and feed; and inadequate extension services. Both capture and aquaculture production systems face challenges of high post-harvest losses; inadequate human, technological and infrastructural capacity at all stages of the value-chain leading to low production and overall productivity.

This policy, done with a gender sensitive lens and considering affirmative action issues, will go a long way in addressing these challenges. The County Government has been working and proposes to continue working with all stakeholders to address these challenges through the implementation of this policy. This policy includes a stronger emphasis on aquaculture development, which is critical in bridging the gap in fish production in light of declining stocks from the wild. This policy will significantly support the creation of decent employment; lift up household and national incomes; food and nutritional security. The Vision of this policy is 'A vibrant, modern, commercialised, and sustainably managed, county fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector'.





1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Global, Continental, Regional and National Context

The world's population is expected to reach 10.3 billion people by mid-2080s (United Nations, 2024). To feed this population, food production will need to double, with a primary focus on developing countries. Globally, fish stocks have drastically declined due to overfishing, and governments are required, through international commitments, to address this challenge.

In this regard, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was adopted by consensus at the 28th Session of the FAO Conference in October 1995. The

Code has a strong persuasive effect on administrators and policymakers of states that are members of FAO (FAO, 1995). FAO's voluntary guidelines establish a global consensus on principles and guidance for the governance and development of small-scale fisheries under a co-management arrangement (FAO, 2015). FAO's outlook for fisheries and aquaculture to 2030 projects an increase in production, consumption and trade, albeit at slower growth rates (FAO, 2018). Total production of aquatic animals is expected to reach 202 million tonnes in 2030, thanks mainly to the sustained growth of aquaculture, which is projected to reach 100 million tonnes for the first time in 2027 and 106 million tonnes in 2030 (FAO, 2022). World capture fisheries is projected to recover, increasing by 6 per cent from 2020 to reach 96 million tonnes in

2030, as a result of improved resource management, underfished resources, and reduced discards, waste and losses (FAO, 2022).

As the world's demand for white meat continues to rise, fish is one of the key products in the highest demand globally. In 2023, alone, fish accounted for 15% of global intake of animal protein and 6% of all protein consumed, making fish the largest traded food commodity worldwide (FAO, 2024). At the continental level, the African Union has established a Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture to facilitate a coherent policy development environment for the sustainable management and development of fisheries and aquaculture in AU Member States, including Kenya.

The AU policy framework is based on the realisation that while the potential is vast for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa, the real challenge is to create an enabling environment that provides fishers and fish farmers with incentives and confidence to invest in fisheries resources. At the same time, there is a need to focus on eliminating wasteful and destructive overcapacity, and moving towards a progressive recovery of fish stocks, as well as improving the quality of fish in the market. This notwithstanding, it need not be gainsaid that commercial aquaculture using different feeds is viable in Africa. No-cash production in fish-farming, as well as low-cost feeds and non-commercial diets, are also viable options.

Given the current population growth, African governments are increasingly adopting policies to promote markets, including focusing on expanding intra-African trade. Despite the positive prospects, fish demand in sub-Saharan Africa exceeds supply, presenting an opportunity for the development and expansion of aquaculture. In 2020, per capita fish consumption in the region was estimated at 8.9 kg, below the African average of 12.6 kg and the world average of 20.5 kg, meaning that the demand for fish over the next decade will rise drastically (Mbabazi, McDonough and Gueye, 2022).

There has been a shift away from emphasising the use of policy to regulate the production side, maintain sustainable supplies, and strengthen the role of fisheries in the food supply system as a panacea for food security and economic development. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 17) emphasise the crucial role of fisheries and marine life in transforming production and consumption patterns, reducing poverty and hunger, generating employment, and enhancing overall livelihoods.

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) was established as an intergovernmental partnership of 10 Nile Basin countries of Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, The Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, with Eritrea participating as an observer. The NBI's shared vision is "to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilisation of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources". Kenya's fishing and aquaculture sector relies on Lake Victoria, its various rivers and wetlands, as well as the multiple fishponds across the country. Further pollution of these waters must not occur; hence, the importance of cooperation through the NBI.

At the regional level, the East African Community (EAC) Treaty requires Governments to recognise and promote aquaculture as a distinct enterprise to optimise its economic contribution. The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) calls upon all EAC countries to support the regulation, management, and development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector, and invest in interventions that ensure sustainable production, enhance food security, increase incomes, and contribute meaningfully to poverty reduction. The objectives of the convention for the establishment of the LVFO were to foster cooperation among the parties, harmonise national measures for the sustainable utilisation of the living resources of Lake Victoria, and develop and adopt conservation and management measures. This policy is an actualisation of the requirement to align with the East Africa Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy aspirations.

Globally, there are over 133 institutions in marine and aquaculture that influence rules, norms and the institutional architecture of Global Marine fisheries and aquaculture governance (Pattberg et al., 2017). Kenya is a member of several regional and international institutions established under international treaties on fisheries, which play a crucial role in the governance of the fisheries sector. These include: Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission (AUC); African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources - AU-IBAR; Committee on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa (CIFA); Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC); International Whaling Commission (IWC); Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO).

The AUC Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA) leads the effort to promote sustainable environmental management and agricultural development. Fishing is primarily carried out in rural areas, and in this regard, the department

plays a crucial role. The African Union, to which Kenya is a member, launched the Africa Blue Economy Strategy. The strategy encompasses, among other thematic areas, fisheries, aquaculture, conservation, and sustainable aquatic ecosystems; shipping/transportation, trade, ports, maritime security, safety, and enforcement; coastal and maritime tourism, climate change, resilience, environment, infrastructure; and sustainable energy and mineral resources (AU-IBAR, 2019).

Kenya is a member of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa (CIFAA). The main objective of the Committee is to promote the development of inland fisheries and aquaculture in Africa. CIFAA's focus is on inland freshwater fishing, including aquaculture, to which Kenya is expected to play a significant role. Kenya is also a member of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO), which was established in 1994. LVFO is an institution of the East African Community with a mandate to coordinate the management of Lake Victoria's fisheries resources for sustainable development and utilisation. It is to spearhead aquaculture development in the basin.

On the Kenya side of the Lake Victoria Basin, national government agencies operating within the Lake Victoria Basin have teamed up with 14 County Governments (Kisumu, Homa Bay, Migori, Siaya, Kericho, Nyamira, Kisii, Nandi, Kakamega, Vihiga, Busia, Bungoma, Trans Nzoia, Bomet) in the Lake Region to collaborate on sustainable utilisation of shared resources within the Lake Region, with Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB) and Kenya Maritime Authority (KMA) as lead agencies.

The work will include developing communication systems in the lake, conducting hydrographic surveys, and bringing a regional perspective to cross-border maritime communication and transport, covering the countries surrounding the Lake Victoria basin. Rehabilitation of fish landing sites infrastructure; making efforts to reduce fish post-harvest losses by constructing fish landing infrastructures in Luanda K'Otieno, and Sori, which are now operational, and Mulukhoba, where construction is still ongoing. Omena Sun Drying Racks; an integration of an extensive project for the utilisation of raised fish drying racks, which will ensure a higher level of productivity around Lake Victoria Beach Management Units to improve fish processing methods, reduce contamination and eventually reduce post-harvest losses and quality of the final product. Kabonyo Fisheries and Aquaculture Service and Training Center of Excellence (KFASTCE); The project entails

the development of infrastructure for aquaculture production, building capacity in fish farming, conducting applied research for the development of efficient and sustainable aquaculture practices, establishing a quarantine facility for biosecurity, and promoting agri-tourism in the Lake Victoria region. With these interventions, among others, LREB hopes to make the Inland Blue Economy a leading contributor to the National Gross Domestic Product.

The Homa Bay County Annual Development Plan (CADP 2023/2024), on its part, has an objective under the Fisheries development program to increase fisheries productivity and output, to enhance food security and improve livelihoods (Homa Bay County, 2023). Subprograms under this sector include Capture Fisheries Development, Farmed Fish Production, and Aquaculture Business Development.

1.2 Legal, Institutional, and Policy Framework on Fisheries and Aquaculture

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010, mandates the State to ensure food security and proper nutrition in order to build a healthy state. The fourth schedule of the said Constitution assigns counties functions and powers related to agriculture, including fisheries. This policy is therefore a fulfilment of this constitutional mandate. Kenya is reforming its fisheries and aquaculture sector and has put in place elaborate plans to develop and manage fisheries and aquaculture resources, including through the enactment of the Fisheries Management and Development Act, 2016, and the Kenya Fisheries Policy, 2023.

The Kenya Vision 2030 forecasts aquatic animal production to grow by another 14 per cent by 2030. It is vital that this growth goes hand in hand with safeguarding ecosystems, reducing pollution, protecting biodiversity and ensuring social equity. As a regulated industry, the fisheries and aquaculture sub-sectors require relevant laws and regulations to ensure compliance, strategic development, fairness among all stakeholders, and protection of fishers and fish farmers. The County Government will, in addition to the Homa Bay County Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Act 2023, review, develop and enforce appropriate laws, regulations and relevant protocols. This policy comes at a time of heightened public awareness of the need for a sustainable use of fisheries resources and the potential for aquaculture development.

1.3 Policy Development Process

This policy was developed through a process of both desktop review and field research that helped isolate the policy briefs. During the field research, interviews were conducted. Key informants included academics, business sector representatives, government employees, and consumers.

A draft policy was developed based on the policy briefs. Stakeholder engagement to input the draft policy was conducted. Suggestions and recommendations from stakeholders were incorporated, and a validation workshop was conducted with stakeholders to

review the extent to which their input was reflected in the policy. Furthermore, public participation was conducted in all 40 wards, and citizens were given the opportunity to review and validate the policy, including members of the County Assembly Blue Economy Committee. Lastly, the policy was then submitted by the CECM in charge of Fisheries to the Homa Bay County Government Cabinet for their review, amendments and adoption. The policy was thereafter forwarded to the County Assembly. Upon the approval and enactment of the policy, the policy was gazetted by the County Executive Committee Member in charge of Fisheries.





2.0 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

2.1 Introduction

To ensure the proposal of cogent policy strategies, a situational analysis of the Homa Bay County fish stock and resources; the status of the capture fisheries; aquaculture development; fish production and productivity; post-harvest management; value addition and quality assurance; fisheries management and governance; the legal and regulatory policy framework; research and appropriate technology; human resource and capacity development; environmental sustainability and climate change; fish biosafety and disease control; fisheries and aquaculture management information system and the level of women and youth involvement in fisheries and aquaculture development was undertaken as documented below.

2.2 Homa Bay County Fish Stock and Resources

Homa Bay is a predominantly rural county, where the agricultural sector employs 74% of the labour force, but contributes approximately 25% of the County's gross income. Increasing labour productivity and profitability to contribute to the gross income that is commensurate with its share of labour intake would transform the County. The County has a shoreline

estimated at 230 kilometres and covers an area of approximately 3,152.5 km². Of this surface, 2,696 km² is land, whilst Lake Victoria, the largest freshwater lake in Africa, covers the other surface area of 1,651 km². The open freshwater resources comprise Lake Victoria, rivers, wetlands and water reservoirs, among others. This water surface raises the county's potential for fisheries and aquaculture development.

The Fisheries sub-sector overall contributes to the livelihoods of 21,123 persons (Government of Kenya, 2020) directly, including boat owners, transporters, and fishing net manufacturers, and approximately 100,000 persons indirectly in the value chain. About 150,000 people benefit directly from aquaculture. Fish forms an integral part of people's diets, serving as a significant source of essential animal protein (Government of Kenya, 2020). It is estimated that about 40% of the fish produced in Homa Bay is consumed locally, leaving about 60% of the fish produced to be consumed outside the County. Going out into the lake is predominantly a male affair, with women being mainly involved in beach seining. A considerable increase in the number of women boat owners and women in the Fishing Trade has been witnessed over the past few years. As of 2023, the fisheries and aquaculture sector contributed to 0.4% (7,004,275) of the Homa Bay County Revenue (County Government of Homa Bay, 2023).

There have been reports of political interference by local leaders in enforcement and compliance work. Neither fisheries management plans nor specific aquaculture development plans or strategies have been developed in the county. No specific fund has been established to expand and exploit the fisheries and aquaculture sector in the County. Allocated funds to facilitate the exploitation and expansion of the sector have been diminishing. The Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods reaffirms the central commitment of the Maputo era to allocate 10% of public resources to agriculture. With the Malabo Declaration being used as the yard stick, the Homa Bay county received KShs 11.5B in the 2024/2025 financial year, the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector received less than KShs 60,000,000 (Sixty Million), leading to minimal funds being allocated to the riparian sub-counties for fisheries and aquaculture development, leaving the funding of the sector to development partners.

Water quality on the Homa Bay County side of Lake Victoria easily supports cage fisheries and has the potential to produce the best table fish in Kenya. It has, however, not been well utilised, both in terms of expansion and exploitation. The effects and implications of the confinement system in aquaculture need to be understood, as well as its interactions with the wild. There is no known use of antibiotics, both in the wild and for aquaculture. Medication for fish is seldom prescribed, as there are no designated treatment facilities. Furthermore, there is a lack of practical knowledge in driving aquaculture in the county, with no notable research in fisheries and aquaculture over the past few years. Again, most fish from Homa Bay County leave the County without high-value addition or processing. This denies residents the opportunity to benefit from the fish value chain.

Lake Victoria experiences fish kills due to various natural and man-made factors. There is a need for a biosecurity system and plan in Homa Bay County to address fish kills and man-made hazards. Homa Bay County lacks a coordinated Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Information system. Given the high interest in Aquaculture Development, particularly for lake cage farming, conflict management components among other lake users, including transporters, wild fishers, and villagers drawing water for domestic use, need to be considered. Cage establishment has the potential to interfere with water routes. Issues such as the duration of a cage farm concession and the allowable cage farm capacity in the Homa Bay County part of the lake have not been regulated. The lake risks

being privatized with cage concessions. Traceability measures of fish released from cages and/or ponds has not been regulated, undermining enforcement in the capture sector.

Governance has been outlined as one of the most significant challenges facing the fisheries and aquaculture development sector. Co-management between the County Government and the Beach Management Units (BMUs) has not been without its challenges. BMUs have proven inadequate in ensuring compliance and enforcement due to the conflict of interest posed by some members, as they are also involved in Fisheries and Aquaculture activities. This has led to ineffective management. Structures for monitoring by BMUs under the co-management framework are either minimal or non-existent. BMU members have no incentives, with neither pay nor training, and they are the 'Weak link' in fisheries governance.

The BMU leaders are elected by the people among whom they are to enforce laws, making enforcement and compliance complicated. Other challenges to the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector include over-fishing, which contributes to the loss of species. Pollution, including effluent discharge from factories and farms, is also a concern. Ecological challenges, including the introduction of alien species and the removal of closed seasons, have exacerbated the situation. Weak extension services and encroachment of Beach/Riparian Land, as well as unregulated sand harvesting, are being experienced. A lack of innovation and technology, as well as low access to grants and insurance, also add to the list of challenges. Spatial planning of the lake has been conducted to help plan aquaculture, with natural breeding areas for wild fish being protected for capture fisheries. However, its implementation has not been given effect. Pollution points or hotspots have not been mapped out, so investors are well-guided on where to place cages and ponds. The intensity of cage aquaculture has not been regulated; the potential capacity of cages and ponds, as well as the quantities in the lake, have yet to be determined. The licensing of cage fishing has not been streamlined, with the various stakeholders' roles, including the National Land Commission, yet to be defined.

Awareness creation on conservation to help the capture fisheries sector is not adequately undertaken. A circular fish economy, utilizing the by-products of fish, could create employment opportunities for women and youth, but it has yet to be activated or initiated. The triple threat of new HIV infections, adolescent pregnancies, and Sexual and Gender-

Based Violence is an issue affecting the Fisheries and aquaculture along the Homa Bay County Beaches. The fisherfolk are among the most vulnerable populations in this regard. This is mirrored by the gendered nature of the fish trade, where we have experienced 'Sex for Fish' persons, popularly known as "Jaboya", "Jokambi", "ng'ata", "tembea", drift and wander. Whereas in these beach socio-economic circumstances, both men and women can initiate relationships, women have remained the primary victims.

2.1.1 Capture Fisheries

The overall production from capture sources in Homa Bay County is still dominated by Nile Perch, Nile Tilapia and Omena as the main commercial species (*Outa et al.*, 2020). The total production from capture fisheries in Homa Bay County averaged 34,797 MT in 2024 (KeFS, 2024). With the current decline in fish stocks, critical fish species are becoming endangered and may become extinct if proper management measures to ensure their conservation are not implemented. Already, some species, such as *Labeo victorinus*, *Haplochromis* are endangered, requiring deliberate effort to preserve them.

2.1.2 Aquaculture

The history of fish farming dates to the colonial era, specifically to 1910. This came about as a result of the activities of private individuals (European settlers) importing trout through the auspices of the Kenya Angling Association. These new settlers were unfamiliar with the indigenous Kenyan fish and likely found them difficult to handle or eat. Consequently, for reasons of familiarity, they imported into Kenya trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss* and *Salmo trutta*), black bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) and common carp (*Cyprinus carpio*). Most of these fish were stocked into various rivers for sport fishing, but black bass were also stocked into Lake Naivasha (Aloys, 1994).

The exact date when fish culture extension and rural fish ponds first began is unclear. Ngunjiri, quoted by Balarin (1985), indicates that the national fish culture station at Sagana started in 1924 with research on *Oreochromis spilurus niger* (*ex Tilapia nigra*) and that by 1948, fish farming proper had started nationwide (Balarin, 1985; Aloys, 1994). This has been a national trend, with very low participation from women and youth. Homa Bay County, however, aims to increase aquaculture production to 300,000 MT annually by 2030, with the active inclusion of women and youth, given the potential in its Dam Fisheries, which remains untapped. The present production from

aquaculture primarily includes that from small-scale fish farmers, emerging commercial fish farmers, and stocked community water reservoirs. The prevailing business opportunities have led to a recent expansion in aquaculture, which has transformed approximately 20% of the ponds into profitable small-scale production units.

There are an estimated 20,000 ponds throughout the county. Production ranges between 1,500 kg per hectare per year for subsistence farmers to 15,000 kg per hectare per year for emerging commercial fish farmers. Over the last five years, there has been a growing prominence in alternative production methods, mainly cage farming, and a rising interest in commercial aquaculture, which requires significant initial investment costs. Cage farming in Lake Victoria was first practiced by Dominion Farm Limited in 2005, with a rapid expansion of cages being reported between 2008 and 2017 (Aura et al., 2018; Njiru, Aura and Okechi, 2019). This has since risen to over 3,000 cages currently on Lake Victoria and other water bodies (Njiru, Aura and Okechi, 2019). The aquaculture sector has attracted a significant number of local and foreign investors who can be supported to ensure mass production. There is a need for awareness of the species that can be cultivated.

The current challenges facing the aquaculture sector mainly include limited access to quality fish seed (fingerlings), reliable feed quality, Lack of knowledge aggravated by low aquaculture extension services, inadequate Capital, lack of biosafety and biosecurity protocols, lack of adherence to best management practices in cage culture, and lack of predictable, reliable markets.

There have been minimal regulations in the aquaculture sector. The quality of seed, feed and even the positioning of cages has not been given much attention. The lack of proper regulation in the aquaculture sector has led to inbreeding of fish at various hatcheries. There is no gene bank or a multiplication centre within the county. Duty on imports of aquaculture-related products has been prohibitive. The competent Authority should allow the use of controlled substances, such as industrial ethanol, in aquaculture to ensure maximum production without unnecessary controls.

2.1.3 Aqua parks development

Currently, aquaculture production is more locally market-oriented with small-holder domination, which has led to low production and productivity. The current level of production does not meet both local and external demand despite the existing potential.

Innovative interventions and integrated solutions, such as Community, Public-Private Partnerships (CPPP) arrangements, should be explored to increase production. This will attract investment and transform current farmers from subsistence to profit-oriented commercial producers through cost-effective methods, technologies, and business management skills. There have been designated areas for aqua parks, but they are yet to be developed, subject to the availability of funding. This policy will ensure environmental concerns are mitigated and aqua parks are sustainably developed and managed through a well-outlined Aquapark Development Plan.

2.3 Fisheries Production and Productivity

Homa Bay County is endowed with rich fisheries resources. However, the overall commercial production from capture sources is still dominated by Nile Perch, Nile Tilapia and *omana*. The Fisheries sub-sector overall contributes to the livelihood of nearly 200,000 people in the Lake Victoria Basin, with over 44,000 fishers (Ministry of Fisheries Development, 2008; Shechonge *et al.*, 2024).

2.5 Fisheries Management and Governance

Before devolution, fisheries in Kenya were run by the National government with district and provincial fisheries officers. The coordination of fisheries activities has been complicated by decentralisation. Before devolution, fisheries activities were under a single command and control system. Fisheries governance over the years has evolved from a command-and-control approach to co-management, with several agencies from both national and government levels playing roles in the fisheries sector. The politicization of the beach management units, coupled with occasional interference by local leaders in the work of the Sub-County fisheries officers, makes enforcement and compliance sometimes elusive.

Beach Management Units are to co-manage the fisheries resources with the county government, in partnership with other stakeholders. County Governments and the resource users are now more directly responsible for the resources in their administrative areas. Consultation is becoming the norm, although it needs a bit more streamlining with additional capacity-building support for BMUs.

2.6 Legal and Regulatory Policy Framework

The Kenya Fisheries Policy 2023 (the Policy), together with the Fisheries Management and Development Act, 2016, has guided the management and development of fisheries resources. This is despite the fact that the transition to take over the fisheries' functions by some counties was not properly harmonised. The policy and CAP 378 laws of Kenya have contributed to the realisation of positive changes in the sub-sector, especially in the diversification of commercial species and their utilisation; growth of investment in commercial aquaculture, including the introduction of intensive non-pond culture systems such as cages; growth in regional markets for fish and exploration of markets, among other changes.

The fisheries sector in Kenya continues to face significant institutional and governance challenges. The country is, however, reforming the sector and has currently put in place elaborate measures to develop and manage the fisheries resources sector, including the enactment of the Fisheries Management and Development Act, 2016. The key institution driving this change at the national level is the Ministry of Mining, Blue Economy, and Maritime Affairs, specifically the State Department for the Blue Economy and Fisheries.

Kenya's Vision 2030, on the other hand, aims to achieve fisheries development and management through expanding the area of fish farming from its current high-potential areas to the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), developing fisheries-related infrastructure, and strengthening monitoring, control, and surveillance systems. The expected impact includes stock assessment & set reference points, increased fish production from capture and culture fisheries, reduced fish post-harvest losses annually, and increased exports of marine and inland products.

Fish production from the Kenya section of Lake Victoria has seen a steady decline over the years. There is a need to restore the capture fisheries potential. The dwindling fish stock in the lake has led to the rise of fish cage farming. A few entrepreneurs have taken advantage of this gap and begun active fish production in ponds and cage farming. This allows for the use of fish feed, a continuous flow of tilapia for the market, and employment to manage the cages and/or ponds.

Initially, fish cage culture emerged as a new socio-economic frontier, offering promising prospects for income in Lake Victoria, while also conserving

declining wild fish stocks. There are, however, growing concerns that fish cage culture, as a form of investment, leads to environmental degradation, besides threatening natural fish production in the lake. The farming leads to changes in water quality. There are also territorial conflicts with the Beach Management Units, including the use of landing routes.

From the issues above, a proper institutional and governance structure is required to manage the country's vast fisheries resources sector more effectively. The fisheries governance in Kenya has historically focused more on the inland sector, resulting in the marine sector and aquaculture being relatively weak. This weak governance system has led to the 'non-performance' of the sector. A comprehensive, modern legal and regulatory framework would be suitable for Kenya and Homa Bay County. Through this policy, Homa Bay County Government shall continue to strengthen the policy and regulatory frameworks so that institutions charged with implementation, promote and implement interventions that will drive the sector forward.

2.7 Research, Extension and Appropriate Technology

There are several endangered species on the Homa Bay side of Lake Victoria, including *Oreochromis leucostictus*, *Oreochromis variabilis*, *Oreochromis esculentus*, and *Oreochromis niloticus*. They need to be protected to enhance the lake's biodiversity. An effort should be made to establish a laboratory by the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Institute (KMFI) in Homa Bay County to help in the propagation of these endangered species. Homa Bay County is not conducting any specific research, as the county has neither allocated funds specifically for research nor developed a research agenda. There are organisations that conduct various research studies in the Lake waters, with the findings being shared with the County Government. Data collection is conducted through frame surveys, which are conducted nationally every two years. KMFI also conducts research on a need basis; however, the downside is that this research is not always cascaded to the County level for their interventions.

2.8 Human Resource Capital, Capacity and Development

Homa Bay County, as of December 2024, has an average of 22 fisheries staff, including three assistant directors of fisheries, one chief fisheries officer, two fisheries officers, two assistant fisheries officers, five fisheries assistants, four administration assistants, three coxswains, and five ship crews, against a proposed staff establishment of 99 staff. The current number is low given the extent of the required extension, compliance and enforcement services. A significant amount of facilitation is required for human development and effective training support. Staff training is currently *ad hoc* and lacks proper structure, resulting in limited continuity.

2.9 Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change

Climate Change, because of extreme climatic variations, has created real concerns for environmental sustainability for fishing and especially aquaculture. This has occurred at a time when most of Homa Bay County fisheries are currently in poor condition for a variety of reasons, including over-exploitation and environmental degradation. There is need for a paradigm shift that focuses on both biological aspects of fisheries and on social and environmental concerns.

2.10 Fish Biosafety and Disease Control

The growth of aquaculture production has resulted in significant movement of live fish within the county and the neighboring counties. These activities pose a danger of spreading diseases in the country, region, and beyond. Disease outbreaks have, however, not been reported in the county or the neighbouring counties of Lake Victoria.

2.11 Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Information System

There is no proper Fisheries and Aquaculture Management information system currently in the County. Data is collected on a need basis without a central depository.

2.12 Investment in Commercial Aquaculture

There has been increased investment in commercial aquaculture, such as the Fish Farming Enterprise Productivity Program (FFEPP), the Aquaculture Business Development Programme (ABDP), cage farming and commercial hatcheries. Gaps: The financing mechanisms for aquaculture remain inadequate. Mariculture is underdeveloped due to insufficient investment.

2.13 Social Inclusion and Gender Equity

There are efforts to mainstream gender and HIV/AIDS into fisheries and aquaculture programs and projects. However, a gap still exists in mainstreaming gender and social inclusion.

2.14 Constraints in the growth of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sub-sector

The Major constraints impacting the growth of marine capture and inland fisheries include limited scope for expansion due to overcapacities in territorial waters, weak regulation, inefficient management and prevalence of traditional fishing practices. Inadequate infrastructure, especially fishing harbours, landing sites, cold chain and distribution systems, poor processing and value addition, wastage, traceability and certification, non-availability of skilled manpower, etc., are some of the other factors constraining the growth of the capture fisheries and aquaculture. In inland capture fisheries, the seasonal nature of fishing operations, depleted stocks in natural waters, issues related to tenure and lease rights, use of obsolete technology for harvesting, coupled with low capital infusion, are some of the significant limiting factors. Specific problems negating the growth of fisheries and aquaculture include poor physical condition of resources (specially the water quality and quantity), gender inequality and non-inclusivity, low input, lack of diversity in culture practices and species, lower productivity, inadequate regulatory mechanism, increased incidents of disease, low levels of investment, inadequate access to institutional credit and high cost of credit, inadequate infrastructure for pre-production, production, post-harvest and processing facilities, low adoption of technologies and shortage of skilled manpower in aquaculture and extension services.



3.0 POLICY PROBLEM STATEMENT

There has been observed decline in fish catches and fish diversity have been observed in Lake Victoria over the past few decades. Various factors have been attributed to this decline in fish diversity and catches, including excessive fishing effort, use of destructive fishing gears, fishing in nursery and breeding areas, and rapid increase in demand for fish leading to over-capacity. Weak legal and institutional frameworks, inadequate information to guide management decisions, as well as limited investment in aquaculture, are also causal. Declining fisheries have far-reaching socio-economic consequences. These include loss of income and livelihoods, unemployment, food and nutritional insecurity, conflict for fish at the community, national and regional levels, as well as reduced exports.

Although the County Government has been implementing various interventions, some policy areas are not covered, including the proposed institutional arrangements. There has been no policy to adequately provide for investments needed to boost aquaculture as a complementary source of stock from capture fisheries. Lack of proper enforcement has seen a spike in irregularities in fisheries. In addition, there has been a weak technological, logistical, financial and human resource capacity of

the institutions in charge of fisheries and research to regulate the sector on all water bodies. Low public and private investment in aquaculture has caused low access to quality fish seed, feed, processing and marketing support services. Unless these challenges are holistically and decisively addressed, the current status quo will hinder Homa Bay County from meeting its development goals, the aspirations within Vision 2030, the EAC and AU objectives, as well as targets under the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

3.1 Justification of the Policy

The rationale for this policy is derived from Kenya Vision 2030, The Constitution of Kenya 2010, the Kenya Fisheries Policy 2023, the Fisheries Management and Development Act of 2016; global UN Sustainable Development Goal 2 on End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; as well as Goal 14 under 14.7 which calls for increase to the economic benefits to least developed countries from the sustainable use of fisheries resources, through sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture.

Fisheries has been identified as the easiest production activity to be carried out at a household level, hence a pathway to improved nutrition and food security, income generation, and poverty reduction.

This policy is needed to drive the sector to enhance its contribution to overall food production in Homa Bay County over the next decade. This policy will be a strong basis for attracting public sector and investor financing into the county to support research, human capacity development, transfer of technical knowledge and practical experience from global best practices. The County Government is desirous to utilize facilities at various centers and to support extension services and increase technical expertise at county and sub-county as well as increase research collaboration with the private sector. For aquaculture, this policy shall support the private sector to produce high-quality fish seed, feed and other products according to the laid-out quality standards.

This policy is required to inform the passage and amendment of county legislation and regulation to ensure compliance by players with quality standards while incentivizing processes to showcase and promote best practices. As local production is boosted,

the quality will be elevated, and costs will be reduced (especially for feeds) through an increased number of feed mills that produce adequate hatchery feed. This will reduce the current over-reliance on imported feeds. With globalization and regional integration, markets now demand effective regulation and administrative arrangements to ensure the quality and safety of fish. This makes this policy imperative in steering the sector forward to ensure that fisheries resources are managed, exploited, developed and utilized in a manner that optimizes the benefits for the posterity of the next generations. Therefore, the County Fisheries and Aquaculture policy is an evolving instrument that is open to review based upon evolving needs and technologies. It will be reviewed in consultation with stakeholders to ensure that the policy remains relevant and is in sync with the changing needs and requirements of the sub-sector through an institutional mechanism.

4.0 VISION, MISSION, GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1 Vision

The County Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Policy Vision statement is: 'A vibrant, modern, commercialised and sustainably managed, county fisheries and aquaculture sub-sector'.

4.2 Mission

The policy mission is: 'To sustainably transform the fisheries and aquaculture sector into a vibrant, modernised, commercialised sector'.

4.3 Goal

The policy Goal is: 'To increase fisheries and aquaculture production from the current 37,000 MT per year to 300,000MT annually to contribute to food security, nutrition, economic growth and job creation.'

4.4 Guiding Principles

This policy shall be guided by principles and values under the Constitution of Kenya 2010, as well as principles under international environmental law. These include, but are not limited to:

Principle 1: Public participation

The policy will be implemented to serve all categories of stakeholders in the sub-sector. The provision of services will be carried out in a well-coordinated manner that ensures public, private and other non-state actors' involvement. The sector will be enhanced in a way that does not preclude anyone who abides by this policy and related regulations.

Principle 2: Social Justice and Equity

Beneficiary targeting will be based on the principles of equity and fairness. Fisheries and aquaculture development will include the active participation of women, youth, orphans, Persons living with disability and any other vulnerable groups. There will be equitable benefits sharing, opportunity for representation and decision-making processes in a non-discriminatory manner. Industries should underpin strong local communities and, at the same time, provide benefits to the community.

Principle 3: Transparency and Accountability

The policy will be implemented in such a way that it is easy for others to see what actions are performed with intentional sharing of information. Accountability to the political administrative systems and client communities will be ensured.

Principle 4: User Pays Principle

Those who benefit from or use natural resources as fishers or fish farmers must contribute to the cost of managing the resource. These user fees will be levied, appropriately, as user charges by appointed county authorities.

Principle 5: The Precautionary Principle

Fisheries and aquaculture development shall be premised on scientific evidence as it applies to the Kenyan context. The lack thereof shall not be failure to act in the face of risk of serious or irreversible harm to fishery, fish stocks and or habitats.

Principle 6: Sustainable Development

This policy seeks to ensure that the management of fisheries and Aquaculture development considers concepts of both inter- and intra-generational equity. The policy will ensure sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources while maintaining fish availability for both present and future generations, without degrading the environment.

Principle 7: Human Rights and Inclusivity

The policy recognises access to food, legal access to resources and equitable allocation of fishing rights as fundamental rights contributing to improved human well-being.

Principle 8: Collaboration and Partnership

The private sector shall complement the public sector in fisheries and aquaculture development. Inter-county and intergovernmental collaboration shall also be enhanced.

Principle 9: Adaptive Management

This principle allows emphasizes on iterative decision-making: evidence-based, flexible and stakeholder engagement. This includes decisions that are informed by data and scientific understanding, plans evolve as new information becomes available, encourages collaboration and shared learning, accepts uncertainty and uses it as a basis for learning and encourages flexibility and learning from experience.

Principle 10: Integrated Management

This involves a combination of various management systems—such as quality, environmental, health and safety—into a single cohesive framework to improve efficiency, reduce duplication, and align strategies with organisational or environmental goals. This includes coordination across sectors (e.g., water, land, forests) for holistic resource governance and avoids fragmented or conflicting policies.



5.0 POLICY AREAS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

To inspire the transformation of fisheries and aquaculture development, making it responsive to the challenges and opportunities at all levels in the value chain, the following shall be the core policy focus areas, objectives and strategies.

5.1 Fisheries and Aquaculture Development, Management and Governance

Policy Statement: The County Government shall review the governance of fisheries and aquaculture development with a view to strengthening the capacity for the management of fisheries resources more professionally, based on science and research. By strengthening the Fisheries Directorate and the creation of a Fisheries Technical Working Group (FTWG) composed of technical people, with others co-opted to advise the County Executive Committee Member (CECM) in charge of Fisheries and Aquaculture on Policy and Performance of the Sector.



5.1.1 Policy Objective

To strengthen governance, coordination, organization, co-management and development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Homa Bay County.



5.1.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Strengthen legal, policy implementation and institutional Framework for Fisheries and Aquaculture development;
- ii. Coordination of Fisheries and Aquaculture mandates and functions in the County;
- iii. Create a stakeholder platform of all lake users to help with conflict management;
- iv. Advise and coordinate on the Establishment of lake-based management plans within the county waters;
- v. Strengthen and promote best stewardship practices over the fisheries and aquaculture resources and assets, accounting for their effective use and management at all levels;
- vi. Promote the use of high technology systems for monitoring fishing activities on water bodies;
- vii. Strengthen, intercounty, transcounty, county and sub-county linkages for efficient management of fisheries and aquaculture resources;
- viii. Promote inter-sectoral partnerships and collaborations with supportive agencies and institutions for proper coordination of fisheries and aquaculture resources;
- ix. Provide for the formation of an association of professionals at the county level to participate to the extent possible in the provision of expertise and advocacy in the fisheries and aquaculture development sector in Homa Bay County.
- x. Streamline the reporting framework of the County Fisheries staff to ensure efficiency and independence;
- xi. Streamline the quality and standards of fishing gear, fish sizes for market, both from capture and aquaculture, to facilitate enforcement;

5.2 Research, Extension Services and Appropriate Technology Transfer

Policy Statement: The County Government shall promote social, economic, environmental, and technical research into specific issues pertinent to fisheries and aquaculture development, including the development of appropriate technologies in response to fisheries and aquaculture development and management needs.



5.2.1 Policy objective

To develop and manage fisheries and aquaculture resources guided by the best scientific evidence and appropriate technology.



5.2.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Support applied research agenda from time to time in fisheries and aquaculture development, outlining themes for consideration;
- ii. Harmonize procedures for commissioning applied research by fisheries and aquaculture management institutions at all levels of governance to enable them to effectively discharge their functions;
- iii. Enhance the capacity of the county fisheries and aquaculture development department to undertake its mandate in fisheries and aquaculture development research and extension services;
- iv. Undertake research on new species of commercial interest in aquaculture;
- v. Ensure effective dissemination of research findings to guide management and stakeholders;
- vi. Support the private sector and other grassroots stakeholders and communities to standardize local and indigenous technologies;
- vii. Conduct random periodic surveys to inform the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

5.3 Human Resource, Human Resource Capital and Capacity Development

Policy Statement: The County Government shall support the development of fisheries and aquaculture staff in education training at various institutions within and outside the county, to build a sustainable critical mass of expertise to drive the technical advisory and management of fisheries and aquaculture development, through development of curricula and short courses tailored to local needs; supporting agricultural extension services through awareness campaigns and establishing county level information resource units.



5.3.1 Policy Objective

To sustainably increase human resources, knowledge, skills and expertise among staff and other actors throughout the entire fisheries and aquaculture department.



5.3.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Strengthen the human resource capacity for fisheries and aquaculture sub-sectors at all levels, including absorption of graduates from Fisheries Training Institutions as frontline extension staff with both affirmative action and a gender-sensitive lens for minorities;
- ii. Establish the necessary infrastructure to facilitate the operations and management of fisheries and aquaculture;
- iii. Establish and strengthen fisheries training institutes at the institution of higher learning within the county, to handle training of BMUs and other stakeholders along the fisheries and aquaculture development value chain;
- iv. Retooling and building the capacity of existing field extension staff to match the changing sector;
- v. Guide and encourage training of fit-for-purpose human resources in fisheries and aquaculture development, including fish laboratory technicians;
- vi. Ensure and encourage deliberate training of women and youth and collaboration on fisheries training, including craft courses, among institutions involved in fisheries training;
- vii. Proactively train the Beach Management Units as co-managers.

5.4 Production and Productivity

Policy Statement: The County Government shall ensure adequate fish stocks through conservation of critical habitats, effective regulation and fishing capacity management, stock enhancement and control of aquatic weeds. Steps shall be deliberately taken to promote commercial aquaculture through ensuring proper site selection, availability of quality fish seed and feed, management of aquatic diseases, and promotion of public infrastructure to support fish production.



5.4.1 Policy Objective

To promote and sustain the availability of adequate fish and fish products for domestic, national and international markets.



5.4.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Enhance the fish stocks in the county water bodies through restocking and protecting critical fish habitats such as breeding and nursery grounds;
- ii. Support capacities of fisher folks through training and access to modern legal fishing vessels;
- iii. Regulate fishing capacity on all water bodies by setting up allowable fishing effort, institute closed fishing areas and seasons on all major water bodies within the county;
- iv. Facilitate County staff to enforce laws regarding fishing practices and aquaculture development;
- v. Deliberate and intentional allocation of funds through a county fisheries fund or through other special means to facilitate the fisheries and aquaculture development sector;
- vi. Create incentives and a conducive environment for the private sector to prioritize the development of hatcheries and brooding centres to ensure adequate fish seeds.
- vii. Develop effective production of quality fish seed and feed, including through Public Private Partnerships and co-operatives;
- viii. Identify and demarcate suitable ecological areas for ponds and cage development, and regulate aquaculture development in the county;
- ix. Establish and enforce a legal and regulatory framework to guide cage farming in Lake Victoria;
- x. Provide frameworks for several possible cage farms based on the fisheries management plans for the Homa Bay County side of Lake Victoria;
- xi. Advance and promote the involvement of women, youth and less advantaged members of society in fisheries resources management and aquaculture development; establish public-private partnerships with the private sector to enhance service provision for the fisheries and aquaculture sector, targeting these key populations;
- xii. Ensure access to finance, especially for women and youth, through partnership with various stakeholders;
- xiii. Put in place structures to support fisheries and aquaculture sectors, including value chains, marketing and promotion, quality and subsidised feeds;
- xiv. Ensure deliberate improvement of physical infrastructure (roads, electricity, security) at landing sites.

5.5 Post-Harvest Management, Value Addition and Quality Assurance

Policy Statement :The County Government shall guarantee the quality, wholesomeness and safety of fish and fish products for human consumption and market access. Additionally, the county government shall ensure quality seed and the safety of fish feeds for the sustainable development of aquaculture.



5.5.1 Policy Objective

To promote value addition, quality fish and fishery products in the market, as well as to improve the fish value chain.



5.5.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Support better fish handling, preservation, processing, value addition, fisheries and aquaculture infrastructure under various arrangements;
- ii. Ensure the different products placed in the markets meet appropriate standards;
- iii. Strengthen existing institutional systems for the inspection and quality control of fish and fisheries products, fish feeds, fish seeds and aquaculture inputs;
- iv. Establish and maintain effective information systems to monitor post-harvest losses, considering relevant social and economic aspects;
- v. Harmonize enforcement regimes that include quality and safety systems based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) and certification measures to meet international standards;
- vi. Take measures to avoid the contamination of fish seed, fish feed, fish and fishery products both before and after harvest;
- vii. Establish and accredit a county fisheries laboratory;
- viii. Provide for and support the establishment of post-harvest plants, including fish cooling plant, preservation, handling and processing facilities in all the designated landing sites to mitigate post-harvest losses;
- ix. Designate landing sites at appropriate points on the beaches in consultation between the beach management unit and the county government;
- x. Initiate and promote improved solar driers to help with preservation.

5.6 Trade and Marketing

Policy Statement: The County Government shall register and promote all actors along the fisheries and aquaculture development value chain and link them to county, national, and international markets.



5.6.1 Policy Objective

To increase the value and volume of fish traded within the county, nationally and internationally.



5.6.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Promote diversification in fish products for national and international markets;
- ii. Regulate import and export of fish and fisheries products in the county;
- iii. Regulate import and export of fishing gear and equipment into the county;
- iv. Strengthen infrastructure for county, national and international trade;
- v. Collaborate with other sectors, especially trade and health, to regulate fish quality and safety issues for both human and animal consumption;
- vi. Explore the use of Fishery cooperative societies as channels to distribute and access legal fishing gears.

5.7 Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change

Policy Statement: The County Government is aware that the world is grappling with the adverse effects of climate change. This policy will be implemented to support initiatives that ensure wetland conservation and catchment protection, use of renewable energy sources, clean production during processing and resource preservation to avoid product waste. This is also in line with Goal 12 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. To ensure sustainability, investments are needed to avoid negative environmental and social consequences while optimising economic and social benefits.



5.7.1 Policy Objective

To support fisheries and aquaculture development practices and technologies that are environmentally friendly and climate change sensitive.



5.7.2 Policy Strategies

- i. Promote and enforce environmentally friendly fishing and aquaculture development both in water and on land for the sustainability of the sector;
- ii. Liaise with other relevant agencies in regulating sand mining, reclaiming shorelines, other mineral exploration and pollution-inducing activities in water bodies, wetlands and catchment areas;
- iii. Promote the management of invasive aquatic weeds and other invasive species;
- iv. Implement community-level activities on climate change adaptation (CCA) and periodically review their impact on the health of ecosystems that support fisheries and aquaculture development; and
- v. Build Capacity for environmental management and climate change adaptation within the fisheries and aquaculture department in collaboration with other sectors.

5.8 Fish Biosafety and Disease Control

Policy Statement: The County Government shall establish and implement fish health and biosecurity protocols as a security measure to protect the biological diversity of fisheries and the life support system. This will involve verification, building the requisite infrastructure and capacity to detect and deter water contamination and other illegal practices.



5.8.1 Policy Objective

To prevent and control the introduction of pathogens, disease-causing organisms and contaminants as well as invasive species within the fisheries and aquaculture sector of Homa Bay County.



5.8.2 Policy Strategy

- i. Support Fish biosafety initiatives and Disease Control Mechanisms;
- ii. Build the capacity of stakeholders involved in fisheries and aquaculture development;
- iii. Initiate and have functional biosecurity protocols to support the fisheries and aquaculture sector;
- iv. Develop a broad-based biosecurity plan to include fisheries and the aquaculture sector.

5.9 Commercialisation of Aquaculture Development

Policy Statement: The County Government shall be guided by an aquaculture development strategy to promote and invest in the development of aquaculture, including the establishment of Aqua parks among others, to increase competitive, market-oriented, profitable, and environmentally responsible aquaculture industry.



5.9.1 Policy Objective

To create a conducive investment environment for aquaculture development to increase fish production and productivity through aquaculture.



5.9.2 Policy Strategy

- i. Provide and create incentives for aquaculture development;
- ii. Provide subsidy on aquaculture feeds;
- iii. Establish gene banks and multiplication centres;
- iv. Ensure the supply of fast-growing, high-surviving, resilient to disease fingerlings to farmers;
- v. Promote commercialization of aquaculture through development of aqua parks, with designated areas for aqua parks both in the lake and on land;
- vi. Establish and implement cage development plans;
- vii. Promote and market the aqua parks to attract investors in aquaculture;
- viii. Provide incentives, including financial access to women and youth, to facilitate their investments in aqua parks;
- ix. Invest in technology to ensure high-density aqua culture;
- x. Establish a method of specialisation for hatchery operators, nursery farmers, fish villages (grow outs) to facilitate maximisation of profits among farmers along the specialisations;
- xi. Establish cooperatives for fish farmers;
- xii. Define the roles of various stakeholders involved in aquaculture licensing and legislate and regulate the continuum of the licensing regime.

5.10 Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Information System (FAMIS)

Policy Statement: The County Government shall improve management information systems to ensure effective and efficient collection, compilation, analysis, storage and dissemination of information for planning, management, monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Data collection tools and systems (electronic and GIS-based) will be required for conducting social-ecological surveys.



5.10.1 Policy Objective

To promote the availability of effective Fisheries Management Information Systems (FAMIS) to ensure adequate and relevant information for planning and decision-making.



5.10.2 Policy Strategy

- i. Establish a robust functional FAMIS to guide management and development of fisheries and aquaculture;
- ii. Map out all stakeholders involved in fisheries and aquaculture development value chains;
- iii. Establish a mechanism for the dissemination of fisheries and aquaculture information;
- iv. Ensure robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks for fisheries and aquaculture;
- v. Develop a database of all stakeholders involved in the fisheries and aquaculture development value chain across Homa Bay County.

5.11 Women and Youth in Fisheries and Aquaculture Development

Policy Statement: To ensure active engagement, participation, and benefit of women and youth in the fisheries and aquaculture development sector.



5.11.1 Policy Objective:

To provide frameworks, assets and capital that will enable women and youth to meaningfully engage and participate in Fisheries and Aquaculture Development.



5.11.2 Policy Strategy

- i. Work with partners and stakeholders to ensure access to capital and Finance for Women and youth to enable them to invest in Fisheries and aquaculture;
- ii. Ensure access to land for women and youth, including the use of aqua parks, to facilitate their participation in land-based aquaculture;
- iii. Incentivise and create champion and model farmers among women and youth to incentivise many women and youth to engage in aquaculture;
- iv. Create opportunities for youth and women through innovation and technology;
- v. Create specialised transport value chains for youth in the sector to support delivery;
- vi. Work with youth and women to promote aquaculture support value chains, including rice, soya, and sunflower;
- vii. Work with partners and other stakeholders to build the knowledge and capacities of women and youth on fisheries and aquaculture development;
- viii. Explore and budget for a substantial charge from the Women Enterprise Fund, the Youth Development Fund and other women and youth-related funds available at the county to support, facilitate and ensure access to funds for women and youth for fisheries and aquaculture development.



6.0 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

6.1 Inter-Sector Coordination

The fisheries sector will be recognized as a partner in determining the water policy, river management, watershed management and rural development. Inter-sectoral coordination among users, i.e. irrigation, hydroelectricity, industries or any other purpose, would be essential to protect the integrity of the aquatic ecosystem. Union MoF, AH&D and States/UTs will take up with nodal departments to ensure that the Department of Fisheries is fittingly represented in all the committees of various levels entrusted with the management and usage of water resources.

6.2 Aquaculture Zonation and Spatial Planning

The spatial plan consists of the identification of appropriate locations, zones and common practice options that help in the management of disease, environmental issues, post-harvest and marketing, mitigation of risks, etc. Spatial planning will be done with the help of relevant agencies for improving social, economic and ecosystem outcomes.

6.3 Health Management and Disease Surveillance

An early warning system will be developed and made operational about the spread of diseases, along with awareness, recommended control and preventive

measures to help farmers. The present disease surveillance and reporting system will be further strengthened with inbuilt provisions to identify and contain emerging diseases.

6.4 Certification and Traceability

Legal instruments supported by institutional mechanisms will be put in place with mandatory provisions for registration of hatcheries, growers, feed and other aqua input producers and suppliers for all aquaculture services and inputs. The specification for different ingredients to be used in feed and other inputs will be notified, inspected and regulated by the Union/ State/ UTs for compliance. The use of local produce in the production of feed, drugs, chemicals, probiotics, antibiotics and pesticides, etc. will be preferred.

6.5 Affirmative Action for Marginalized Groups

The county Government shall ensure that women, youth, children, the elderly and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are full beneficiaries of this policy and that they are not marginalized in its implementation. The County Government will address this through equity in employment, access, tenure, and participation in all interventions, as well as equal benefits sharing that accrue to fisheries and

aquaculture development. The County Government shall ensure that reformed institutional structures promote the active participation of women, youth and the vulnerable groups to ensure sustainable social and economic development.

6.6 Natural Resource Protection and Conservation

This policy will be implemented in line with Article 42 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, as well as the Environment Management and Coordination Act, cognizant of the need to preserve Homa Bay County heritage for current and future generations. Conservation of indigenous fisheries resources and restoration of natural productivity through ecosystem restoration with concerned agencies will be given primary focus.

Aquatic biodiversity will become an integral component of fisheries management. Adaptive mechanisms will be put in place to mitigate the ill effects through capacity building. Interventions envisaged under this policy will ensure better use of climate-smart technologies to adapt and mitigate adverse effects of climate variability; thereby enhancing the resilience of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Community-based disaster management and cluster approaches in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors will also be initiated in a collaborative cross-sector mode.

6.7 Diversification

The major thrust will be given for the diversification of species in both freshwater and brackish water culture systems, especially with suitable native fish species having high preference and demand in the domestic market by establishing hatcheries, brood stock multiplication centres and nuclear breeding centres. Research and Development programs will focus on developing breeding, hatching, seed rearing and grow-out technology for identified alternative species suitable for aquaculture by bringing in/adopting advanced technologies and practices to enhance production and productivity. Priority will be for the propagation of area-specific integrated farming systems for adoption after evaluation and field trials

6.8 Fish Seed Production and Genetic Up-gradation

Private sectors will be encouraged to set up hatcheries and seed rearing farms, especially in deficient areas, to ensure year-round availability of quality stocking material in water bodies. Registration and accreditation of hatcheries will be made mandatory. The norms for seed sale and subsequent stocking will be implemented to ensure the quality of stocking material. Brood banks are to be established to cater for the requirements of hatcheries. Broodstock Multiplication Centres and Nuclear Breeding Centres of native and exotic species will be promoted under both public and private sectors.

6.9 Intellectual Property Rights

This policy will be implemented in tandem with other policies and laws that protect communities' intellectual property rights over their traditional belief systems and resources. The County Government, in partnership with the national government, will encourage patenting of endemic fish species as well as patenting of traditional knowledge as would be appropriate.

6.10 Media and Communication

Awareness creation on the optimal utilization and benefits maximization of fish will be ensured through extensive media and communication campaigns, targeted at national, county, community and family levels. Media houses and other forms of public outreach channels will be used to take this message to all possible parts of the county.

6.11 HIV & AIDS

HIV/AIDS related diseases among fisherfolk and in communities are rampant. The Department of Fisheries needs to be involved in activities of the triple threat sector since HIV and AIDS continue to be a challenge for the fishing communities in Homa Bay County. It is estimated that in some areas the HIV/AIDS prevalence is 15.2% higher than the 3.3% national average. These places fisher folk among groups that are regarded as being at high risk,

categorised as KP/PP (key populations and priority populations). Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS stems from complex, inter-dependent courses that may include the mobility of many fisher folk, their access to cash income in an overall context of poverty, their demographic profile (young and sexually active) and the ready availability of commercial sex in many landing sites. Cultural factors related to fishing are a high-risk, low-status and uncomfortable occupation, which leads to high-risk sexual behaviour practices. Interventions to ensure that the triple problem of HIV/AIDS, adolescent pregnancies and gender-based violence is in check shall be put in place.

6.12 Funding and Finances

The need for sustained funding mechanisms for fisheries management and aquaculture development cannot be overemphasized. This is instrumental in ensuring social and economic benefits to resource users and the county as a whole. Implementation

of cost recovery systems as a means to finance fisheries management is crucial. The establishment of a County Fisheries Fund in line with the Public Finance Management Act, Cap 412A, will be key for the effective development and management of the fisheries and aquaculture development sector in the County.

The sources of funding for the County Fisheries Fund will include, among others, the current levy on fish catch, issuance of licenses and permits on vessels and trucks /truck licenses, as well as development partners and other support. Non- traditional sectors, but sectors having an effect on fisheries, including hoteliers, beach owners, boat owners, miners, petroleum companies around the lake, factories that release wastes into the lake and ecotourism services will also form part of the revenue from effluent discharge sources, towards the County fisheries fund.





7.0 GOVERNANCE ADMINISTRATION

The Administration of this policy will be conducted by the CECM responsible for Fisheries through the structures that will be created under this Policy.

7.1 The role of the Fisheries Directorate

The mandate of the fisheries directorate, as it relates to Fisheries and aquaculture development to be outlined in the Homa Bay Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Act, will apply to this policy.

i. Regulation, Coordination, M&E Reporting and Financing

- a. The fisheries and aquaculture directorate will review policies, plans, frameworks, legislation, guidelines, standards, and approve by-laws by BMUs that support fisheries and aquaculture at the county level, including those developed by non-state actors, both local and national;
- b. Account to the CECM in charge of fisheries on the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector performance;
- c. Mobilise resources (both technical, financial and logistical) to implement fisheries and aquaculture development activity on water bodies and enforce standards and further develop the sector.

ii. Research, Extension, Advisory and Training Services

- a. The department will generate the research agenda and request support from academia, research organisations to generate and disseminate appropriate, safe, cost-effective fisheries and aquaculture technologies;
- b. Work with county Extension Services to empower fish farmers and fisherfolk to embrace new technologies through protracted demand-based extension, advisory and training services;
- c. The department will train and professionalize fishers and value chain actors, aimed at professionalizing the sector, with a possibility, for instance, with fisheries best practice certificates.

iii. Fisheries and Aquaculture Value Chain Development and Commercialization

- a. Support efforts to restock water bodies, multiply fish seed and ensure access to improved fish seed and feed, as well as fish disease control commodities;
- c. Designate, initiate and promote collaboration for fisheries production, including aquaparks to achieve economies of scale.

iv. Quality Assurance

- a. Regulate and monitor all actors and ensure adherence to this policy and laws as laid out, and work with other entities to ensure compliance with county, national, regional and international standards.
- b. Support traceability through strengthened responses by supporting disease, pest and vector control systems.

v. Support to sub-counties

- a. Promote the interests of sub-counties generated from routine inspection, including coordination of fisheries and aquaculture development initiatives, projects and programmes;
- b. Provide technical assistance, support, supervision and training to technical fisheries staff, promote fishers and fish farmer producer groups and associations and facilitate initiatives to build them institutionally;
- c. Strengthen human capacity in both quality and quantity to manage fisheries and aquaculture development, including strengthening extension offices in their work to reach out to fishers and fish farmers adequately and expeditiously in the resolution of issues affecting fisheries, including disease, pest and vector control.

vi. Registration and Licensing

In order to reduce overcapacity, promote sustainability of the resource, and resolve resource use conflicts, the fisheries and aquaculture department will;

- a. Control fishing capacity through the conduct of annual registration of fishers, farmers and input dealers along the value chain, working closely with sub-county offices;
- b. Vet and license of fishers and other fisheries-related businesses;
- c. Control entry in the fisheries sector through the use of modern Fishing Vessel Identification Plates and an effective monitoring system, including the use of radar systems in fish breeding areas.
- d. Undertake mobile licensing technologies for hard-to-reach areas, including linkage of licensing processes.
- e. Designate, allocate and license cage farming areas in consultation with the beach management units in line with the fisheries management plans;

7.2 Role of sub-county officers

The core functions of sub-counties shall be to:

- i. Implement the county policy and associated regulations and ensure application and monitoring at the sub-county level;
- ii. Implement fisheries and aquaculture rules and guidelines based on the county policy but tailored to the specific needs of the local situation to regulate fish quality, marketing, local taxation (and other fees) and other aspects to advance fisheries and aquaculture;
- iii. Work through the extension services system to provide technical assistance, support supervision and training to technical fisheries offices, promote fishers and fish farmer producer groups and associations and facilitate initiatives to build them institutionally.
- iv. Mobilise, increase awareness, and empower fish farmers, fishers to protect fisheries production and natural resources. Implement adaptation measures to the adverse effects of climate change.

7.3 Support to the Private Sector and Non-State Actors

The county government will strengthen the County Fisheries and Aquaculture development platform to include all key stakeholders, including the private sector, non-state actors (NGOs, CSOs) and Development Partners. This county Platform shall meet biannually to discuss issues facing fisheries and aquaculture development and devise means and ways to resolve them, as well as introduce new practices to elevate the sector. The County Government will support this platform to be set up not just at the county level but also in sub-counties with substantial fish and farmed fish capacity and potential. These platforms shall play the following roles:

- i. Mobilise fishers and fish farmers to access services including financial products, inputs, markets and market information; and training for associations and cooperatives;
- ii. Contribute to policy and strategy formulation as well as drafting of proposed regulations and guidelines as need arises;
- iii. Share good practices and alternative approaches to fisheries and aquaculture development, and propose ways for their uptake at the county level. The platform should advise the county government on ways to improve the quality of

- service to advance the sector towards national and international standards;
- iv. Drive advocacy to facilitate enforcement and adherence practices that ensure sustainable fishing;
- v. Encourage practices that mitigate the effects of climate change.

7.4 Ensuring benefits for Communities and Households

The County Government will ensure that sub-counties and communities collaborate in the management of shared fisheries and aquatic ecosystems for the benefit of the communities through the Beach Management Units. Households will be expected to take the lead in husbandry of their resources, especially near water shores and wetlands and do so in ways that do not degrade the environment. They will be expected to use these resources sustainably and respond to guidelines as laid out in the law while contributing ideas on how to advance the sector in ways that optimally benefit their livelihoods.

7.5 Linkage to other Institutions for Implementation

The Vision and Mission of this policy cannot be achieved by the County Government alone. It will need support from various sectors, development partners, the private sector and other key players. Partnerships are vital for the successful implementation of this policy.

This policy shall be implemented through a sector-wide approach that involves both state and non-state actors at both county and sub-county levels. An elaborate and costed Implementation plan shall be designed as a reference point to guide the implementation of this policy. Effective implementation will necessitate two types of coordination mechanisms:

- i. An internal coordination mechanism to deal with policy implementation within the county government and sub-county structures;
- ii. External coordination will entail creating functional linkages between the county government, other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and non-state actors to develop a sound and vibrant fisheries and aquaculture sector.
- iii. To this end, the County Government will strengthen and put in place appropriate

organisations and institutions to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as envisaged under this policy.

- iv. At the County, this policy will be coordinated by the CECM responsible for fisheries. There will be a Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy Implementation Unit housed in the Directorate of Fisheries that will ensure smooth implementation of the policy at all levels and provide the necessary guidance to sub-county offices. In turn, all feedback and accountability from the sub-counties will be submitted to this Unit for analysis and compilation of quarterly reports on the state of performance.
- v. The County Government shall provide external coordination of all projects and programs that fall under the Directorate of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development. Key to this process will be the work to coordinate and support implementation done by the private sector at individual, group, cooperative and other organisational levels. This will leverage the expertise of the private sector and CSOs to drive production, productivity and profitability of the fisheries and aquaculture value chain.

7.6 Enforcement, Rewards and Sanctions

The implementation of this Policy will require strict enforcement and sanctions to deter those involved in various malpractices, including overfishing, the sale or supply of counterfeit fish seed, feed and products, and illegal fishing gear. The County Government will work with other stakeholders to ensure enforcement, vigilance and apprehension and prosecution of culprits is done as a deterrent to those engaged in irregular practices. The Homa Bay County Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Act has already been developed, and the regulations that will be informed by this policy shall be enforced both at the county and sub-county levels. In addition, sub-counties will be supported to pass guidelines with reward mechanisms to entities, groups or individuals that protect and conserve the water bodies on the one hand; and punitive measures for entities, groups or individuals that contravene these laws on the other. This Policy will contribute to the operationalization of community intellectual property rights through relevant legislation so that rights-holders and conservationists are rewarded appropriately to incentivise quality production and those who uphold best practice.



8.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Monitoring and Evaluation of this policy will be conducted to ensure that the vision, mission and goal of the policy are being realized.

8.1 Routine Monitoring

The implementation of this policy will be reviewed and monitored at various levels per quarter, and reporting made after a mid-term review and final evaluation of its performance. The CECM responsible for fisheries shall monitor the performance at the county level and among the private and non-state actors based on the reports they receive every quarter. The fisheries directorate will track high-level key performance indicators (KPIs) and use this information in reporting to the Governor on sector performance.

To guide the monitoring and evaluation of the policy, indicators will be developed and agreed upon at all levels. Periodically, stakeholders will be brought together to reflect on the implementation of the policy and provide input on improvements of indicators and the methodologies for reporting on them. The fisheries directorate will utilise the existing management information systems to track performance right from the community level, to sub-county and feed this information into the county

repository hosted by the Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Information System (FAMIS). Other M&E systems to which reporting will be aligned shall include: the community Barazas under the Ministry of Interior.

8.2 Evaluation

To evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the various programmes, interventions under this policy, the CECM responsible for fisheries, through the County Director of Fisheries, will conduct analytical work on sub-county and county level performance and feed these results into the Annual Sector Performance. The county will undertake periodic reviews of this policy, including a baseline survey, scheduled policy reviews, mid-term and final evaluations for both this policy and its implementation strategy. There will also be processes that ensure reviews are routinely undertaken under the County Government Evaluation Facility.



9.0. FINANCING AND ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

The aspirations of this policy will not be realized if effective financing and accountability mechanisms are not put in place. The policy has made the following financing and accountability mechanisms.

9.1 Financing Mechanisms

The County Government shall mobilize resources to finance this policy through the county budget framework. This is in line with the Public Finance Management Act (2016). To ensure the sustainability of financing, the County Government will revitalize mechanisms to mobilize resources from within the sector, including internally generated resources such as fish levies, registration and licensing fees, inspection fees, and fines. These resources shall be managed to support the operational costs of the proposed strengthened Directorate as well as support to its decentralized structures to increase their capacity to supervise, regulate and be responsive to some of the needs of stakeholders at that level. In the event that resources are insufficient for financing the implementation strategy designed to guide the operationalization of this policy, the County Government will seek support from all stakeholders, including development partners.

9.2 Accountability Systems

Ensuring adequacy of financing for fisheries and aquaculture development activities is a key step of the accountability mechanism. At the sub-county level, the Directorate shall work with and through existing structures to ensure proper planning and budgeting is undertaken.

The Directorate shall ensure that accountability mechanisms are aligned to the Office of the Auditor General requirements for both internal and external audit and reported to all duty bearers so that they are accountable on all commitments. At the sub-county level, offices will be set up to be accountable for implementation of this policy and in close contact with sub-county coordination structures. The CECM responsible for fisheries will be expected to be responsive to the recommendations stipulated in the Annual Auditor General's Report, supported by the county assembly and to gradually ensure that all accountability mechanisms are functional and adhered to by all stakeholders.



10.0 COMMUNICATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The content of this Policy will need to be disseminated to the various target groups and stakeholders, and a communications strategy has been suggested, which will need to be broadened. Indicators and activities to help in the implementation of the strategy will need costing; a timeline for its development has been suggested, including timelines for the policy review.

10.1 Communications Strategy

Concerning efforts will be made to ensure that this policy is explained to and understood by all stakeholders. To begin this process, the County Government will design a user-friendly, popular version of this policy and translate it into local dialects to ease communication and enhance awareness. County and sub-county staff will be tasked to popularize this policy as it is implemented and provide feedback through the M&E and supervision systems that will be established.

Awareness creation will be critical. Emphasis will include working closely with the county agricultural extension mechanisms to reach out to fisheries and fish producer entities at all levels with accurate and effective information they require. In addition, there will be a broadcast of information through various channels. These will include: one-on-one meetings with extension service staff at the local levels; village meetings organized by the county and sub-county fisheries authorities; Radio and Television, distribution of leaflets, demonstration chats translated in local languages and some displayed at public places; circulation of pull-outs from the national and local newspapers; bulletins and journals as well as discussions and workshops convened at community meetings, county and sub-county levels. In all these communication systems, a two-way system will be devised where, on the one hand County Government explains the aspirations of this policy

while on the other hand, feedback from stakeholders is obtained. Results of these engagements will be communicated to contribute to efforts to build the capacity of both public and private organisations to ensure efficient and effective fulfilment of functions and mandates. International best practices, innovations and new developments will be communicated expeditiously to all stakeholders so that they become more responsive to stakeholder needs and ensure continuous improvement at all stages of the value chain. Communication will also include exchange visits within the county government, nationally and globally to support uptake of local, regional and global best practices.

10.2 Policy Implementation Plan

The CECM responsible for fisheries, in collaboration with relevant implementing MDAs, the private sector, and other stakeholders, will develop an implementation plan within three (3) months after the approval of this Policy. The plan will include, among other things, the costing, indicators, time frame for the implementation of the proposed strategy interventions and activities.

10.3 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed after 5 years, provided various chapters or segments can be reviewed as need arises.

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