

Intensifying Crises in Fishing Communities at Lake Victoria Uganda

- A Case Study on the Impact of Capitalist Rationales on Marginalized Groups of Society

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Abstract

Today's fishery policies and development strategies form a global wave of enclosures. They displace small-scale fisher peoples and fishing communities from the fisheries and localities their livelihoods and cultures depend upon. With a case study at Lake Victoria Uganda this thesis investigates the role of capitalist rationales in this development. Theories on socio-cultural processes behind emergence and preservation of capitalist regimes are used to analyse how these systems exploit, and oppress producers in favour of economic and political elites. Qualitative semi-structured interviews and group discussions compiled information on the fishery at Lake Victoria Uganda from the perspectives of marginalized groups of society. The analysis unpacks how fisher folk, fishing communities, and nature at Lake Victoria Uganda are exploited to satisfy the needs of global capitalist markets. Exploitation co-creates false needs through which vulnerability and dependency in fishing communities increases. Since Lake Victoria is overfished, those needs increase poverty through numerous vicious circles. Additionally, global capitalist regimes increasingly focus on new forms of ownership to sustain themselves independently of physically-based production. Thus a switch towards enclosures displaces marginalized groups, such as fisher folk at Lake Victoria Uganda, and further intensifies and co-creates crises and inequality. Capitalist rationales are hence unsuitable to achieve sustainable and just fisheries.

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List of abbreviations

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BMUs | Beach Management Units |
| COFI | Committee on Fisheries |
| EAC | East African Community |
| EU | European Union |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| ITQ | Individual Transferable Quota |
| KWDT | Katosi Women Development Trust |
| MPAs | Marine Protected Areas |
| NaFFIRI | National Fisheries Resources Research Institute |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| PPPs | Public Private Partnerships |
| RBF | Rights Based Fishery |
| SAPs | Structural Adjustment Programs |
| SSF Guidelines | International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries |
| TAC | Total Allowable Catch |
| UFFCA | Uganda Fish and Fisheries Conservation Association |
| WFFP | World Forum of Fisher Peoples |

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1 Introduction

On July 10, 2014 a group of international activists stood up and gave great applause to the 800 delegates present at the 31st Committee on Fisheries at FAO, Rome. They applauded for the plenary having endorsed the 'International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries' (hereafter 'SSF Guidelines'). These guidelines came a long way, and, though voluntary, they are a mile stone in acknowledging the world's small-scale fisher people and securing their human rights. Broadly speaking, small-scale fisher people are all people that ensure their food security and livelihood with full time, part time or seasonal fisheries, and those people engaging in the pre- and post-processing sector¹. Half of them are women (HLPE 2014). What small-scale fisheries look like differs globally². Common characteristic of small-scale fisheries is the ownership pattern: All means of production are owned by the producers. Regarding capture fisheries, gear and, if applicable, boats belong to a natural person. This person engages in the fishing process and crew is paid by the share. Companies and privates that hire a crew and pay them through wages, and fishers working for wages are not considered part of small-scale fisheries (Lequesne 2004). Another central characteristic of small-scale fisheries is its socio-cultural importance.

“For us [small-scale fisher people], fisheries are not only an economic activity — they are as much a culture and a way of life, with skills, knowledge, social norms and systems of internal governance passed down and honed over the generations” (WFFP, ICSF and IPC 2009).

Small-scale fisheries are relatively more sustainable than large-scale fisheries, because small-scale fisheries supply local populations and support local economies where they create multiple spin-offs within other economic sectors. Therefore small-scale fisheries are found to be more suitable for securing food security than industrial, or export oriented fisheries (HLPE 2014). More than half a billion people build their livelihoods on small-scale fisheries (WFFP

1 Fishery includes capture fishery, harvest, and aquaculture of fish, crustaceae, molluscus, other aquatic animals, aquatic plants and algae. Aquaculture is used synonymous with farming, referring to the cultivation of fish, crustaceae, molluscs, and miscellaneous aquatic animals, with the help of farming systems such as constructed ponds, nets or cages in fresh water or salt water. Though, today, most of the globally traded aquatic plants and algae originate in planned cultivation, aquatic plants and algae are not included in the reading of 'fishery' applied below.

2 This thesis does not work with quantitative definitions of small-scale fishery. Quantitative definitions orient on characteristics such as boat size, crew size, catch size, or days spend on sea. Such characteristics cannot do justice to the diversity of small-scale fishery (Hilborn and Hilborn 2012). Hence this thesis works with qualitative definitions of small-scale fishery.

and WFF 2013). Small-scale fishers constitute 90% of the world's capture fishers and fish workers. Of all fish directly consumed by humans about two third is caught by small-scale fisheries (HLPE 2014). Regardless their importance for coastal, lake shore and riparian communities, small-scale fisher people are increasingly losing access to, control over, and benefits from their livelihood resources. Whilst climate change, overfishing and environmental pollution are stressing the fish stocks, small-scale fisher people and other fisher folk are currently made increasingly vulnerable to poverty and food insecurity by neoliberal policy reforms (TNI et al. in press)³.

Small-scale fisher people are structurally excluded from meaningful participation in the analysis and strategy making of fisheries policies and related policies. The newly endorsed SSF Guidelines, might be a small piece in a giant puzzle, but they are a mile stone in recognizing the importance of small-scale fisher people's needs, stand-points, and knowledges. The FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI), the only international forum dealing with world-wide issues of fisheries and aquaculture, first started to pay attention to small-scale fisheries in 2008. Since then a panel of civil society organizations, representing small-scale fisher people, proactively engaged with FAO⁴. The 2014 SSF Guidelines were formulated with major contributions by this civil society panel. Presenting a vision of how to sustain small-scale fisheries, the SSF Guidelines spell out the rights of small-scale fisher people and offer guidance for future fisheries policy making. But they are voluntary and have limited power. Fisheries policy-making orients largely upon the interests of big, industrial, and foremost surplus producing fisheries. Most national fisheries management structures are centralized, top-down structures, created to manage industrial fisheries. Hence, though presented and discussed as necessary and sustainable solutions to today's crises, today's policy-making processes tend to overlook the needs and peculiarities of small-scale fisheries. An effective and just fisheries management has to be able to address and work with the diverse conditions and needs of different fishing communities. People fish amongst others in high-seas, coastal waters, mangroves, swamps, rivers, or lakes, all different in size, and ecological as well as socio-political conditions. Tools used to fish vary from bare hands to

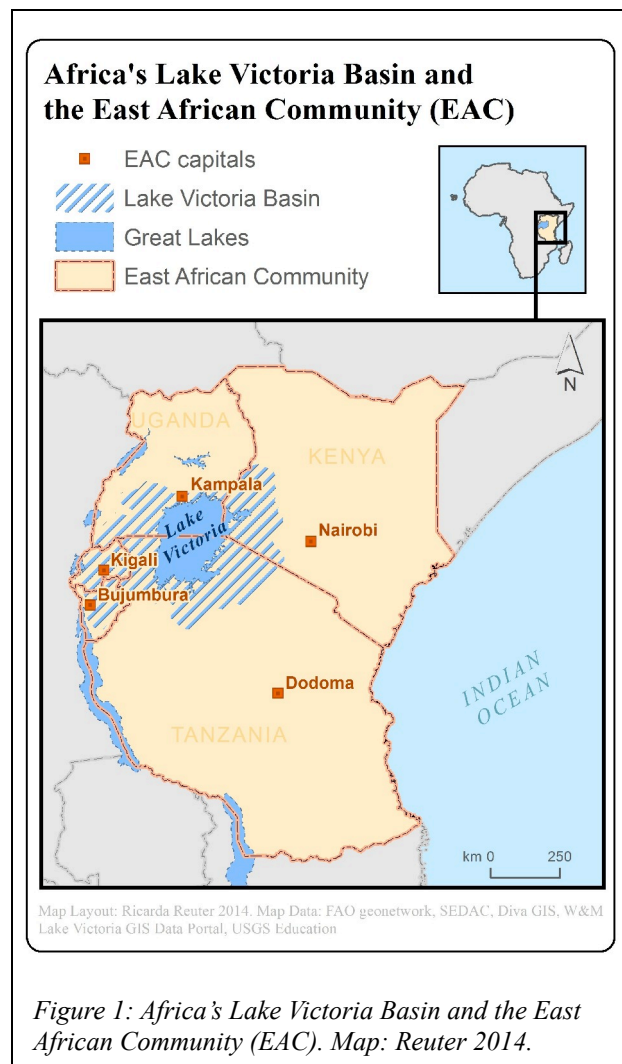
3 In this thesis 'fisher folk' refers to small-scale fisher people and those that are in between the categories of small-scale and large scale fishery, but do not practice industrial fishery.

4 The civil society platform engaging with FAO on small-scale fisheries issues consists of the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP), The World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers, the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty, and the International Collective in Support of Fish Workers.

high tech devices. Top-down management structures cannot consider such specifics. Overfishing, for example, is a widespread problem. For each single case different causes might be identified, and different solutions considered appropriate and effective (Hilborn and Hilborn 2012).

This thesis focusses on the fisheries at Lake Victoria Uganda. Lake Victoria fisheries are famous for the drastic changes it underwent in the past 50 years. Today, it is characterized by commercial overfishing, environmental pollution, and various socio-economic problems, including illegal fisheries. Lake Victoria is the world's second largest fresh water lake, nearly the size of Ireland and the largest lake in Africa. It extends into Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya (see figure 1). Its basin extends across all member states of the East African Community (EAC)⁵. It is the world's largest fresh water fishery and constitutes 95% of all fish landed from inland fisheries of the EAC⁶. Lake Victoria, therefore, is one of the most important shared resources in the EAC (Fulgencio 2009). The lake's fisheries “support almost 2 million people with

household incomes and meet the annual fish consumption needs of almost 22 million people in the region” (LVFO 2014). To coordinate and manage the fisheries at Lake Victoria, the EAC formed the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization in 1994 (ibid.). The population growth along the lake is significantly higher than the average growth in those countries' rural areas



5 “The East African Community (EAC) is the regional intergovernmental organisation of the Republics of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Republic of Uganda, with its headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania” (EAC 2014).

6 Fulgencio (2009) does not specify that this number describes only fish landed by inland fisheries. However, regarding the coastal fishery of Kenya and Tanzania I assume that it does describe inland fisheries, only.

(Fulgencio 2009). In 2012 Uganda had a total population of 36,35 Million people (WB 2014), of which about 88% were rural, and 54% were concentrated in the South, especially on the shores of Lake Victoria.

Fisheries at Lake Victoria have been subject to various studies and development programmes. Interestingly, the information available regarding the causes of today's problems, the interventions needed, and the success of past reforms varies, and some of it is conflicting (Jones 2009; Kamuturaki n.a. a). Poverty in rural areas remained although the Ugandan GDP grew from 6,2 billion US\$ in 2003 to 19,8 billion US\$ in 2012 (FAO 2006; WB 2014). Around the lake civil society organizations have formed, tackling the different problems local fishing communities face. Their understanding of the problems and solutions needed often differs highly from the perspectives and interests of decision making politicians.

With this thesis, I aim to analyse the origin of the crises fisher folk at Lake Victoria Uganda face today, in order to contribute to the small-scale fisher people's fights for food sovereignty. To do so, I rethink the history of fisheries, focussing on the example of fisheries at Lake Victoria Uganda. I strive to create a narrative that explains the history of fisheries at Lake Victoria Uganda, since Uganda's independence in 1962, from a human ecological perspective, not as a series of isolated events, but as a history, embedded in larger processes throughout time and space⁷. I analyse if and how global capitalist (fishery) regimes create, manifest, and reproduce oppression, discrimination and destruction of social groups and other *natures* from which dominant groups distinguish themselves⁸. The analysis builds upon the perspectives of

7 In my analysis I apply a human ecological perspective. Human ecology is not a discipline, but a way of seeing that disagrees with a strict separation of human and nature - the Earth Systems, as the complex global systems of our physical and ecological environment, and the World Systems, as complex global systems of socio-cultural activities of man (Young 1974, Hornborg, Mc Neill, and Martínez-Allier 2007). Human ecology strives to rethink the history of man and nature as one. In this history the spheres of the human individual, society and culture, ecology and the physical environment form systems that are interdependent within and throughout different levels, ranging from local to global (Paulson and Gezon 2005). This rethinking includes understanding time as something more complex than a singular linear story. Time is understood as numerous complex and entangled stories that are neither linear, nor irreversible one-way developments which replace each other completely (Mbembe 2011).

Human ecology draws from several academic disciplines at once. Its analysis is closely related to the approach of political ecology. Political ecology "encompasses the constantly shifting dialectic between society and land-based resources, and also within classes and groups within society itself" (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987 cited in Paulson and Gezon 2005, 2), and thereby addresses the power relations amongst a plurality of human groups, how they interact with biosocial landscapes through the use of resources, and how these are linked to and through global processes (Gezon 2005).

8 Hereafter '*nature*' refers to the externalized constructs, and categories from which dominant groups distinguish themselves (For a more detailed explanation see chapter 2).

those groups of society that are largely overlooked by decision makers. Therefore this thesis is written in cooperation with the Ugandan organizations Uganda Fish and Fisheries Conservation Association (UFFCA) and Katosi Women Development Trust (KWDT). This thesis focuses primarily on socio-cultural developments. Central points of the analysis are: identification of capitalist rationales at hand, inquiry in main fishery regimes and driving forces behind those regimes, and in who the oppressed groups are, how the regimes are organised and which crises they (co-)produce.

With the analysis of fisheries at Lake Victoria Uganda this thesis underlines the importance of locally adapted human-rights based fishery regulations, as promoted through the SSF guidelines. To begin with, the reader is provided with the theoretical knowledge the analysis builds upon. In chapter two, world system analysis, food regime theory, the concept of the capitalocene, as well as theories and concepts focussing on dualisms, hierarchy, and self-sustaining systems of power are set in relation. Thereby this chapter explains to the reader how capitalist regimes oppress human and other natures and co-produce injustice and inequality through waves of exploitation. Chapter three illustrates these theories with the example of waves of exploitation and global capitalist regimes emerging in fisheries. After the reader was provided with the knowledge needed to contextualize the case study, chapter four introduces and reasons the methodological approach of the study: group discussions and interviews with women in fishing communities, designed according to concepts of participative research and sciences from below. Building upon the previous chapters and the fieldwork undertaken, chapter five presents and analyses the material gathered: The history of fisheries at Lake Victoria Uganda. The reader learns about the crucial role the introduction and globalisation of a specialized, industrialized fishery plays for the development of the local communities. Therefore the development at Lake Victoria Uganda is brought in relation with capitalist exploitation. The analysis identifies how in this case basic patterns of capitalist development unfold in waves, how such waves co-create and intensify crises, and increase the vulnerability of fishing communities. Finally, chapter six summarizes the main findings and deduces from the fisheries-focussed analysis why and how global capitalist regimes create, manifest, and reproduce oppression, discrimination and destruction of certain social groups and other *natures*.

2 Capitalist regimes of production

Unequal patterns of distribution of resource preservation and resource exhaustion are not accidental. They are an intrinsic characteristic of capitalist systems (Hornborg 2007). The capitalist way of thinking and organizing the human and extra-human world is a main driver of today's inequalities and injustices. Economies on global and local levels, and at different points of time, can be described as a relation of primarily two spheres: *Core* zones, that are extractive economies, and *periphery* zones, that are productive economies⁹. Core and periphery are connected through dynamic, asymmetrical relationships that are constantly changing and might vary depending upon the level of analysis. Yet, the core is an identifiable geographic space that experiences accumulation of physical capital through the extraction of natural resources from its periphery, and places the environmental load created through this consumption upon the peripheries (Hornborg, Mc Neill and Martínez-Allier 2007). Core zones often build their advantaged position on the resources and land available to them. Generally, a lack of resources and land creates structural poverty. To avoid falling into structural poverty those societies that are structurally wealthy can use their wealth to create power and hierarchies that prevent them from structural poverty (Lliffe 1987).

A concrete description of dynamics of core-zones and peripheries is the analysis of the development of capitalism in relation to the history of agriculture by Friedmann and McMichael (1989). They identified three capitalist *food regimes* that shaped the global organization of agriculture: a *British/ colonial regime*, an *US-American regime*, and a *corporate regime* (Friedmann and McMichael 1989)¹⁰. With a British hegemony ahead, the formation of strong European nation states was enabled by Europe's colonial activities. This colonial regime increased the accumulation of capital in Europe through maximizing agricultural production of cheap tropical food. Rationalizing and industrializing agriculture, European states displaced local food systems and ecosystems in their colonies (Friedmann and McMichael 1989). After a US-American agrarian crisis destabilized the agricultural system in the 1930s a second food regime formed, characterized by the activities of the new settler states in Northern America. Food was commodified, and a strongly industrialized and specialized production resulted in a shift from direct to manufactured, cheap products. The

9 To compensate for the absoluteness of his dualistic model of the World System, Wallerstein also introduces semi-peripheries and other external arenas (Williams 2007).

10 Food regimes are “rule-governed structures of production and consumption of food on a world scale” (Friedmann 1987 in McMichael 2009, 142).

young post-colonial states' domestic production became increasingly import-dependent through the global regulation of prices, American exports of food aid, the imposed standardization of production, and the externally controlled shift of their agricultural sector towards livestock, plant fat and sweeteners for export. This development reinforced the green revolution and strengthened the economies of the American states (Friedmann and McMichael 1989). Since the 1980's a corporate-controlled food regime emerged. In contrary to the former nationalization efforts this regime is led by a few giant companies that control and divide the different steps of production globally, navigating around nationally varying regulations, to achieve highest profit possible for the company. In this transnational economy, Northern countries and companies operate under preferred market conditions, so that the Global North largely gains at the expense of the Global South (McMichael 2009).

The concept of core and periphery and the agriculture-focused food regime theory, both do not sufficiently explain mechanisms that sustain, and shift or reproduce capitalist regimes. An analysis that does address such questions is the broader analysis of capitalism by Moore (2014). He argues that the way civilization organizes itself since 1450 should be characterized as the *capitalocene*. Capitalist production has been created through the enlightenment, when the understanding of humans being separate from a nature that is to be dominated, took over. Fetishising nature, space and time, the 'enlightened' society turned away from seeing value in land-productivity and instead defined *labour productivity* as a value¹¹. Sustaining production of surplus requires a share of work outside production that is larger than the share of production, but less costly. Because of this relation, the shift towards production of surplus is the core element of the capitalocene: it establishes the need to mobilize large quantities of cheap labour-power, and other human, but also extra-human values, such as food, energy, and raw materials. Since then, all nature, including the human nature is organized in relation to production. Thus capitalism is a world-ecology. Separating nature from man, the human-nature divide, and other subsequent externalizations, allow to supply the *cheap human and extra-human natures* needed to sustain production. With their externalization the negation of the responsibility to pay their services becomes morally acceptable. Moore calls the reliance upon externalized services *appropriation of unpaid work* (regardless if performed by human or extra human natures). These cheap natures and their capacity for reproduction are

¹¹ Hereafter '*labour productivity*' refers to the fetishised and normalized category of productivity from which capitalist rationale distinguishes other productivities.

exhausted quickly because the costs of their work remain unpaid (Moore 2014).

Socio-cultural analyses contribute many concepts and theories that further unpack the fundamental importance of externalization for repression and exploitation of other *natures*. The critique of *dualistic self-understandings* addresses the processes at the heart of externalization: The creation of identity of dominant groups in opposition to and neglectance of any dependency from the externalized other (Crenshaw 1991, Plumwood 1993, Marcuse 2002, Baumann 2005, Spade 2011). What dominant identities or self-understandings look like changes throughout time, and space. "There are many ways of being human, but each society makes a choice of the way it prefers or tolerates" (Baumann 2005, 105). Deciding what the preferred and tolerated ways of being human are, is defining norms of what is valuable, and what is not. As Moore (2014) presents it, production of surplus value is the main norm of productivity in capitalocene, and reproduction is the other, against which it is defined, and which it depends upon though neglecting this dependency.

Creating externalized *natures* means creating simplified, stereotyping understandings of a world as being disconnected. But it is through relation and interaction that people conceptualise themselves, give meaning to their lives and other events and derive ideals and norms. Things, practices, and places can connect individuals to larger processes, through connecting one to past life, family, and future, as well as representing, and unifying one with certain cultures, knowledges and customs, which sustained oneself and one's ancestors. In becoming disconnected those meaning-giving relations are disturbed (Taylor 2006). "If we cannot connect ourselves to, or place ourselves in a coherent narrative, it is difficult (but not entirely impossible) for us to be sure who (or what) we are, where we are going, or what we should do" (ibid, 34). The confusion resulting from disconnectedness is then a precondition for societies in which, as Marcuse (2002) describes it, *false needs* control *one-dimensional man*. People have vital needs, and further needs in general have always been preconditioned. But the demands created by false, superimposed needs (e.g. the need for a specific kind of production) make man dependent on the system that satisfies those needs, and hence sustains the system that disconnects people from their true needs (ibid.). Once disconnected, *remoteness* can ease the upholding of structures that create inequality, because it prevents realizing the irrationality of oppression and exploitation of others. Instead it allows to

implement, justify, and maintain hierarchies¹². Strengthening the power of those that benefit, such processes further solidify their position, creating systems with increasingly unequal power relations (Plumwood 2002). In addition, "Knowledge and power are internally linked: they constitute and co-maintain each other" (Harding 2008, 117). The world views produced by dominant groups become naturalized. Those rationales depend upon the experiences and practices of the dominant groups. Hence they are highly influenced by their social position as oppressors and cannot be sufficient to create holistic understanding of the nature and causes of crisis (Harding 2008).

The currently dominant capitalist rationales are based upon the world views of the dominant group of not only western, but also white, male, youthful, healthy, able-bodied, wealthy, college-educated, hetero-normative cultures (Plumwood 2002, Harding 2008, Hooks 2009, Spade 2011). They represent the 'worthwhile' norm. Oppressed groups, are those who are characterized as different to the dominant groups: i.e. non-western, indigenous, people of colour, female, elderly, disabled, poor or working class people, non-heterosexual and not cis-performing people (Spade 2011). At the core of the many dualisms created, is the classification which creates a dualism of production and reproduction (Plumwood 1993). While Moore (2014) points towards capitalist regimes as central to this dualism, Plumwood (2002) understands other regimes (patriarchy, colonialism scientific rule) as regimes which are equally based on superimposed, disconnecting rationales of otherness and productivity¹³. Considering that political, economic, and ecological marginality can be mutually reinforcing – each one being the result and the cause of the other (Gezon and Paulson 2005) – marginalization is intensified through the close interconnectedness of the spheres. Hence different social hierarchies are shaped by and shape each other (Harding 2008). The *theory of*

12 Plumwood (2002) explains the main characteristics of dualistic thinking that is behind oppressive processes: Dualisms are radically exclusive in that a person or things can only be either in one or the other category. They are homogenizing and stereotyping because everything which is described as the other is subsumed within a category that does not allow diversity and individuality: all 'others' are the same. Denying any dependency or connection dualisms are disrespectful towards the role the 'other' plays. To make sense of the denied connectedness the 'other' then is incorporated: it is defined only in relation to the master, but not on its own. And lastly, ascribing only such values to the 'other' that are related to their function for the dominant group exploits everything defined as the 'other'. In these characteristics lies a hierarchy. When some are characterized as good, normal, and superior, others are labelled as bad and abnormal. Thereby these others 'naturally' deserve to be oppressed. The hierarchisation of the different categories then is the main fundament upon which the groups in power enlarge their power and maintain this position (Plumwood 2002).

13 The male-female dualism, for example is closely connected to the human-nature split. Men being attributed the same characteristics as human in general (autonomous, intelligent actors that produce), and women being attributed the characteristics of the nature category: passive, free of will and agency, and reproductive in their being (Plumwood 1993; Blunt and Rose 1994, Plumwood 2002).

intersectionality, analyses how, because of such interconnectedness, each crisis can only be solved through focussing on multiple marginalization, and awareness of one's own standpoint (The Combahee River Collective 1978, Crenshaw 1991).

The concept of capitalocene explains the different regimes as waves of capitalism. Since its emergence capitalism sustained itself through cyclic phases that begin with the creation of new external values and end with a crisis of high prices. Oppressing and depleting the resource the production depends upon, capitalist regimes increase the value of those resources, making production unprofitable. To postpone this moment of unprofitability, production needs to be increasingly rationalized, e.g. through the constant reduction of socially-necessary labour-time. When this is no longer sufficient, the appropriated *nature* gets commodified – *capitalized* – in order to make more mechanisms available, to slow down the depletion, and to sustain it as long as possible. Finally, a crisis of high prices marks the end of each cycle. At such a point, only the creation of new *cheap natures*, to be appropriated, can sustain production (Moore 2014). Being based upon irrational thought and capitalist cycles, capitalism produces its own limits. Firstly, one *nature* after the other is depleted, which limits the overall availability of *natures* to rely upon. Though fundamentally necessary for production, the dependency upon those *natures* is denied and hidden by the creation of new externalities. Secondly, despite being economically externalized, these *natures* are not disconnected from the world. They have multiplier effects on other *natures*. These effects are overlooked as long as they don't show drastic impact upon the production. Thirdly, once they negatively affect production and alternative *natures* to appropriate equally cheap are not available, commodification re-internalises those *natures* into the economic system. Thereby commodification secures supply of cheap resources for a short while, but reduces the resources that can be relied upon without being paid for and speeds up the price increase of production (Moore 2014). In sum, the cheap *natures*, upon which the production relies, are stressed increasingly, the longer the system operates. In result the need for a new wave appears at an ever earlier stage, increasingly shortening the cycles. Thus capitalist production creates vicious cycles that can only postpone the limits of such a system, while further increasing remoteness, accelerating the gap between rich and poor and generally worsening the starting conditions with each round.

Concluding from the theory presented so far, a definition of *capitalist regimes* can be given here: A capitalist regime is an economy that fetishises productivity. In order to sustain production in its core zones – the physical and social areas defined as productive – capitalist regimes need to constantly accumulate capital through the production of surplus. Since *labour productivity* is defined as the norm of production, capitalist regimes need cheap human and extra-human resources – cheap *natures* – to sustain this production. Those *natures* are typically created in peripheries – the physical or social areas that reproduce the cheap *natures* needed. To keep the costs of production low the great majority of reproductive work is left unpaid. Hence core zones do not (sufficiently) pay for the *natures* extracted but use their power to redefine natures as external *natures*, and normalize them being inferior and oppressed. Thereby the *natures* appropriated are exhausted. Capitalist regimes repeat such waves of appropriation through accessing ever new resources or peripheries. Over the long run this way of organizing everything around a narrow defined labour productivity creates its own limits.

In the early 1980s the neoliberal cycle started. This regime was earlier described as the currently dominant, corporate food regime. Moore (2014) explains that to overcome the rising prices of production that resulted from an increasingly strong labour class in the 1970s, which at that point was the cheap *nature* that kept production profitable, capitalists started another cycle of appropriation: a global enclosure (Moore 2014).

"This was a tectonic shift in world history that entailed the simultaneous de-industrialization of core zones and the rapid industrialization of the Global South. [In this corporate regime] structural adjustment programs and market liberalization, restructured agrarian class relations worldwide, dispossessing hundreds of millions of peasants worldwide" (Moore 2014, 16).

Moore (2014) describes neoliberalism by means of its ability to create new cheap *natures*. The dispossessed masses might be considered a new global proletariat – new cheap labour – that moves to urban areas in search of employment¹⁴. Confronted with hunger and poverty this new proletariat is forced to accept the low wages offered by transnational corporations.

¹⁴ In the Global North the new labour force consisted to a large share of women that now did both paid and unpaid work (Moore 2014).

Neoliberalism is as a set of trends that distributes wealth towards a small elite and worsens the situations of poor people through “policy changes like privatization, trade liberalization, labour and environmental deregulation, the elimination of health and welfare programs, increased immigration enforcement, and the expansion of imprisonment” (Spade 2011, 33-34). Ekman (2014) criticizes the common understanding of the latest regime. She describes neoliberalism as an illusive and distracting ideal of capitalist developments that does not suffice to describe today's reality. Today's markets are far from free, as subsidies and monopolies leave no room to manoeuvre and production depends heavily upon the state (ibid.). In this regime the welfare system is needed to lessen the speed with which human and extra-human *natures* are slaved away (Baumann 2005, Moore 2014). Ekman's critique is in line with Baumann's description of the socio-economic developments that ensure capitalist production. Their observations describe the switches that happen when within a cycle of appropriation the *natures* which are denied importance are re-included into the economic system – a momentum which signals the close end of a capitalist cycle. At the end of a regime cycle, the parallel occurrence of regulation, privatization, as well as increasing monopolies and the growing importance of welfare states, and augmenting regulations is not unusual. Since 2003, signs of a crisis of the neoliberal cycle can be identified: the prices for cheap *natures* rise. This signals the exhaustion of the current accumulation regime. Lasting for a decade, this crisis is of unusual length. It becomes increasingly hard to move production to cheap-cost countries and successfully create surplus-value there. To Moore (2014) these characteristics indicate that it could be the epochal crisis of capitalism. Because the creation of cheap *natures* cannot longer be achieved, this crisis does not mark the switch towards a new capitalist cycle, but the close end of the capitalist strategy.

"Put simply, the Great Frontier that opened the capitalist epoch did so by making nature's free gifts – human natures too – more-or-less cheaply available to those with capital and power. The end of the frontier today is the end of nature's free gifts, and with it, the end of capitalism's free ride" (Moore 2014, 19).

Are we now reaching the limits of the capitalist strategy? Or will new mechanisms of self-preservation evolve out of this crisis? Regarding today's crises Moore (2014), is uncertain. Baumann's socio-economic analysis offered another perspective on today's crisis: an

unavoidable side-effect of capitalist economies is the superfluity of waste. Externalizing ever more human *natures* to appropriate their work, capitalist systems filled the remote areas of our planet with social outcasts. The creation and appropriation of non-human externalities additionally filled, predominantly, the peripheral areas with waste, creating an increasing the number of inhabitable places. Additionally the global population kept growing. “Today, our planet is full” (Baumann 2005, 91). The society keeps creating externalities, but there is nowhere to export them to. Also, the possibility to turn waste to something useful again, e.g. through prison-industry complexes, is limited. Because disconnectedness, needed to sustain oppressive structures, can no longer be sustained through spatial remoteness, remoteness is increasingly created within the system. Individualization, a growing gap between rich and poor, and the criminalization of social problems are the new inside separation. The populations of urban ghettos, asylum camps, refugee camps, and prisons grow. And here, again, stereotypes cause fear, legitimize mistreatment and present the state as safeguard. Baumann does not see this as a crisis of capitalist strategies. To him, it is a crisis of western society, a society that stopped questioning itself (ibid.). With a planet full, the regime preserves itself through a switch in the creation of cheap natures to appropriate: It concentrates on the redefinition of human natures and is thus a crisis of both extra-human and human nature.

3 Waves of accumulation in global fisheries

In this section I tell the history of fisheries in sequences that orient on the idea of cycles as described by Moore (2014). A typical development of a fishery-cycle is that it starts close to a home port. As long as the fish are in plenty the most popular species are depleted first (Roberts 2007)¹⁵. Once their fishery becomes more expensive than other options, the fishery focuses on other species, and when the local species and areas are depleted enough to make more distant fisheries profitable, the focus switches to other areas (Daniel, Hilborn, Branch 2013). In the history of fisheries, the overexploitation of fish stocks, combined with other factors, i.e. environmental changes on land resulted in empty waters, time and again (Roberts 2007).

¹⁵ Popular species are those that are in plenty, easily accessible, considered of good taste, and least complicated regarding storage, transport and processing (Roberts 2007).

Europe is a key actor in the development of Western fisheries. The first main cycle described here is the start of commercial fisheries in Europe, in the 11th century, when fish consumption was increasing and urban markets and inland trade of fish developed¹⁶. Throughout medieval times fresh water fisheries in Europe became unprofitable. Population growth, settlement growth, increasing agriculture activities, forest clearances, ploughing, the construction of road networks, and the installation of water mills and dams stressed the fresh water systems. They were soon highly polluted, closed by slith, and inaccessible for many species that used to migrate upstream for spawning. The first aquaculture activities began in reaction to the decrease in fish stocks, benefiting largely the wealthy population, while worsening the overall conditions of the waters upon which the poor still depended. The fishery soon oriented towards the sea (Roberts 2007). This is the beginning of another main cycle. Being able to dry cod to storable stockfish, European fisheries went up north, where they exploited the initially abundant Scandinavian fish stocks. The town of Bergen became the pivot of a south-north fishery and due to the developing trade Norway's economy shifted towards exporting fish and other commodities, and became dependent on grain-imports. In the 13th century the European fresh waters were finally overfished. Once the competition in Scandinavian waters became too strong and commercial interests in the Americas grew, Europe's fishery turned towards east-west trade (ibid.). East-west fishery is a next main cycle. In the late 15th century transatlantic fishing activities in American waters were normal. The development of colonies in North America highly depended on the local fresh water systems, and marks another main cycle. From the 16th century on, the North-American fresh water systems experienced the same fate as those in Europe during medieval times (ibid.).

Each newly accessed, plentiful resource kept fishery profitable (ibid.). “By the mid-seventeenth century, New England was already Britain's most successful experiment in overseas colonization” (Roberts 2007, 50). Every time a new fishery was found, whether in Scandinavian seas, in North American seas or fresh waters, or later in Newfoundland and Caribbean waters, the abundance, diversity, and pure size of the fish encountered was, for today's reader, unbelievable¹⁷. New technologies allowed to access ever new stocks and

16 This first cycle, like the other cycles named here, are main cycles, consisting of numerous sub-cycles that focus on different species, stocks, catch methods, and fishing grounds accessed.

17 The former abundance of the seas and fresh water systems is easily forgotten, because “each generation comes to view the environment into which it was born as natural, or normal [, causing] a collective social amnesia in which gradual deterioration of the environment and depletion of wildlife populations pass almost

species, and the lands to be conquered were many, so that with every fish stock declining, the fishery reoriented to a new fishery. For several centuries Europe's fisheries expanded globally (Roberts 2007).

In the nineteenth century industrialization speeded up overfishing of inland waters and near shore areas in Europe and North America (Roberts 2007). In Europe, national fisheries management was implemented relatively late compared to agriculture management and the European trade policy has always been more liberal regarding fisheries than agriculture (Lequesne 2004). Since the 1950s many states implemented state-ownership over their coastal waters and neoliberal policies began to influence fisheries (Mansfield 2004). In the 1960s the European seas were overexploited. With the propagation of the theory of *the tragedy of the commons* (Hardin 1986), property and market rationales became a central focus of fisheries policy making (Mansfield 2004). A Common Fisheries Policy of the European states was developed in the 70s. This policy, however, did not succeed in fairly managing the European fisheries¹⁸. With the 1975 Lomé convention the EU entered in fisheries agreements with 71 African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries, of which the waters were abundant in fish. While the EU agreements with Southern countries exchanged territorial access for (mostly financial) compensation, EU agreements with Northern countries exchanged majorly access rights for access rights (Lequesne 2004).

In 1982 state ownership of 200 nautical miles of the coast was anchored legally through the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, converting about one third of the ocean's surface to national waters, and thereby assigning the responsibility to manage 95% of the catches of that time to states (Lequesne 2004). Since then, EU fisheries regulation orients on Total Allowable Catches (TACs). Based upon scientific advice, the EU-politicians annually define how much of each species can be landed by each country (Lequesne 2004). Being influenced by political debate, and focussing only on the landings, TACs neither regulate gear, sea days, boat sizes, discard, by catch, or by kill on sea. They failed stopping and preventing

unnoticed" (Roberts 2007, 36).

18 European fisheries are comprised of many diverse fisheries, distinct socio-economic preconditions, different national management traditions, territorial differences, and a variety of ecosystems. Such diverse fisheries can impossibly be governed fairly by a centralized system, such as the EU implemented. Though the European model of a centralized fisheries management failed, most fisheries are regulated through similarly centralized systems (Lequesne 2004).

European fisheries from overexploiting the seas, especially, since new, fisheries oriented member states joined the European Union, and the importance of European fisheries and their activities outside the EU grew (Roberts 2007)¹⁹. Though the implementation of state-ownership created national common goods, those were largely considered to be open access. This understanding and the introduction of TACs paved the way for rights-based fishery (RBF), as private ownership was understood as panacea to overfishing and other stressors (Mansfield 2004).

In 1984, Iceland was the first state to introduce Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs). Despite its promises to achieve environmental and social improvements in fisheries, this quota system proved to be only beneficial for large-scale fishing operators. With the introduction of RBF, fish became privatized and marketised. The national catch is divided in a number of quota shares that are to be privately owned and can be traded with. Amongst the main outcomes of this switch is a changing ownership pattern. Place-based, collectively-managed rights are replaced by individual, private rights that concentrate in the hands of an economic elite, dispossessing especially small-scale fishers of their livelihoods. Today, rights-based fishery is implemented in Iceland, Chile, Canada, Mexico, Denmark, Namibia, USA, New Zealand, and prepared in Sweden, Great Britain, France, Peru, Argentina, Mozambique, Senegal, Gambia, and Uganda (Arnason 2005; TNI et al. in press). In South Africa the ITQ-system is now being abandoned after South-African small-scale fisher people fought against the devastating socio-economic impacts ITQs have already had upon the large majority of their fisher folk. In each case the concentration of catch shares results in a global concentration of fishing rights in the hands of few transnational companies that are majorly based in the North. Thus RBF facilitate that “The waters of developing countries are being pillaged today in a rerun of the years of colonial exploitation of their terrestrial wealth” (Roberts 2007, 329)²⁰.

19 The original member states of the EU were no major fishing actors. Especially with Greece (1981), Portugal (1986), and Spain (1986) joining the EU, the Common Fisheries Policy changed drastically, as the fish caught in the EU more than doubled, and much of those countries catches came from waters outside the EU (Lequesne 2004).

20 The European fleet engages with more than 700 vessels in non-European waters. In 2000, 20 to 25% of the fish production of the European fleet was supplied through bilateral agreements, 40% of the overall catch weight of the EU came from foreign territories, and another 20% of the overall catch weight was caught at the high seas (Lequesne 2004).

Today's fisheries follow capitalist market rationales. Thus, the increase of efficiency and rationalization are central elements (Carothers 2008). In result, the size of fishing vessels increases, the days spend on sea and the volume of fish caught increase, the crew is reduced and chosen from an international pool of fishermen, and the number of boats per fleet is reduced. Fishing waters, harbours for landing and maintenance, and processing sites are chosen in regards to the highest possible profit, too, internationalizing the processing industry (Lequesne 2004). Orienting on global economic patterns the European fishery became deterritorialised.

“The twentieth century was a time of technological revolution for fisheries – faster boats, bigger nets, stronger materials, better weather forecasts, visuals beamed from the sea floor. But for all their science and gadgetry, today's fishing captains are no more successful than their nineteenth-century forebears. They are chasing resources in decline, and each new technology presses nature harder, ratcheting down populations to new lows” (Roberts 2007, 315)²¹.

Despite growing catch power global fish landings went in reverse in 1988 (Roberts 2007). In the 1980s and 90s most of the Global North had been overfishing their waters (Hilborn and Hilborn 2012, 123). “On the current trajectory of decline, fisheries for all of the fish and shellfish species we exploit today will have collapsed by 2048” (Roberts 2007, 330). Such horrifying prognosis revived the idea of saving the stocks by implementing no-take zones through installing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). The number of MPAs grew tenfold from 1970 to 1995. In 2010 the Convention on Biological Diversity declared to bring 10% of the coastal and marine areas under protection until 2020. Currently about 4% of the world's marine and coastal areas are protected by MPAs or other area-based conservation measures (Sharma and Rajagopalan 2013). Some ambitious conservationists upscale the goal to 20% or 30% of protected areas until 2020 (Marine Conservation Institute n.d.; CTI n.d.; The Nature Conservancy 2014). Most of those areas are, and will be, located in coastal areas and

21 The scarcer the fish, the more gear improvements are made and meanwhile, the technology blinds the people to the shrinkage of stocks (Roberts 2007). An example that illustrates the dimensions of technology development and ecosystem destruction is bottom-trawling in the high-seas, where the fleets of active trawlers “... hit around 1,500 square kilometres (580 square miles) of seabed every day. This is equivalent to the area of two and a half soccer pitches or nearly four American football pitches destroyed every second, faster than the rate of loss of the world's tropical rain forests. For every breath we take, an area covering ten soccer pitches has been stripped of its fish and invertebrates” (Roberts 2007, 330).

territorial waters, the areas in which the small scale fisher people live and practice their livelihood activities. One study found, about half of the MPAs analysed have displaced small-scale fisher people. Centralized top-down management and one-sided representation of interests and contexts are some of the key reasons behind small-scale fisher people being restricted or denied their access and/ or practices (Sharma and Rajagopalan 2013).

The Western idea of being able to predict and manage nature according to ecological or economic models is a false conclusion (Bavington 2010). Fisheries management is primarily a social issue. We can only try to manage human behaviour, assuming that it affects the fish stocks in the predicted way (Hilborn and Hilborn 2012). Focussing on one or few factors management can not address the complexity of systems of which fisheries are part²². Promising food security, the creation of jobs, and an end to overfishing, large scale aquaculture, in which ecological processes are considered to be more easily controlled, becomes increasingly popular. Though the ecological impacts of monocultures on land are well known, aquaculture became a key trend in fisheries policies and fisheries-related development work (Roberts 2007; TNI et al. in press). As MPAs, large-scale aquaculture has high potential to displace fisher folk from their lands or fishing grounds in the name of sustainable development. Beneficiaries of such large-scale projects are all too often foreigners: investors, transnationally operating corporations, or populations from the Global North, while the costs of their gaining are carried by the local small-scale fisher folk (TNI et al. in press).

The impacts of Marine Protected Areas and other models of fisheries depend upon their design and implementation. Before western-style centralized fisheries management was introduced, the western Pacific was managed by its communities (Johannes 1981). Though community-based management does not necessarily imply sustainable management, many of the Pacific communities that managed the fisheries on their own were able to sustain the stocks for thousands of years (Hilborn and Hilborn 2012). When, today, someone is

22 “When a species is dying from a thousand cuts, a lot of bandages are needed” (Hilborn and Hilborn 2012, 33). Considering ecological factors only, a brief brainstorming makes me come up with many different coefficients influencing the aquatic ecosystems: pollution through large scale aquaculture, industrial overfishing, resource extraction such as deep sea mining and mining on land, agricultural intakes, ocean acidification, ghost nets and marine littering, dumping of toxics, dumping of chemical weapons and other waste, radioactive pollution, and oil spills, all of which interact with the aquatic systems in a way that they are not affected by borders, be it of MPAs or territorial waters.

demanding community rights and communities' co-management in fisheries, the questions which community, and which rights and responsibilities they are talking about is crucial. The local, place-bound community of small-scale fisher folk has different needs and interests in fisheries management than the interest community of politicians or transnational corporations. All are stakeholder groups, but depending on who has which rights and who is (co-)managing, the outcome and the effects upon the food sovereignty of those inhabiting, and depending on the areas and resources in question with their livelihoods will vary (Ruddle and Davis 2013). Neoliberal co-management tends to mask the shifting of burdens and responsibilities to the citizens as power-sharing, while it only serves to further rationalize the management-process (Davis and Ruddle 2012).

Market oriented and capitalist rationales in fisheries management and beyond, as seen in Rights Based Fishery (RBF) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), mistake small-scale fisher people as isolated, mobile, profit maximizing *homo economicus*. But human and nature are interconnected through fisheries and this relation does not stop at the coast (Macinko 2007). “For many fishermen, fishing is a way of life closely connected to particular places with deep cultural meanings and social ramifications, not merely a wealth-generating activity that is interchangeable with alternative occupations in other places” (Carothers 2008, 59). Recently, key fisheries policy makers, corporate representatives and international NGOs have increasingly influenced global fisheries policy making, pushing forward privatization and creating global commodities for transnational markets through RBF, public-private partnerships, MPAs, and industrial aquaculture (Reuter 2014). This wave of privatization goes beyond the privatization of means of production. New types of privatization emerged in fisheries: Privatization of environmental management through market-based instruments (such as licences granting the right to fish), privatization of life (patenting biological processes and genetic information), and privatization of the areas upon which life-processes depend (areas in which fishing or other activities including leisure activities and aquaculture are possible) (Mansfield 2007). With the catchphrase “blue growth” international initiatives, such as the Global Partnership for Oceans, and the Global Oceans Actions Summit, push forward such ocean grabbing: key decision-makers and powerful economic actors secure their power through legal, market-based mechanisms of fisheries management, other resource-use related policies, and market activities following capitalistic rationales, enclosing marine,

coastal and inland fisheries, with devastating socio-cultural and ecological consequences (TNI et al. in press)²³.

There is a rich pool of cases of ocean grabbing that includes stories from all over the world, covering different types of fisheries and different struggles of (small-scale) fisher people whose livelihood is threatened by profit interests²⁴. Through the Global Partnership for Oceans, the World Bank has allocated 200 million US dollars respectively for developing East African fisheries (Masifundise 2013). Meanwhile, the African Union disabled the representatives of small-scale fisher people repeatedly to meaningfully participate at key decision-making events. Thus the African Union is creating one-sided solutions that largely orient on economic growth through the introduction of rights-based fishery, Marine Protected Areas and Public Private Partnerships (Reuter 2014). "Powerful interests now dominate the fisheries industry. There is the issue of **Lake Grabbing** by foreign investors under the guise of fisheries development" (UFFCA 2013b, 5). Fishing communities in Uganda increasingly are confronted with lake and land grabbing. Land and water bodies are sold to private individuals or companies (UFFCA 2013b). Globally, small-scale fisher folk is dispossessed of their access to, control over and benefits from the livelihood resources their livelihoods depend upon (TNI et al. in press), leaving behind fishing communities for whom "The inability to fish [...] does not equate to merely lost income; rather, the inability to fish is often accompanied by a loss of identity, way of life, and, for some, a disconnection with their home communities" (Carothers 2008, 59).

4 Methodological frame

To rethink the history of fisheries from a human ecological perspective, I undertook a field study in fishing communities of Mukono district, a coastal district at Lake Victoria Uganda. The research methods chosen for this study orient on the concept of *history from below*. Strongly influenced by Marxism, history from below focuses on reconstructing history, by

23 The example of Iceland demonstrates how the introduction of ITQs marketised ownership, boosted rationalization of the sector and resulted in great job losses in the fisheries sector. The ITQs increasingly channelled capital towards the economic elite, where it was largely used for speculations, co-constituting the financial bubbles that started the financial crisis in 2008 (Benediktsson and Karlsdóttir 2011).

24 The term 'ocean grabbing' describes processes of enclosure fisher folk faces. That includes not only salt water fisheries, but also inland fisheries and land-struggles of fishing communities, such as blue grabbing, green grabbing, aquatic grabbing, fisheries grabbing, lake grabbing, water grabbing, or land grabbing.

means of directing attention to marginalized voices (Russell 1999). The understandings of marginalized groups differ from those that are in power. Adding new perspectives to the analysis of repressive structures, knowledges of oppressed groups have potential to be radical thought that can produce empowering alternatives to the currently dominant perception of this world (O'Reilly 2005).

In the 1980s *Alltagsgeschichte* was established within the concept of history from below (Lüdtke 1995). *Alltagsgeschichte* can be translated as the history of ordinary events – *everyday history* (Jackson 1990). Acknowledging the experiences and understandings of everyday people as equally valid as those of academic historians, historical key figures, and experts of all kind, everyday history draws attention the political importance of the politics of everyday life (Crew 1989, 397). In telling personal stories that include irrational choices, and conflicting values and needs, everyday history contributes to make existing history more complex, enriched with ambiguity, uneven development, and contradictions (Crew 1989).

Supplementary to the concept of everyday history, the overall approach and design of this fieldwork is oriented on the concept of participative research as action research. Action research was founded by critical social scientists who were searching for ways to contribute to an existing struggle for social justice. It assigns a new role to the researcher who becomes an actor within a political discourse. Action research questions dominant understandings. All participants are seen as potentially equally active, and potentially equally expert (Greenwood and Levin 2007). The research process is understood as a joint learning experience, and truth is understood as a provisional status of an ongoing process - the "best reasoned knowledge that can be accepted by the parties at a particular point in the collaboration process" (Greenwood and Levin 2007, 103). Social movements can profit from such co-generative cooperation between scientists and activists, because action research can promote democratic social change through increasing the people's ability to self-control and improving their capacity (Greenwood and Levin 2007).

This thesis is problem driven and dedicated to contribute to a concrete struggle of small-scale fisher people. The thesis is written in collaboration with the Danish NGO Africa Contact, and

the Ugandan organizations Uganda Fish and Fisheries Conservation Association (UFFCA), and Katosi Women Development Trust (KWDT). UFFCA and KWDT are key actors in the civil society-network fighting for small-scale fisher people's rights in the Ugandan context and internationally. Both organizations have a critical standpoint towards fisheries that in some regards is in line with the approach of political ecology.

Striving to learn the history from those that are marginalized, I chose to undertake a case study in rural fishing communities in Uganda, focussing on inland fisheries, and the viewpoints of rural small-scale fisher folk. I decided to discuss small-scale fisher people's issues primarily with women of such fishing communities, because within fishing communities in Uganda women are stronger marginalized than the male members of their communities. But there are also practical considerations supporting this decision: I.e. in Uganda, women are traditionally not considered to be qualified for fishery. Talking about fisheries I – a women myself – might find more welcoming interview-situations with women than with men.

I chose the qualitative approach of everyday history because I strive not to construct my interview-partners as a homogenous group of '*the other*', or in my case '*the women of rural fishing communities in Mukono district*' which would be a reproduction of simplifying discriminatory patterns, but instead explore multidimensional subjectivities. The hyper complexity of the systems in questions is a key element of World System Analysis (Mbembe 2001), and of everyday history (Crew 1989). The people I engaged with for telling this story are no passive objects in one, true history that I can find and tell. They act. And in learning about the politics of their everyday life, I can tell a history, that has the potential of creating and supporting counter narratives that deconstruct the dominant oversimplified stories (O'Reilly 2005).

The fieldwork was undertaken at Lake Victoria Uganda from February 10 to 21 2014. I undertook semi-structured interviews and group discussions with primarily women in fishing communities at landing sites in Mukono district, as well as additional, semi-structured group

discussions with fishermen and other stakeholders at Lake Victoria Uganda²⁵. The semi-structured set-up ensured that the interviews would cover certain topics, while also offering space for all participants to add themes. This interview style additionally creates a more natural conversation flow (O'Reilly 2005). Working in a way that allows me to personally engage with the people that are at the core of this thesis, enables me to illustrate how history is made by human beings, that “are able to make choices, to be reflexive, to have a certain amount of free will, thought, and calculation” (O'Reilly 2005, 114). As discussed earlier (see chapter 2) such an encounter is crucial for not reproducing dichotomies and stereotypes. Figure 2 displays all places at which interviews and other fieldwork were undertaken.

Since the fieldwork was undertaken in rural communities in Uganda my research depended upon the support of a translator²⁶. The design of the group-encounters and the individual interviews orient on the oral history methodology (Russel 1999), and the principles and best practices compiled by the Oral History Association (Oral History Association 2009). The fieldwork included the following elements: pre-interview meeting, consent-release forms, interview/group discussion checklists, interview/group discussion outlines, and thank you notes. Especially helpful to ensure that each encounter covers information relevant for my analysis, were the outlines²⁷.

25 A landing site is an area of coastal land that is specifically used for landing boats and unloading the catch after fishing. It functions like a harbour, since the boats stay there. At lake Victoria Uganda I encountered landing sites varying from a few meters of nearly deserted sandy coastline with less than 10 boats to a strongly fenced and security protected area, with concrete floor, freezing and transportation infrastructure for trucks, hosting shops of different kind, several gastronomies and more than 50 boats of which most were engine driven.

26 The main language spoken in Uganda is Luganda. Many people also speak Swahili, and some of the women we met in Mukono were fluent in English. The group discussion with Fishermen in Kasenyi was translated by UFFCA staff. The first group discussion in Mukono district was translated by KWDT-staff. KWDT's fieldworker facilitated and translated all further group discussions and six of seven interviews with women in Mukono district. He is fluent in English, Swahili and Luganda. Myself, I speak English and Swahili fluently. I am aware that due translations the translator has a certain influence on the mediation of the discussion. He was informed about the overall project and the reasoning behind the questions and interviews. To enrich the discussion he would add questions and inquire independently if interested. So eventually it would be more appropriate to talk about small group discussions, even regarding the interviews.

27 Due to the twofold interest in historical development and the socio-cultural impact of fisheries the outlines included open-ended questions and closed-ended questions. The complete outlines can be found in the Appendix.

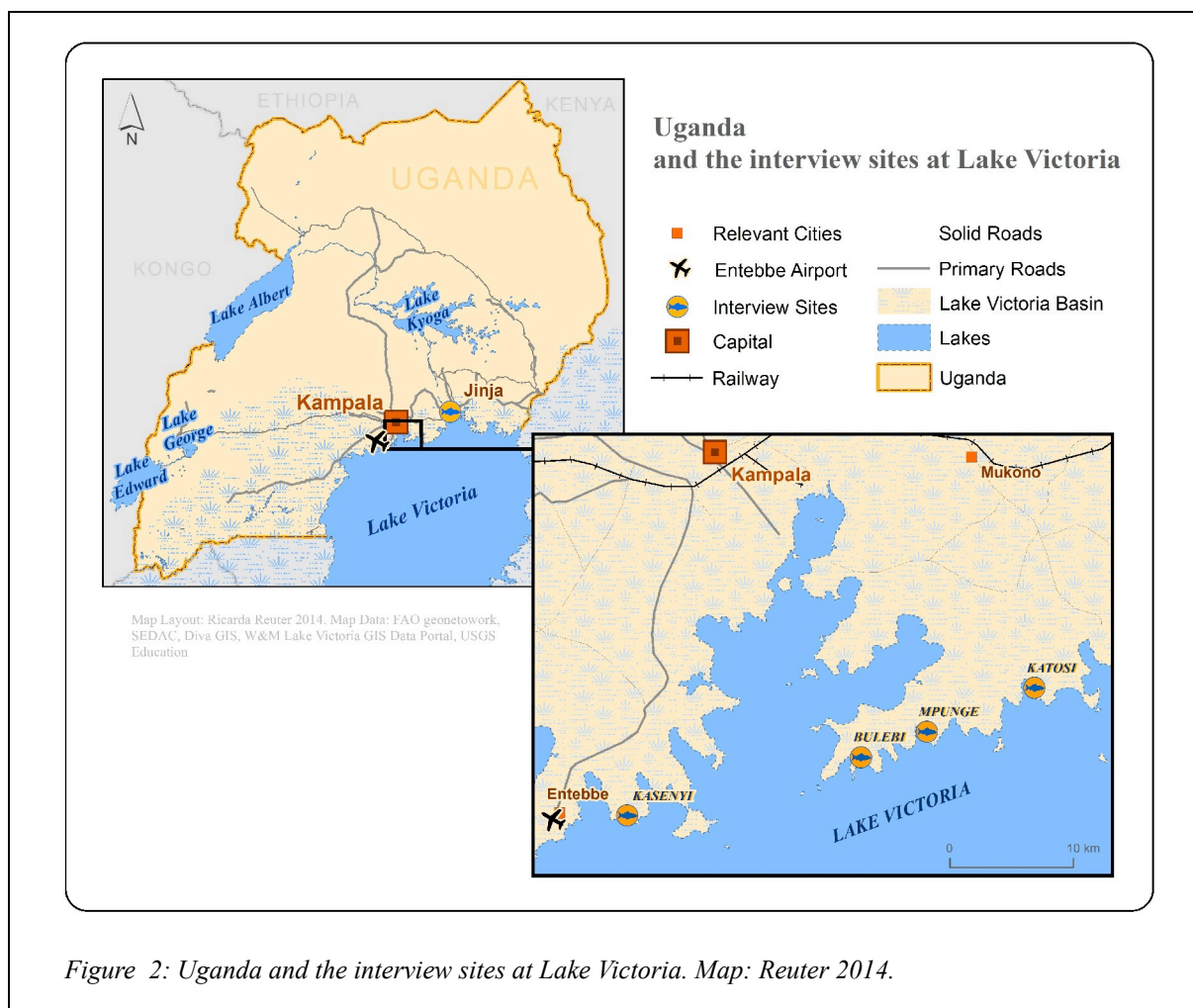


Figure 2: Uganda and the interview sites at Lake Victoria. Map: Reuter 2014.

During my fieldwork I undertook seven group discussions, facilitated by KWDT and UFFCA. The material gathered in group sessions includes:

- Notes from a group discussion with an Africa Contact volunteer, UFFCA staff, and fishermen in Kasenyi landing site in Wakiso district. The meeting lasted about 30 minutes. (Kasenyi, personal)
- Notes from three KWDT-facilitated group discussions with primarily women of fishing communities in Mukono district. Each meeting lasted about 60 minutes. (Mpunge 1, personal; Mpunge 2, personal; Bulebi, personal)
- Notes from a meeting with staff from the National Fisheries Resources Research Institute. The meeting took about 100 minutes. (NaFFIRI, personal)
- Notes from a discussion with UFFCA staff and a Fisheries Officer from Mukono

district. The discussion lasted about 45 minutes. (BMU-officer 1, personal).

- Notes from discussions with an Africa Contact volunteer and the executive director of Uganda Fisheries and Fish Conservation Association. All in all the meetings with UFFCA took 4 to 5 hours. (UFFCA, personal)

Group discussions allow the researcher to create a more relaxed atmosphere than single-interviews (O'Reilly 2005, 130). Group discussions also have the potential to increase the transparency of my work towards the communities which I engage with. The conversations were a mixture of Focus Group Discussions and Planned Group Discussions. They were held with 5-30 people. In most cases the participants were familiar with one-another. Also, the conversations concentrated upon specific topics, which were useful in researching a range of views and responses, and especially the social setting influencing the people's reactions upon certain topics (O'Reilly 2005). All meetings were held at public places, allowing other community members to listen in or participate. This way the group discussions did also contribute insight into the social set-up within the landing sites.²⁸

The outline for the group discussions originally consisted of four main themes: To gather general information that would be helpful in understanding the overall situation and to contextualize the discussion, the first theme was the *community* in general. To gain insight into the situation of women in fisheries and their common experiences the second theme was the participants *everyday life*. To learn and discuss about the sociocultural and historical developments the third theme was the *women's livelihoods in relation to fishery development*. Lastly, in order to comprehend the participant's understanding of place and to learn and discuss issues and experiences of land grabbing and lake grabbing, we talked about *places and their importance for fisher folk*. Based upon the group discussion held a fifth theme was added to both the outline for group discussions and interviews: *migration* to the lake and fisher folk migration along the lake shore.²⁹ The outlines for the semi-structured interviews were more detailed than those for the group-encounters. The interview outline encompassed four main themes: To get to know the person, her individual situatedness, background, and reasoning the first main theme focused on the *personal story*. The second main theme was

28 In consequence, all of the discussions that were planned as women-only meetings, were nevertheless joined by at least one landing site official, and a varying number of male community members that eventually also engaged in the discussions.

29 You can find the complete outline for group-sessions in appendix B.

culture and everyday life. This section often reconsidered issues that were raised in an earlier group encounter. A special focus was set on *livelihood practices and fisheries*, two main themes in which we discussed interconnections of culture and livelihood practices on the examples of different livelihood strategies and land use. The last main theme was focussing on the *places, and personal migration*, and closely connected to discussions about livelihood and home.

The material gathered in interviews includes:

- Recordings and notes from 7 interviews that I conducted with women from different fishing communities in Mukono district the shore of Lake Victoria, in Uganda. In average the meetings took 44 minutes.³⁰
Betty (Boey, personal), Jamirah (Joeh, personal), Jane (Joe, personal), Josefine (Jooe, personal), Pross (Poes, personal), Rachel (Roe, personal), Samalie (Soee, personal)
- Notes from a discussion with one of Katosi's Beach Management Unit Officers. The meeting lasted about one hour. (BMU-officer 2, personal)
- Notes from Skype calls with the translator, that were held for further inquiry into the topics discussed. All together the Skype-sessions lasted about two hours. (KWDT, Skype)

The participants for the interviews with women from Mukono district were suggested and facilitated by the Katosi Women Development Trust (KWDT) field-worker. He chose the participants from within the KWDT members, following on the group discussions, and via snowball approach. Main criteria for the choice of interviewees was to talk with women that all together cover a wide range of fishery-related livelihoods. I am aware that in engaging primarily with KWDT-members the group of people that I encountered is neither representative of the whole community, nor of all women in the community. KWDT women have their own agenda and their own understanding of how things are connected.

For the analysis transcripts and notes from the interviews and discussions were evaluated with Docear mind maps in three main steps³¹. In a first mind map all information from the notes and transcripts, was collected and sorted into the topics and relations that came up. The second step was to restructure the collection in regards to the key themes of the study,

³⁰ All interview participants are anonymised. The names presented are not the real names of the participants.

The interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants.

³¹ Docear is an open source literature management and mind-mapping program.

possible relations to the theories, and contextual information that were to be applied in the analysis. The third step was to restructure this collection into thematic sequences and a rough chronological order. This step allowed analysing relations amongst the different sequences and building a narrative³².

5 Rethinking fisheries at Lake Victoria Uganda

The presentation and analysis of fisheries history at Lake Victoria Uganda begins with the end of colonialism and Uganda's independence from the British, in 1962. Until 1960 the Ugandan Game Department was the only institution in charge of defining and enforcing fisheries regulations in the country (UFFCA 2013). While fishery at Lake Albert became more mechanized from the 1960s to the 1980s, the Ugandan government had limited possibilities of regulating fishery at Lake Victoria (Kamuturaki n.a. a). Until the 1970s the fishery at that lake was a decentralized small-scale sector (Kamuturaki n.a. b). "[T]he local fishing communities around the lake had all through this century developed rules which regulated fisheries" (Kamuturaki n.a. b, 6). Therewith, cultural and traditional leaders have been in control of some parts of the Ugandan shores, parallel to the governmental structures (Kamuturaki n.a. b).

Due to insufficient financial means the people engaged in fisheries did not make bigger investments. Those who owned the boat were on board and fishing, and income was distributed relatively evenly. Those who fished in teams would share the catch. Processing and trade was organized locally in the community, and largely carried out by women, who were excluded from fishing. Only the fish that was not for direct consumption was processed and sold to local markets. There was no hierarchy between those who fish and those who trade, and fish mongers used to develop longstanding relations with fishers (Kamuturaki n.a. a). Traditional gear used during this time was passive gear. Fishers installed nets on the lake, left them over night and came back to collect them in the morning (NaFFIRI personal). The fishery was small and oriented towards a multiplicity of species (UFFCA personal). The people in the fishing communities relied upon diverse livelihood strategies. For 80% of the

32 Throughout the analysis I worked with multiple allocation of notes. In result the mind maps became complex and repetitive. However, this procedure proved to be especially helpful for the analysis of how things are connected with each other. A screen shot of the mind map at the beginning of step three can be seen in Appendix C. Most of the mind map knots visible on this screen shot contain new mind-map trees within.

fishermen fishing was the primary livelihood, often complemented with agricultural activities (Kamuturaki n.a. b). The women processing and trading fish largely did so as a part-time activity (UFFCA personal).

During the late 1960s and 70s Uganda suffered from violent political regimes and economic decline (Golooba-Mutebi 2010)³³. Overall population growth, a lack of employment and the simplicity of entering fisheries at Lake Victoria reinforced population growth and other problems in the lake shore communities, where land began to become scarce. Already in the 1960s most commercial species of Lake Victoria were overfished (Golooba-Mutebi 2010). At that time many men became full time fishermen (Kamuturaki n.a. b). Unlike agricultural activities, fishery did not require to own and care for places – the reproductive activities of the lake's ecosystem were appropriated. Especially in times of crisis, fisheries might have been a more promising and more reliable livelihood than agriculture activities. In the long run, becoming dependent on one single livelihood strategy increased the vulnerability of the fisher people towards crisis and resulted in intensified fishing pressure.

The women in Mpunge Nangooma report that, back in 1952, the most popular catches have been tilapia and mud fish (Kasenyi, personal)³⁴. After those species have been overfished the lake still provided plenty of haplochromine (NaFFIRI, personal)³⁵. In the 1960's there were over 500 species of haplochromine in Lake Victoria that made up 80% of the catches. The three lake countries' governments were looking for a way to turn them into a marketable product (UFFCA, personal). But haplochromine are small, bony fish that are generally regarded as "*trash fish*" (NaFFIRI, personal). They were not popular. Developing a canning or fishmeal industry would have been costly and haplochromine had no economic value for export or the local market (NaFFIRI, personal). Nevertheless, a small trawler-fishmeal

33 The first president of the independent Uganda, Frederick Edward Mutesa, was overthrown by his Prime Minister Milton Obote, who declared himself president in 1967. Obote banned all parties except for his own, the Ugandan People's Congress. Already in 1972 Uganda experienced another regime shift, when General Idi Amin came to power. Under his leadership Uganda's economic and political institutions were severely damaged. Amin turned Uganda rapidly from a multiparty democracy to a country ruled by political violence. Civil wars, political exclusion, i.e. the ban of political parties, abolishment of parliament, and expelling the Asian minority, who were the economic backbone of Uganda's industrial and business class, had significant socio-economic consequences. Amin did not focus on Uganda's development but invested primarily in security and regime-maintenance. It was only with the help of the Tanzanian government that the political opposition in exile could successfully overthrow Amin in 1979 (Golooba-Mutebi 2010).

34 In this thesis fish of the species *Oreochromis niloticus* is referred to as tilapia, and mud fish describes cat fish or lung fish caught in muddy waters (NaFFIRI, personal).

35 In this thesis fish of the group haplochromine cichlids are referred to as haplochromine.

industry, targeting haplochromine, was started in the mid-1970s. The introduction of the fish-meal industry was an attempt to overcome the scarcity of resources by creating a commodity that is suitable for global markets. However, this industry never became big. But it marks the introduction of commercial fishery, in which "the operators of the trawlers in the lake had little knowledge of [the local] rules, or felt free to disregard them" (Kamuturaki n.a. b, 6). Commercialisation and regional trade brought with them new interest-groups that were not necessarily located in the fishing communities from which the fish for fishmeal was caught, landed and processed (ibid.). Distant consumers and migrant labour bear higher potential for socio cultural and hence environmental remoteness in form of unawareness, lack of understanding and disrespect of the local customs and ecosystems (Plumwood 2002). From this point onward the fishery at Lake Victoria Uganda began to be shaped by the interests of capitalist food regimes.

5.1 The introduction of a Nile perch-focussed fishery

To restock Lake Victoria with commercially valuable species, the East African Fisheries Research Organization suggested to introduce Nile perch – a fish species native to several other lakes in this region (NaFFIRI, personal)³⁶. This perch is a predator species that feeds on haplochromine, turning the trash fish into "natural fodder" (UFFCA, personal)³⁷. Lake Victoria already inhabited relatives of the Nile perch (ibid.). Unlike the smaller native fish of Lake Victoria, Nile perch was suitable for export (Pringle 2011). In the early 1960's about 350 Nile perches from Uganda's Lake Albert were introduced at the Ugandan shore of Lake Victoria. Additionally, Kenya introduced about 200 Nile perches from Kenya's Lake Rudolf (UFFCA, personal)³⁸. In the first years after the introduction, Nile perch made up only 1% of the catches, while the unpopular haplochromine continued to constitute about 80% of the catches (NaFFIRI, personal). In the early 1980s, the Nile perch population suddenly skyrocketed. In Uganda, the total catch of Nile perch increased from less than 1.000 tonnes in

36 In this thesis fish of the species *Lates niloticus* is referred to as Nile perch, which is its local name.

37 This project was not without critics. Especially amongst scientists there was a strong opposition. As a test run Nile perch was first introduced in the smaller Ugandan Lake Kyoga in 1959. Passing the test sufficiently well for two years, the major fisheries research institutes in Jinja, Uganda, decided to officially introduce it in Lake Victoria (UFFCA, personal).

38 Interestingly, unknown actors already introduced Nile perch to Lake Victoria, before the official introduction took place (NaFFIRI, personal). Also different stories and disagreement regarding the course of events exist (Pringle 2011). For the location of Lake Albert see figure 2: Uganda and the interview sites at Lake Victoria.

1981 to 41.000 tonnes in 1986 (Kamuturaki n.a. b)³⁹. With the introduction of Nile perch the scarcity of commercially relevant fish was overcome, as a new cheap *nature* was – literally – created. Appropriating the ecosystem's capacity to reproduce commercially relevant species, the local fish commerce grew.

Through Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund then facilitated the transformation of Lake Victoria fisheries towards a more industrialized economy that specialized in the export of Nile perch-filets to the Global North, made Uganda the African showcase for the economic success of SAPs, and hence attracted more donor assistance (Golooba-Mutebi 2010)⁴⁰. Up to the mid-80s the Lake Victoria fishery was still primarily a small-scale fishery (Kamuturaki n.a. b). Some women from Mukono district reported that in 1991 people still caught plenty of tilapia, and later, when the bigger Nile perch became popular other fish than this perch were discarded (Mpunge 1, personal). Nile perch required different catch methods, ways of processing, and transportation infrastructure than the smaller fish species, upon which the fishery was built so far (NaFFIRI, personal). It took some time for the market to adapt and increase the popularity of the fish. Despite that, the fishing sector at the lake grew and the emerging industry brought new jobs. During the 80s about 180.000 jobs were created at Lake Victoria. Additional migrant workers entered the fishery. The increasingly lucrative business motivated those that were still seasonal or part-time fishermen, fish mongers, and migrant workers to focus their livelihood strategy solely towards Nile perch fishery (Kamuturaki n.a. b). Furthermore, the high initial investments needed to work with Nile perch, required to abandon other livelihood activities, as capital was not sufficient to invest in several strategies (Pringle 2011).

39 Except from the original number of Nile perches introduced to the ecosystem, the overall biomass of fish in Lake Victoria never underwent relevant changes. However, its composition did (NaFFIRI, personal).

40 The economic stabilization programs in Uganda were amongst the first experiments with Structural Adjustment Programs in Africa. Main goals were the liberalization of the Ugandan shilling and reductions in the state expenditures. Though these interventions had a positive effect in the short term, the economy went down again. Amongst others, civil war and corruption prevented the reforms from being successful. In 1985 ethnic conflicts within the military led to a coup d'état that replaced Obote with General Tito Olara Okello. Unable to negotiate peace his regime again was overthrown by another coup d'état in 1986. Since then, the National Resistance Army Movement (NRM), led by Museveni is in power (Golooba-Mutebi 2010). Contrasting their predecessors the National Resistance Army Movement chose a participatory, socialist course. But inheriting a highly unstable country it didn't go well and in 1987 the government turned towards the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank loans, and followed their guidance for economic reforms (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey 2010). The reforms strengthened the governments legitimacy, and donor pressure pushed the NRM to finally allow multiparty-politics, but they could not stabilize the Ugandan economy (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey 2010).

Many of the women I have spoken with, shared stories of how they started operating at the lake because the plenty of fish made business lucrative (Mpunge 1, personal; Joe, personal; Joee, personal, Roel, personal; Poes, personal). Rachel and Josefine, have originally been engaged in fish trading (Roel, personal; Joee, personal). When the boom began they earned enough money to buy their own boat, motor, and gear, and to hire a crew of fishermen that went fishing for them. Rachel told that "Fish would be given to them freely. Like you come here, there's a lot of fish and if you want a piece of fish you just take. So then she thought OK: fish is in plenty and maybe I involve myself. It would be good business" (Roel, personal). Pross moved to the lake to improve her fish smoking business. She started her business in 1976 with 20kg of Nile perch. After one week she could already buy 100kg Nile perch from the profit she made (Poes, personal). Fisher folk from Bulebi reported similarly about profits in the fish smoking sector (Bulebi, personal). With a business running so well new entrants could soon invest again, and expand (Joee, personal; Joe, personal)⁴¹. There is an old saying "*ssente azirya kivubi*" – spending money like a fishermen. It originated in those times, when fisher folk were so wealthy, that they used to spend their money, without having to plan, or to be worried about tomorrow, because their business would refill their pockets the next day (Mpunge 1, personal)⁴².

In 1990 the Nile perch fishery in Uganda reached its peak with an annual yield of 330.000mt. The catches were so high that Nile perch flooded the local markets. Fish was cheap and accessible for everyone, so that it eventually became a major part of the local diet (Kamuturaki n.a. b). Additionally to the increased supply with fish, the high catches also brought about investments that lead to infrastructure improvement and economic growth for the lake region. A key development was the reorientation of the Nile perch trade to markets beyond those of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The quantity of Nile perch available, and the possibilities opened through the SAPs, and the nearby Entebbe International Airport, allowed also global markets to appropriate the lake and gain through development of a processing-industry and the trade with Nile perch (Fulgencio 2009; Kamuturaki n.a. b; Mpunge 1, personal)⁴³. Initially, the local demand was low since the fatty fish required more work for

41 With her first boat Josefine made 5.000.000 UGX (about 1.400 Euro) a month. At the peak of her business, she owned and managed six boats (Joee, personal).

42 With NaFFIRI I discuss how catch-fishery differs from cultivating plants/ farming. Fishery suggests to bring revenue without the fishermen directly taking care of the lake. The resource appears to be somewhat endless (NaFFIRI, personal).

43 "*During the last 10-15 years a substantial export-oriented trade has developed on the basis of the fisheries*

processing and storage. Boosted by sheer availability the global market, especially in Europe, the Middle East, Japan and the USA, welcomed the perch, therewith creating the demand for Nile perch and an infrastructure needed to globalise it. To meet this demand the number of filleting factories at the lake increased fast. In the 1990s there were more than 35 factories in Uganda (Kamuturaki n.a. b). Due to its size Nile perch needs to be frozen in order to be transported. The freezing, transportation, and filleting industry created many jobs and again lead to an influx of migrant workers (Joeh, personal). Additionally an increasing number of people, including Josefine, became middle men between the original fish mongers and the trucks (Joe, personal; Kamuturaki n.a. b)⁴⁴.

The interview-participants from Katosi described many positive changes that came about with the Nile perch fishery (Joe, personal; Boey, personal; Joeh, personal; Poes, personal). Betty came to Katosi to work as a nurse and never was directly engaged in fishing. She reported that, "About 20 years ago Katosi was like a village, now you find commercial houses, solid houses, a much bigger population, electricity, a road network of connected roads and trucks arriving that bring beverages and other goods" (Boey, personal). She relates those changes to the development in the fishing sector. Jamirah, who lives in Katosi, is engaged in the community's care taking of women, and ran a successful fishing business during the fish boom, also mentions in particular the construction of solid houses, and how the new roads increased the availability of goods for Katosi and the people living on nearby islands (Joeh, personal)⁴⁵.

resources in Lake Victoria. Development Aid organizations and the international development banks have played an important role stimulating this development" (Kamuturaki n.a. b, 3).

"Moreover, Entebbe International Airport which would later become the hub of the fish export industry is located at the shores of Lake Victoria. Thus, it was such really heavy investment in the fishery sector coupled with the proximity of the airport that led to the rapid growth of the fish export industry " (Fulgencio 2009).

44 "So initially she started as a trader. So she would buy fish and smoke it. Then later sell it. Then during that time these refrigerated trucks started coming in to the lake. Onto the landing site. Then she was among the first people who started dealing with these people who are bringing in trucks. So she would buy from the fish mongers on the lake and sell to the trucks. Yes, she was like a middle-man. And she was getting a lot of money" (Joe, personal).

45 "We have changed. Everything has extended. The shops. Big shops have extended at the shores. So those ones who are coming from the landings are no longer going to Mukono to buy things from Mukono. They just buy them from Katosi and then they take them to the islands. The vehicles are moving [...]. They bring soda, they bring beer, they bring – bring – that one has brought bread. Each and everything. They bring food to the area. They no longer have to go out of Katosi. They bring them here to Katosi. Then these ones are coming from the islands they buy them from here and then they take them back. Also they make their shops on the islands" (Joeh, personal).

But not only housing and the commercial infrastructure had improved. Betty, who works as a nurse in Katosi, and Jamirah both explain how the development improved the overall health-care in Katosi. Having health centres and clinics, including mental clinics, in and around Katosi is a great asset, because before the clinics available used to be in Mukono, which is more than 25km from Katosi, or Kampala, which is about 50km from Katosi (Joeh, personal)⁴⁶. The rapidly growing population increased the need for sanitation infrastructure. Pressured by a lack of hygiene that threatened the fishing business, the government in cooperation with development projects, inter alia the World Bank's sanitation and hygiene programme,



*Figure 3: Katosi's busy main road and solid houses.
Photo: Reuter 2014.*

facilitated the construction of several wells that allowed to access ground water. Additionally public toilets have been installed and the fish landing site was converted to a solid facility with improved hygiene standards to land, process, store, and load the fish on the trucks (Boey, personal; Joeh, personal)⁴⁷. For Betty these changes, in combination with improved availability of medical treatment, are the reasons for diseases, such as Bilharzia and Tetanus to be less common now (Boey, personal). She also praised the increased number of schools in this area. With shortened distances to the schools, and an income that allows to pay for school fees and material, more children could go to school. The relation between good income and the possibility to send their children to school was a theme that came up in most of the interviews in Mukono district. As the fish boom enhanced the infrastructure and reinforced the increase in jobs, the people came to see Nile perch as "the saviour" (Kamuturaki n.a. b; Mpunge 2, personal)⁴⁸.

46 See figure 2: Uganda and the interview sites at Lake Victoria.

47 At this time, Katosi Women Development Trust was engaged in sensitizing the population about hygiene and sanitation issues, as well as undertaking HIV and AIDS awareness work (Boey, personal).

48 Josefina explained that, "there is a great change in the life between her parents and what she is going through now. Because she says when she was growing up [...] she never knew like a ten-thousand shilling note. She never really had to touch and feel the money. But these days even a kid knows the ten-thousand shilling. So she is saying when they were still in the village they were not even sleeping on mattresses. And these days, in every home – even in the villages – you can find mattresses. So she is saying in many places there is some changes. [...] And she is saying the life now is better than the life before" (Joe, personal).

In my perspective, the SAPs and related investments for improved infrastructure of transportation, housing, healthcare, hygiene, and education have been largely profit-motivated. For successful export-industries certain standards have to be fulfilled, especially regarding hygiene. To sustain the supply of cheap *natures* the *nature* appropriated – i.e. ecosystem capacity to reproduce Nile perch and unpaid labour – has to be sustained, too. Visiting different landing sites, I found those sites connected to the road network (e.g. Kasenyi and Katosi) have profited largely from the fishing boom, as the roads are paved, houses solid, trade vigorous, landing and transportation infrastructure to supply factories installed, and hygiene conditions good. Remote sites (e.g. Mpunge and Bulebi), have not profited from the SAPs. The roads are still bumpy and sandy, housing structures poor, landing sites are little more than strips of beach with wooden sheds, and hygiene structures barely existing. There, too, Nile perch was landed in big numbers during the boom, but it only supplied local and regional markets. Without the infrastructure needed to maintain the quality of the big fish export industry might not have been interested in those sites, and foreign investments did not reach. A strong welfare state not being at place, the SAPs created welfare where needed to sustain production. Several of the investments lead to great improvement of



Figure 4: Mpunge landing site.
Photo: Hammerich 2014.



Figure 6: Bulebi landing site.
Photo: Reuter 2014.



Figure 5: Businesses at Kasenyi landing site.
Photo: Hammerich 2014.



Figure 7: Katosi landing site.
Photo: KWDT 2014.

the living standards and should be welcomed. But to understand the future development of those communities it is crucial to be aware of the motivations behind the implementation of SAPs. Areas that were supportive of the production for global markets have been promoted. The interventions promoted unequal development amongst the fishing communities, and increased the speed with which the resources in the key-areas are depleted. A regime, similar to the earlier mentioned US-American agricultural food regime, can be identified here. The development of the local fishery sector was directed by foreign aid, created a new global commodity, and made the region dependent upon this commodity. That this development happened when the global US-American food regime came to an end could be explained with Uganda's long-lasting political instability that for many years created an environment hostile to foreign interventions.

5.2 The Nile perch regime co-creates its crisis

Fish in plenty, high profit margins attracted wealthy investors. They bought boats, machines and gear, and hired crews⁴⁹. With their arrival new forms of fishermen developed: absentee owners (so called armchair fishermen), managers, operators, and crew (Kamaturaki n.a. b). Today, more than 80% of the fishermen are crew only. They do not own the boat or the gear and income is distributed less evenly. This development is an important change in ownership patterns, since the means of production were increasingly owned by people that are more remote to the lakes fishery than the resident fishermen, but that have the necessary capital to invest. The commercialization of Nile Perch converted a locally operating economy to a commercial setting with orientation towards global markets. This change is seen as one of the main causes for many of today's problems (UFFCA, personal). The introduction of new ownership patterns turned small-scale fishers – producers owning the means of production – to labourers that work for wages. Control and benefits were shifted from those that fish to few, large and wealthy operators. To operate a processing industry wage labour was required. Hence migrant workers from whole Uganda and nearby areas in Kenya were attracted. Wage paid fishers at Lake Victoria Uganda are no small-scale fishers. But they are also not fishing in industrial scale. Until today the industrialization of the processing sector at Lake Victoria

49 "[T]hese people who are in the boats are not the rightful owners. There are these rich men who are the owners. These [people that actually are in the boats and go fishing] are just employed by these rich men. So they give the boats and the nets and they deploy them to go into the lake into the deep waters to go and get fish for them. They are just paid to do that work. But the owner is always ashore. [...] initially it was not like that. Even the owners would go to the boats" (Joe, personal).

Uganda did not lead to industrialization of the fishery. The overall set up on the lake did primarily change in regards to the number of fishermen, vessels and nets.

Nile perch fishery at Lake Victoria was characterized by highly mobile fisher folk. People involved in fishing businesses used to move along the lake shore, migrating to the most lucrative landing sites seasonally (BMU-officer 1, personal; Soee, personal; Joe, personal; Joee, personal; Joeh, personal; NaFFIRI, personal; Poes, personal)⁵⁰. Jane, who worked in different fisheries-related jobs, used to follow the Nile perch stocks with her husband, and Josefina follows the fish until today (Joe, personal; Joee, personal)⁵¹. While NaFFIRI states that fisher folk naturally moves along the lake shore (NaFFIRI, personal), other sources claim that it was not before the 1980s that labour migration at the lake started (Pringle 2011). From 2000 to 2008 the fish boom at Lake Victoria Uganda attracted more than 60.000 new fishery entrants (Kamuturaki n.a. b)⁵². Population growth, itinerant labour and the booming fishery made Katosi and its surroundings more attractive places for operating businesses and stimulated the economy (Mpunge 1, personal; Mpunge 2, personal; Joeh, personal; Poes, personal)⁵³. Samalie, who came to the lake to trade with fish, and Betty criticize the parallel increase of entertainment facilities within Katosi. They relate the rise in night clubs, bars, alcohol and drug consumption, and prostitution to population growth and high income (Boey,

50 Fishermen are free to choose at which site they land their boats. Good prices, infrastructure and atmosphere attract the fishers (BMU-officer 1, personal). In Katosi boats from a neighbouring district are landing. Additionally, the mobility of the fish, the water quality, seasonal changes and other factors determine the fishing grounds accessed (BMU-officer 2, personal).

51 Jane states that "Where there is Nile perch then they would go together" (Joe, personal). For Josefina staying somewhere, where there is no fish, is not an option "Even up to now. Where there is fish - because you know fishers communicate in such and such area you can get fish - then they can go there." (Joee, personal).

52 According to the interviews most of the non-residents moved to the lake because they wanted to improve their business, like Jamirah and Pross did, or because of family-related reasons, such as marriage. Family-connections, acquaintances in the region, and tribal affiliation ease migration to the lake and along the lake (Mpunge 2, personal; Soee, personal; Poes, personal). One effect of the fisher folk's mobility and the many years of migration towards the lake, is the diversity of the landing site communities. While the social situation was generally described as peaceful (Mpunge 1, personal; Mpunge 2, personal), some women reported about tensions amongst some of the tribes and how the different cultures and the influx of people challenge the bureaucratic system (Mpunge 2, personal). The migration along the lake might also influence the perceptions of place and distances. Rather than talking about the different villages, the region was presented as a web of places and villages closely connected through the people constantly moving between them. Families and businesses are spread out along the coast, trade is a key element in connecting the places, and distances up to 50km, though the travelling conditions are not good, were presented as rather short (Joe, personal; Mpunge 2, personal; Poes, personal; Soee, personal).

53 Many people rent rooms or houses when they follow the fish (Mpunge 2, personal), and through their business, their good financial situation, and their needs, they further stimulate the development around the busy landing sites (Joeh, personal). "People [here are] not from Katosi. They just came to Katosi. They are not born residents of this area. And most of the people who have developed this area are not born residents of this area. [...] they came to Katosi. They started working in Katosi. They started creating in Katosi" (Joeh, personal).

personal; Soee, personal)⁵⁴.

The community's social cohesion changed at some point (Joe, personal; Roel, personal). Jane told that people started to care less for each other, became more individualized and had less respect for one another (Joe, personal)⁵⁵. Women in Mpunge explained that they tend to take less responsibility for the places and people that they move to seasonally. Since they expect to leave the place again they put less emphasis on hygiene, take less responsibility towards the environment, and commit less to the social community. Their main home, however, would be treated differently (Mpunge 2, personal)⁵⁶. The overall increase in migration, the introduction of middle-men, bosses, people that no longer work for their subsistence but for wages, and fishery expanding to international companies and consumers further disconnected the people involved – managers, producers, consumers, beneficiaries – from one another, and from the resources they all relied upon. As migration increases remoteness to the local ecosystem, it starts a vicious circle in which remoteness to the ecosystem leads to higher environmental degradation and immediately, as well as indirectly, to a loss of local environmental knowledge⁵⁷. Less local environmental knowledge, then, increases remoteness to the local ecosystem which lets the circle start again, but with worse starting conditions. Over the long run, the high fishing pressure lead to a decreasing Nile perch stock in Lake Victoria. This trend intensified competition and the market reacted with rising prices for Nile perch. While the local population could no longer afford Nile perch, about 90% of the catch was exported. With catches shrinking, the export of Nile perch started to decrease in the late 1980s (Kamuturaki n.a. b). For Jane and Josefina the year 2002 was the turning point at which "competition was really increasing" (Joe, personal) and "Money became much more

54 Samalie was one of the people that profited from this situation, as she later traded alcohol for fish (Soee, personal). Jamirah pointed out that next to alcohol also other drugs were popular amongst fishermen. Regarding the fishermen she states that "They were drug addicts. They could spent money like they wanted. Because fish was in plenty. You can catch fish and come and sell they go for drinking" (Joe, personal).

55 Asked about whether the community supports her as a single mother, Rachel answers "That is totally out. No one is helping her" (Roel, personal). She also shares that she has no real friends in this area. She does not trust them. And she directly relates that to her financial status "If you are financially stable you get more friends. But when they see that financially you are changing then you loose many friends. [...] They always change because of the financial status." (Roe, personal).

56 Pross' business, for example, goes well since she moved to Katosi. In her home, people always would ask her for support, and she would help a lot, because they were her family and friends. But in Katosi she does not have such obligations. Her close friends in Katosi are people that are business-oriented like her. They understand her business, and do not expect her help. Being able to be stringent in her business was one of the main reasons for her moving to Katosi, where she did not have family. (Poes, personal).

57 At the landing sites forests, birds, crocodiles, and hippos were common in the past. They can no longer be observed today (Bulebi, personal; NaFFIRI, personal; Soee, personal). In general, aquatic ecosystems are less penetrable than terrestrial systems.

important than it used to be" (Joe, personal)⁵⁸. In this time a new saying was established in Nangooma, expressing that staying close to the lake does not mean that you can buy fish (Mpunge 1, personal)⁵⁹.

To compensate for the decrease in Nile perch supply, the processing-sector tried to reorient towards other species, especially tilapia and mukene⁶⁰. tilapia was commercialized in order to also be processed in the filleting factories, and a small fish-meal sector started to process mukene to animal fodder (Kamuturaki n.a. b). Since then, the fishery at Lake Victoria is largely an export oriented three-species fishery (UFFCA, personal). The export industry



Figure 8: Despite landing time only few fish is landed in Katosi. Photo: Reuter 2014.

created jobs in the lake region, but increasing the fishing pressure it also fuelled overfishing and contributed to the deterioration of the fisher folk's livelihood-base. The decrease in fish availability has devastating impacts on the local economy. Few fish, high competition with the export sector and high prices resulted in a decrease of customer turn over at the landing sites. The market share orienting towards regional and international opportunities became

larger the more the fish scarcity increased. Pross managed to continue her Nile perch-smoking business. She sells the now luxurious good largely to rich customers outside of Katosi. Overall, there is no longer enough fish to supply all the fish-based businesses. Many gastronomy, fish transport, and fish processing businesses closed down, leaving many people without employment (Poes, personal; Bulebi, personal)⁶¹. Additionally, half of the filleting-

58 Jane observed changes in how fish was bought and sold. The generosity and bargaining power that fishers and fish mongers had during the boom was gone. Fish was from then on counted precisely and in consideration of its size and weight (Joe, personal).

59 This saying was explained to me after in the midst of our first discussion in Mpunge and old man joined the group. He was drunk. And in a theatrical manner he presented to us a bag of fish that he just bought. He explained the a few years back people would have laughed at him when he would fish that kind of fish. That day, he said, he, an old man, had to kneel down to beg for buying this fish with the little money he had (Mpunge 1, personal).

60 In this thesis fish of the species *Rastrineobola argentea* is referred to as mukene, which is its local name.

61 The majority of fish smokers had to drop out of business (Poes, personal). So did many fishermen and women engaged in fisheries. Josefine still manages to operate with one boat, out of the three boats that she used to operate in Katosi (Joe, personal). In the landing site of Katosi we are told that they used to have 60 boats landing their catches every second day. Today, they have 38 boats, landing about one time a week

factories had to close and the remaining ones operate on reduced capacity (Kamuturaki n.a. b).

Though many women worked in the local processing-sector, few engage directly in fisheries. With the increasing value of the Nile perch, the share of women engaged in trade and processing of this fish decreased (Fulgencio 2009). The industrial processing sector replaced the local processing sector that was largely run by women (Pringle 2011). In a first wave this happened in regards to Nile perch only. With today's scarcity of Nile perch, the local tilapia and haplochromine market might be increasingly taken over by men and export industry, too. Women standing in the background, it was primarily men who migrated along the shore. The husbands left their families behind. Not only did the families then lack a supporter, but the men often took additional wives at other landing sites. Thus, increased labour migration might have fuelled the spread of HIV/ AIDS (Pringle 2011). The high number of widows and orphans, and also the short-sighted planning, reported about in Mpunge and Katosi, could be related to the high HIV/ AIDS rates (KWDT, Skype)⁶².

Many women are single women or widows. Also, most of the women I talked with have children, and they are also taking care of others' children (Joee, personal; Joe, personal; Joeh, personal). Jane, for example, cares for six dependants, and four own children (Joe, personal). The dependants largely come from the women's family. Probably they are orphans, their parents were incapable of caring for them, or they left them behind in order to find income at other places (Joee, personal; Joe, personal; Joeh, personal). The women's economic situation is crucial for the children. When struggling with income one of the first budget cuts are school fees. This was a topic of great concern in the majority of the discussions (Bulebi, personal; Joe, personal; Joee, personal; Joeh, personal; Roel, personal; Soee, personal). During the Nile perch boom school fees were not a problem. At that time, people earned enough money. And

(BMU-officer 2, personal). That is a reduction in landings of more than 80%. Less fish being landed changes the whole post-harvesting sector and related businesses.

62 Several of the interview participants talked about a high number of dependants being orphans, and women being widows (Joe, personal; Joee, personal; KWDT, Skype; Mpunge 2, personal; Mpunge 1, personal). Studies found, that, generally, small-scale fishing communities have a high prevalence for HIV/AIDS (Allison and Seeley 2004). Looking at Uganda's HIV/ AIDS statistics I found, that, despite the high vulnerability of fishing communities being well known, the latest Ugandan survey (UAC 2014) did neither include Mukono district, nor seven other districts at lake Victoria. For the districts covered, the surveys found a general reduction of HIV-cases in hospitals since the 1990's (UAC 2014). An earlier study identified the lake region west of Kampala as the region with the highest number of HIV-positive cases (Ministry of Health Uganda et al. 2012).

the plentifulness of fish resulted in many people not going to school⁶³. All one had to learn in order to make a decent living was how to fish. That resulted in a generation which is characterized by a lack of general education (Joeh, personal; Roel, personal). But nowadays fish is not plenty. School education and alternative livelihoods became crucial. As women are particularly hard hit by unemployment, more and more children have to stay at home (Roel, personal; Joeh, personal)⁶⁴.

Overall, the Nile perch orientated fishery was characterized by centralization of the fishery sector. Aiming to maximize profit the rationalized industry offered relatively few jobs, but created a specialized industry, cheap export goods and profits for the local elite and the Global North. Together the three export-species Nile perch, tilapia, and mukene make up 98% of the catch (Kamuturaki, n.a. b). At the same time, all three export-species are overfished (NaFFIRI, personal)⁶⁵. Orienting the communities development on production, capitalist logic took over. Superimposed needs for mobile labour and rationalized production of export goods, in combination with a depletion of the human and extra-human resources necessary to satisfy these needs, resulted in increasing individualization, rivalry, and a growing entertainment industry. The latter likely essential to compensate for the socio-cultural losses created. Once the resource-extraction focussed industry switches to other places, the false needs created remain in place⁶⁶. To satisfy those needs the capitalist structures are reproduced, further intensifying the problems created through the initial appropriation of cheap nature.

Each new fishery opened to the global markets appears to be equivalent to a fishery

63 *"People was really fool. Fishermen not very long ago didn't go to school [...] because they were depending on the lake"* (Joeh, personal).

64 Interestingly, Betty is not concerned about school drop-outs because of poverty. In her eyes people already learned out of the situation. She says that they prioritize school education, and learned how to handle money properly (Joeh, personal). "They learned that money is not there for ever. [...] They are cleverer nowadays. They know how to use their money. They know how to use their resources" (Joeh, personal).

Contrasting that statement, we saw a fishing boat leaving the landing site in Nangooma, of which the crew were two young boys. There are laws that forbid children to go fishing. In Bulebi people told us that they take those laws seriously, and one would never see a young person going out for fishing (Bulebi, personal).

65 The overall biomass in the lake did not change, but its composition did. The staff from NaFFIRI recorded no significant changes in the biomass composition until 2000. Before 2000, Nile perch constituted about 70% of the biomass caught. In 2012 Nile perch constituted only 30% of the catches. Due to the decrease of this predator-population, the population of the small haplochromine increased. It now constitutes 60% of the catches (NaFFIRI, personal). It is important to note though, that the overfished species slowly seem to recover, due to predator-prey dynamics (UFFCA, personal).

66 In a study on the overall impacts of SAPs in Uganda, Golooba-Mutebi (2010) found similar trends: From the SAPs conducted before the Nile perch boom "Only soft drink and cigarette production maintained the revival momentum and were operating at 40 percent and 75 percent capacity respectively by 1985, while other industries operated at less than 20 percent capacity utilization".

commercialized beyond the reach of the local fisher folk. There was not one person that I talked with who did not refer to a negative development of catches of Nile perch and tilapia. The catches decrease further with each year (Kasenyi, personal). The day we interviewed Josefina, her boat only landed one Nile perch (Joe, personal). Recently, another saying was established in Nangooma: "You can have money, but that doesn't mean that you can have fish" (Mpunge 1, personal)⁶⁷. With fish scarcity, poverty, and fish prices increasing at the same time, the food culture changed. In Mpunge, I was told that the people used to eat tilapia, Nile perch, mukene and haplochromine (Mpunge 2, personal). But the consumption of Nile perch and tilapia changed drastically (Mpunge 2, personal; Bulebi, personal). Rachel, who lives at a landing site, can spend a month without eating tilapia or Nile perch (Roel, personal)⁶⁸. Jane is convinced that no longer eating as much fish has negative impacts on her health (Joe, personal). Out of the overall situation, a market for trash fish developed, through which the leftovers of the filleting factories, fish skeletons, and damaged fish, became a local standard good (Kamuturaki n.a. b).

5.3 New regulations worsening existing and creating new problems

In order to regulate, control, monitor, and revive the Ugandan fishery sector the government introduced new policies and institutions, and further opened the market for foreign investments. In 2004 a National Fisheries policy was passed. UFFCA criticizes that the policy and the implementation plan came solely from the government⁶⁹. The policy is a mere technical regulation that does not limit overfishing⁷⁰. Altogether, the introduction of too many mechanisms, some of which create incentives for armchair fishing, in interplay with a lack of transparency, a generally high mistrust in the law enforcers, and a high level of corruption resulted in the 2004-policy never being fully enforced. As a key element of this policy a co-management scheme based on Beach Management Units (BMUs), was installed at each

67 Buying Nile perch for home consumption, which has been common practice, was no longer eligible for the majority of people in the fishing communities. Betty told that "There used to be much fish for all, but now there is not even enough fish for those that live around the lake" (Boey, personal).

68 Jane explains that in the past "in a family each one would feed on a whole tilapia. If you are five you cook five tilapia. Each one" (Joe, personal). But nowadays, she said, the whole family shares one fish (Joe, personal).

69 It was revealed, that, despite participative activities were hold in order to formulate the policy, the government had already finalized the implementation plan beforehand (UFFCA, personal).

70 The overall catch is not limited. Neither is the number of boats on the lake. The regulations largely focus on the type of gear (passive gear, mesh size, boat size under 18 feet), the size of Nile perch caught (above 20 inch), transport and trade licences, and a licensing system that grants fishing rights to anybody who can afford the licence for fishing and boat (UFFCA, personal).

landing site. However, "The BMU structure has been a failure" (UFFCA, personal)⁷¹.

The new policy defines the legal types of gear to be used fishing at Lake Victoria. The use of illegal gear and practices is emphasised as one of the major drivers of today's continuous overfishing of the lake (NaFFIRI, personal). Especially women increasingly turned towards juvenile fishing – purposely catching immature fish in shallow waters (Mpunge 1, personal). Jane, Jamirah, and the NaFFIRI staff explain the lawbreaking largely with greed and lack of education (Joe, personal; Joeh, personal; NaFFIRI, personal). Everyone I have been talking to was aware of the negative consequences of illegal fishing methods, and the risk of high fines, possible gear and catch confiscation, and prison sentences⁷². In the following we will see that, nevertheless, many people engage in illegal activities, often for complex reasons (Kasenyi, personal; Mpunge 1, personal).

With the new policies the expenses for fishing activities grew. The market, again, reacted with rising prices, which also affected the post-harvest businesses. New gear tends to be expensive, and in this case most of the legal gear is more costly than the illegal alternatives. In consequence, fishing nets being stolen when left unguarded in the water became a big problem (BMU-officer 1, personal; Joee, personal; Mpunge 1, personal; NaFFIRI, personal; UFFCA, personal). Women, that own boats, are especially affected by this development. They do not go on the water with their boats; they can therefore not guard their nets over night, but have to trust their crew, and are often stolen from (Joeh, personal)⁷³. The increasing risk of investment further encourages fisher folk to choose the less costly, but illegal, alternatives, i.e.

71 The introduction of BMUs was supported by the World Bank. Today, there are more than 700 BMUs along the shores of Uganda's lakes. Working towards a just and inclusive policy that benefits the small-scale fishers UFFCA was engaged in designing the BMU structure. However, UFFCA does not agree with today's BMU system (UFFCA, personal). Amongst others, BMU membership is not clearly defined, the BMUs follow government interests and views, and the BMU-staff is corrupt, so that regulation is largely based upon bribery (BMU officer 1, personal; Mpunge 1, personal; UFFCA, personal). In order to replace the outdated fish act from 1964 and also compensate for the shortcomings of the 2004 policies, especially the BMU structure, a new Fisheries act was finalized in 2008. Yet, until today the 2008 act is not passed (UFFCA 2013a).

72 Jane, for example, was most concerned about juvenile fishing. She stated that she never ate juvenile fish "And she feels bad if she sees someone really pulling out young fish from the boat. Because for her she'll never eat these young fish. She grew up seeing only bigger fish. So she feels very bad when she sees the young fish being harvested" (Joe, personal).

73 Josefina dropped out of the fishery because the business, especially the legal gear, became too expensive (Joee, personal). Jamirah reports from nets and out boat engines being stolen and fish being sold by the crew before reaching the shore. "You can't go on the water, you stop ashore, wait for them, they come. And just get you the message that they stole your what? Your fishing nets. And you can't go in to waters to look for the nets. So you have to pull out. [...] Because you are seeing you are coming down to poverty every time" (Joeh, personal).

mono filament nets with small mesh sizes (BMU-officer 2, personal; NaFFIRI, personal)⁷⁴. Those nets catch more fish, than the legal nets (Mpunge 1, personal; NaFFIRI, personal). Also, they catch small and therefore immature Nile perch. Catching fish before it is old enough to breed results in ecological overfishing of the stock (Hilborn and Hilborn 2012), and the small-mesh nets have worse impacts on the aquatic ecosystem if lost in the water (NaFFIRI, personal).

Nevertheless, a market demand for juvenile Nile perch has developed and further motivates juvenile fishing: Smaller fish is more easily caught, does not need to be frozen, and is more easily processed locally. In addition the filets of the medium size Nile perches are considered to be of higher quality as filets from big Nile perches. Hence the factories gain higher revenues selling the medium-sized filets (NaFFIRI, personal; UFFCA, personal). Furthermore, the more competition amongst fishery increases the more people use illegal gear (Joeh, personal; Mpunge 1, personal)⁷⁵.

Resorting towards illegal activities is risky, and to the benefit of the law enforcers. "Because [...] if I ever use illegal nets they will always be getting me. They will always be catching me. They will always ask for money from me. In the long run you'll always be affected" (Joe, personal). Because they were smoking undersized fish, the financial stress caused by the fees, confiscations, and other legal punishment as well as the costs of bribing are the main reason for the majority of the fish smokers dropping out of business (Poes, personal)⁷⁶.

"So there were many – around thirty of them – but because of the strict laws that used to come up and the laws were really catching up with them – many lost their capital. Because every time they are in courts, every time they are in police and

74 The fishermen we met in Kasenyi all agreed that, with the fish stocks decreasing it would make no sense to spend money on legal, but ineffective gear (Kasenyi, personal). "The government has tried to fight the illegal fishing gears but people can't do what? They still continue to use those illegal fishing nets. There are no other gears. So there is no longer fish in the water. You could go with a lot of fuel. You spend it but without getting fish. You go the next two days really expensive. You go for fishing you bring only two kilograms. Which can't even cover the amount of the money used by the fuel" (Joeh, personal).

75 Some fishers having higher catches and less expenses drives other fishers to either drop out of the business or choose illegal gear themselves.

76 The majority of fish smokers processed juvenile fish in order to keep their business profitable. "there is a great change in the viability of fish from the lake. When she started there was a lot of fish and they would smoke big big big sizes of Nile perch. But these days unless it is rejected by those who are taking it to the truck – that's when you can access the big fish. And because of the scarcity of fish that's why you can still resort in to juvenile fish. Because you have to continue with your business" (Poes, personal).

you have to pay to bribe and you have to pay money to be taken out of the police. So many women lost a lot of money. Lost their capital. And so far there are around three of them who are seriously doing the fish smoking" (Poes, personal).

In addition the costs of running a business have been rising. Licences have to be paid for landing fish, transporting and selling fish on markets, and rent has to be paid for living at the landing site or operating a business at the landing site. Those who don't own the licences required have to pay fees (Mpunge 1, personal)⁷⁷. In the cases discussed, poverty pressured fisher folk to resort to illegal activities. Engaging in those, their vulnerability increases, resulting in a worse state, leaving them unable to comply with the law. Therein lays a vicious circle of poverty and illegal activities reinforcing each other. Licences, fees, and other economic mechanisms introduced re-include the cheap *natures* that were externalized into the economic system, in order to sustain the production as long as possible. Capitalizing resources that are already scarce further intensifies the vulnerability of marginalized groups, such as small-scale fisher people whose work remains largely appropriated.

The 2004 policy determines not only the minimum size of certain fish species caught, and the type of gear to be used, and the licences needed, it also determines a legal boat size of 28 feet (BMU-officer 2, personal). Regardless of that, the majority of boats on the lake are of a cheaper type, that is only 18 feet long (BMU-officer 2, personal; NaFFIRI, personal). These short boats are less resistant to waves, storms, and crocodile encounters than the longer boats (NaFFIRI, personal). The low catches and low water quality nearby the shore drive the fishers increasingly further onto the lake⁷⁸. They leave the 2-nautical miles zone, entering offshore waters with small boats that are not appropriate for such trips (BMU-officer 2, personal). To reach this far, they invest in motors and fuel (Kasenyi, personal). With the offshore activities increasing the controls changed as well. The government uses speed boats that patrol at night. Severe accidents, including several cases of death, happened because of those speed boats

⁷⁷ Several participants complained about these regulations. They do not own licences and often have to pay fees. The reasons they named for not having the licences needed are that they either not know about all the regulations, cannot buy the licences necessary, do not know where to buy them, or cannot reach the places where the licences are sold (Mpunge 1, personal).

⁷⁸ Polluting activities, such as constructing and operating factories at the lake shore have high impacts on the fish stocks. The fishermen, who were used to operate in shallow waters close by the landing sites, are forced to get out onto the lake to find fish because the catches near the shore decreased (UFFCA, personal). Changes in water quality were mentioned in discussions in Bulebi, Kasenyi, and Mpunge (Bulebi, personal; Joee, personal; Kasenyi, personal; Mpunge 1, personal).

crashing into the less stable fishing boats in the dark (UFFCA, personal). The deteriorating situation of fish scarcity and conflicts resulted in some fishermen bribing former or current soldiers, in order to be protected against controls. Consequent violent encounters on the lake are dangerous for both the fishermen and the law enforcers (BMU-officer 1, personal). Regardless of such dangers, the fishermen fish offshore and with illegal gear (NaFFIRI, personal).

Despite the decrease in water quality, some women engage in juvenile fishing. They were dropping out of their businesses because the processing sector is largely taken over by industry, trade and fishery on the lake being a men's business, fisheries businesses in general became difficult to sustain (Joe, personal; Mpunge 1, personal; Kasenyi, personal). Lacking access to land, on which they could practice alternative livelihoods, some women turned towards the already established market for juvenile fish, and started to lay the nets in easily accessible shallow waters – the breeding grounds of Nile perch (Joe, personal; Mpunge 1, personal; Kasenyi, personal). Turning towards illegal practices appears to be rather a necessity than a choice. And these days, practising illegal methods does not guarantee high income, because juvenile fish have become so scarce, too (Kasenyi, personal). Many people I talked with were hopeless regarding their future. They lack access to legal mechanisms that protect their fisher's rights. But also they do not know the laws that regulate the fishery, and are unable to choose legal gear and methods. The majority of fisher people I talked with did not see any solution for their problems, and were insecure about their future and the future of their children (Bulebi, personal; Kasenyi, personal; Mpunge 1, personal).

Uganda's 2004 fishing policy, overlooks that many fisher people engaging in illegal activities do so, because they are driven by despair. Complex relations behind problems such as overfishing are not thoroughly analysed and instead the responsibility for causing and solving problems is assigned to individuals and communities. Criminalization labels fisher folk as morally bad people that freely choose a wrong path. Exemplary for this kind of criminalization are also Uganda's 2014 Anti-Homosexuality bill, and the 2014 bill criminalizing the transmission of HIV. Such laws further marginalize those who are already facing severe situations, excluding them from their rights and individualising the burden that is co-created by much larger systems than the individual choices of those affected⁷⁹.

79 *“The passing of this discriminatory law has not only opened the floodgates for a range of human rights*

“Politicians who introduce draconian measures like the Anti-Homosexuality Bill stir up moral panics that help consolidate their power through the moralizing construction of ‘tradition,’ the biopolitics of fertility, and human rights exceptionalism” (Cheney 2013, 91).

The commercial fishery sector tries to sustain itself. This is in the interest of both the official stakeholders that resort to stricter legal measures and the fisher folk that resorts to illegal activities. Both parties do not act out of malice, but because through the connection to international markets, a dependency on the production of fish was created. While it is a political and economic issue for the officials, it is a question of survival for the fisher folk. Illegal fishery is a sub-cycle of this regime. The need for resources that sustain production results in the creation of new markets. Each wave of accumulation and capitalization – each sub-cycle – causes vicious circles that worsen poverty and vulnerability of the marginalized groups of society, and speeds up the exhaustion of cheap human and extra-human *natures*. To survive, people adopt their live style to the changing conditions.

5.4 Privatization, displacement and increased vulnerability

Access to land and water is an important matter. It can stabilize the people's economic situation. At Lake Victoria Uganda many people experience a loss of accessibility or complete exclusion from land and water scapes, due to privatization efforts (Bulebi, personal; Joe, personal; Joee, personal; Kasenyi, personal; Mpunge 1, personal; Mpunge 2; personal; Roel, personal; Soee, personal). Migration to and along the landing sites was first limited when the government defined official landing sites⁸⁰. Before that, there was no regulation. Temporary landing sites and settlements would be started anywhere, regardless of people having title to

violations against LGBTI people in Uganda, but has also ensured that victims of these violations are denied access to effective remedies” (HRW 2014b). *“The Anti-Homosexuality Act is creating homelessness and joblessness, restricting life-saving HIV work, and bloating the pockets of corrupt police officers who extort money from victims of arrest”* (Ghoshal in HRW 2014b). Due to technical flaws in the endorsement-process the validity of the anti-homosexuality-law was declared void on August 1, 2014. Nevertheless homosexuality remains illegal and heavily discriminated against and the Ugandan government is expected to appeal on this annulation (Deutsche Welle 2014; Nathan 2014). *“The HIV Prevention and Control Act passed by the Ugandan parliament on May 13, 2014, is discriminatory and will impede the fight against AIDS”* (HRW 2014a).

80 In order to reduce fishing pressure and enable BMU- management and monitoring of the lake's fisheries, the government decided to define a number of official landing sites. It is only at those gazetted sites, specifically defined areas of land, where fish is allowed to be landed, and without legal registration no further landing sites can be started. Landing sites in Uganda can be privately owned or state-owned (BMU-officer 2, personal). Regarding Katosi and its surroundings, Jamirah explains, that the landing sites were reduced to one site in Katosi (Joe, personal).

the land or not (Mpunge 2, personal; NaFFIRI, personal). The creation of official landing-sites concentrated fishery-activities in those sites and thereby directed these local economies to orient primarily on fishery⁸¹. When poverty and living costs were rising, migration to and along the lake slowed down remarkably (Joeh, personal; NaFFIRI, personal). Those who could no longer afford to move along the lake and had to settle down, regardless if there was any fish to catch, trade, or process (Bulebi, personal; Mpunge 2, personal)⁸². Having to settle down some of the fisher folk's problems were reinforced, and new issues developed. Due to seasonal migration the houses and infrastructure in Nangooma are built for temporary housing. Now this less elaborate infrastructure needs to support long term housing. But investments in improved infrastructure are barely undertaken because of a lack of capital, but also, because, not having any title to the land, people expect to have to move away at some point (Mpunge 2, personal)⁸³. Migration along the lake allowed to access ever new cheap extra-human *natures*, and make good business out of it, without having to pay the ecological costs. Migration slowing down, the fisher folk is confronted with those costs – overfishing, deforestation, decreasing water quality – that before, have only been an issue for those that were not mobile. In addition, a concentration of settlements and fishing activities on few sites increases the environmental pressure at these places.

81 In Bulebi, for example, the majority of the people, which engaged in fisheries during the booming years, has no other livelihood activity. Communities further off the landing sites rely stronger on farmed land and animal husbandry than those living close to/ at the landing site (Bulebi, personal).

82 It used to be promising to move to the landing sites in Mpunge and Bulebi, and to migrate seasonally in this region. With the many business closing, the incentives to move to the landing sites disappeared (Bulebi, personal; Mpunge 2, personal). So did the incentives and possibilities to move around along the lake. Increased poverty makes moving risky (Roel, personal; Bulebi, personal). Rachel is one of the women that used to migrate along the landing sites, following the bigger fish stocks. But now she does not do that anymore because moving around carries costs. She does no longer have that money (Roel, personal). In Bulebi the group additionally discussed that if you leave, and your plans will not work out, your situation when returning will be more complicated (Bulebi, personal).

83 Being a community that is built of a large proportion of migrants, people lack ownership of land. Few have family-land nearby. Many people I spoke with in Mpunge and Bulebi use(d) to lease land (Bulebi, personal, Mpunge, personal).



Figure 9: Housing at Mpunge landing site.
Photo: Hammerich 20 14.

Since 2005 the governments of the three lake countries increasingly welcome Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to strengthen the region's development. Promoted by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund SAPs, the East African Community strives for trade liberalization to attract new industries (Kamuturaki n.a. b). Those industries cause further environmental degradation⁸⁴. An export-oriented flower-

industry, for example, settled down at the lake shore and three of its companies are in Mukono district⁸⁵. The production of flowers needs high quantities of water. Neither paying for the water used, nor for the water polluted, is yet another facet of appropriating, and exhausting extra-human *natures* in the Global South, for the benefit of the Global North. Additionally factories and other industry, a growing tourist sector, and the privatization of land and islands displace the local fishing communities. Legally speaking, a 200m wide strip of land along the Ugandan shore of Lake Victoria is excluded from sale. This land cannot be privately owned by or sold. But reality looks different.

“Community members [in Nagooma] emphasised that certain individual ‘investors’ have bought land adjacent to the lake. The bought land is then demarcated all through the water body (fishing area) and restricted to only owners. [...] The local fisher communities are strictly forbidden to go in or anywhere next to these fishing grounds and are confined to a very small portion which can hardly satisfy their livelihoods. ‘If you think we are telling lies, you dare cross that red flag and see if they will not shoot at you! Nobody is allowed to go closer, however bad the weather may be!’ explained one fisherman” (Namugga 2013).

84 Though they affect the fishery, polluting industries, are beyond the reach of Beach Management Units (BMU-officer 1, personal).

85 *“The main cut-flower farms are located within 45km of Kampala and Entebbe Airport. Three companies are located in Mukono District” (UNEP 1999).*

Coastal land is sold and a lack of awareness and access to their rights leaves the fisher folk behind (BMU-officer 2, personal). Bulago Island, for example, is an island of which the original inhabitants were removed, and around which fishery is forbidden. The island today is a tourist facility, that is considered environmentally friendly and conservationist (Bulago Island n.d.; NaFFIRI, personal).

Based upon today's financial system capital – money or equivalent tradable rights – can reproduce and create surplus without labour productivity or other place-bound processes involved. This is how capital owners can increase their wealth with an ease incomparable to the work demanded from those who have to sustain themselves through 'other' work. Hence the importance of sustaining ecosystems and communities that can be appropriated gets lost. Interest groups such as a flower-industry compete with place-based communities. Opening up this new dimension of production, an arena was created in which only the elite can play. Fish export, flower export, tourism, and soon cage farming, are all activities that appropriate local ecosystems, displace small-scale fishing communities, and direct the benefits to wealthy communities, largely in the Global North. The consequences of such land grabbing are heightened by the scarcity of fish, and vice versa. The fishery in decline, fisher folk increasingly needs to reorient towards land-based livelihood activities, making land a valuable resource to which access is crucial⁸⁶. The privatization of land thus is another factor forcing fisher folk at Lake Victoria Uganda to turn towards illegal practices.

The devastating consequences of privatization of land and life in agricultural production are well known (McMichael 2009). In the East African Community's fisheries such types of privatization are still building up. Aquaculture is only recently being heavily pushed forward. Today, the development of cage farming is a priority for the East African Community (Kamuturaki n.a. b)⁸⁷. Northern countries like Canada and Norway already have big cage farming industries. While central-European countries constituted a large share of the donor

86 "People are very poor. [...] they are becoming really poor because there is no fish. So you have to look for a place where to cultivate, so to get the benefit. You can't buy food every day. And you have to get the money for educating your children. For education and that, the daily basis. At least you have to get a place where where you cultivate and you can eat food from the garden" (Joe, personal).

87 Cage farming is fish cultivation in, mostly, permeable cages or similar fixed structures in the water. Small-scale aquaculture existed in Uganda since 1953 (UNEP 1999). Already these facilities had impacts on the environment. NaFFIRI started to focus on the development of aquaculture towards a larger scale in 1992. Working out policy suggestions for fisheries management they also research upon ecologically sustainable cage farming (NaFFIRI, personal).

aid Uganda's fishery received during the booming years, Norway is one of the key donors since 2000 (Standing 2014). Promoted as livelihood alternative that brings food security and jobs, cage farming is seen as less stressful for aquatic ecosystems than capture fishery and is more productive than installing aquaculture ponds on the land. However, cage-farms occupy those water scapes that offer best breeding conditions and a current strong enough to 'clean up' the resulting dirt, conditions that are often found at estuaries. Hence the cages block and pollute the migration routes of spawning species and also tend to occupy the best fishing grounds (NaFFIRI, personal). Due to their preferred water conditions, cage farming, as well as protected areas and tourist facilities all target water scapes to which access is crucial for the fisher folk's livelihood. Unlike aquaculture, capture fishery is not based upon a planned cultivation. The introduction of Nile perch to the lake is an exception here. Through the development of cage farming new possibilities for *labour productivity* are created and thereby the supply of fish can be refreshed. The cultivation however asks for a precondition that capture fishery does not need: To keep cultivation profitable, exclusive access needs to be established. Cultivation and exclusive access at the same time also stabilize the fish-supply. Cage farming allows stock management in an artificially simplified environment and thereby creates an improved predictability of the harvest. With regard to land-based activities this switch to controlled *natures* already took place in industrialized agriculture, animal husbandry, and aquaculture. All of these forms of production have the privatization of the target resource in common, as well as, the privatization of life-processes (patents on species and ways of breeding), privatization of the land or water space needed to install the facilities, practice of monocultures, and an unnecessary upgrading of protein at high socio-ecological costs. Reasoned as improving food security these industrial production sectors are part of global capitalist regimes that distribute costs and benefits of production unequally – the costs are to be carried by peripheries. The development of a cage-farming industry is a sub-cycle of capitalism that first postpones the crisis of capitalism. But in effect, it will reinforce the production of the limits of capitalist relations.

Currently, the government of Uganda also considers to introduce a fishing ban (NaFFIRI, personal; UFFCA, personal). None of the fishing community members I talked to had concrete information on the ban, but the topic was controversial. Supporters of a ban have either experienced a former fishing ban's positive impacts on the lake and local businesses, or

they do not (solely) depend upon fishery. For those that do depend largely on fishery-related businesses, there is great fear⁸⁸. What is left to the women we met in Mpunge is the hope for the lake to recover, and the fear of one day being forced to move away towards uncertainty (Munge 2, personal). The fisher folk we met in Bulebi equally expressed such uncertainty towards the future. Though expecting a rising demand for fish, they confess having less and less hope. They only stay at Bulebi, because there is no hope elsewhere, too (Bulebi, personal).

6 Conclusion: Capitalist regimes intensify and co-create inequalities

This thesis' analysis of global capitalist rationales in fisheries starts with rethinking the history of European fisheries in relation to waves of appropriation and capitalist food regimes. It illustrates the emergence of a strong European regime, out of which an additional American regime developed, leading to today's fishery regimes that predominantly benefit corporations in and from the Global North. I undertook seven semi-structured group discussions and nine semi-structured interviews with primarily female fisher folk in Mukono district at Lake Victoria Uganda to analyse the history of fisheries at Lake Victoria Uganda. I came to the conclusion that, after Uganda's independence, global capitalist regimes began to strongly influence the development in Uganda's fishing communities at Lake Victoria in the 1980's. In a first wave the regimes at play concentrated on fish products for the global market and increased the communities' dependency upon exports. Parallel to increasing scarcity of fish a second wave began to established private ownership beyond the means of production. The fish export-dependent economies were suddenly left behind. The case study illustrates that capitalist rationales increased the vulnerability of already vulnerable groups of society

88 The fisher folk spoken to in Mukono district underlined repeatedly that the majority of the people engaged in fisheries do not have livelihood alternatives (Joeh, personal; Mpunge 1, personal; Soee, personal). It is predominantly the people living further off the landing sites that own land and can farm (Bulebi, personal). Jamirah, who lives in Katosi mirrors the overall atmosphere well, when she discusses the impact of a ban on the people at the coast and the islands that solely depend on fishery. "Those who [...] are born residents of those areas. They have grown there. They have become old when they were there. And then you are stopping them from fishing - where will they go? [...] It is good to stop fishing. But you first budget for the people who are in the landing sites. [...] How will they get food for other than renting? Where are they going to get money for eating, for educating their children, for medication?" (Joeh, personal). The people on the islands are of particular concern for her. On the island, former criminals constitute a higher part of the population, than on the mainland (Joeh personal, 15). At the same time fishery is the main livelihood for the island population. She worries: "If they stop fishing where are those ones going to go? [...] Are people who are living at the shores going to be safe?" (Joeh, personal).

through the establishment of hierarchies, intensification of crises, as well as unequal distribution of social and ecological benefits and costs between social and physical core and periphery zones⁸⁹.

Uganda's fishing sector used to be largely oriented towards local and regional markets, and the costs and benefits of fishery were distributed rather equally. Fuelled by the introduction of a new species, a global capitalist regime arrived in the 1980s. This regime concentrated on the extraction of fish for the Global North. It benefited largely the Northern Nile perch importing countries and their emerging internationally operating corporations, as well as local businessmen in Uganda. Structural Adjustment Programs of the IMF and World Bank, Governmental development aid, and some fishery laws facilitated infrastructure development for the export of industrially manufactured fish products. Starting with Nile perch fishery, and later focussing additionally on tilapia and mukene, this regime defined and exhausted commercially relevant species, and largely displaced local fishing economies. Thus it put the costs on the ecosystems and communities upon which the rural fisher folk at Lake Victoria Uganda depend.

The capitalist regime assigns great value to *labour productivity*. Global *labour productivity* demands cheap human and extra-human *natures*. In that sense, only the work, which is categorized as labour contributing to the export of processed fish to the global markets, is considered *productive* and therefore valuable. Those *natures* that are not valued as part of a *labour productivity* system are considered worthless. No matter how important such work might be for the provision of fish and labour – it will be appropriated as cheap *natures*. Two main cheap natures could be identified for the fishery at Lake Victoria Uganda: Though providing, amongst others, fish, water and the living conditions sustaining the communities, the ecosystem at Lake Victoria is not categorized as *productive*. Its work is appropriated, largely without being taken care of. Another cheap *nature* in this regime is the fishing communities. These place-based, socio-environmental units contribute to the productivity of

89 The booming fishery created dependencies. Thus the local economies became more vulnerable toward changes. An example is that with the fish boom the number of women that migrated to the lake, women whose livelihood depends solely upon fishery, women that are single or widows, and the children and dependants of those women multiplied. As long as fishery was a profitable business these households did well. With a crisis in the local fishery these groups were amongst the first to carry the increasing costs of production.

the Global North because they reproduce the labour that sustains the local processing and export facilities. But again, understanding *labour productivity* as independent from community means the needs of communities are not recognized.

Overlooking and denying the needs of the undervalued peripheries the exhaustion of the cheap *natures* created vicious cycles of rising vulnerability of the oppressed *natures* and increasingly fast and severe exhaustion. To supply the global market with fish, this regime established false needs that created and sustained an unsustainable fishery, in which the ecosystem, the different professions in the fishing sector, and those consuming or otherwise benefiting from the fish became more remote from each other and increasingly vulnerable to system changes. Thus dependency from the system grew amongst those who are oppressed by the system. In consequence, hierarchisation, load displacement and oppression are reproduced within those oppressed groups, too. However, such strategies secured and improved primarily the power-positions of local elites. Furthermore, once the cheap *natures* became scarce and expensive this particular fishery-sector's contribution to the global production decreased. Thereby it became less valuable and hence less attractive for global markets. In addition, the now hierarchical structure of the fishery increasingly channelled the benefits to a relatively small elite, the scarcer the commercial species became. Poverty and illegal activities reinforce each other in vicious circles. Hence illegal catch, trade, and processing of immature fish are yet another sub-cycle of this fishery-regime. In the long run, this capitalist fisheries regime, as other capitalist regimes, builds its own limit with every wave of appropriation and at the same time intensifies crises by worsening the starting conditions for each new cycle.

Bringing together the theories discussed and the historical narratives about fisheries I identified two basic relations that shape how people ensure their access to resources needed: expansion and exclusion. Interestingly, both relations establish hierarchical control. Though they might include cooperation they are not cooperative in an altruistic sense, but instead largely self-interest motivated cooperation, that reproduces hierarchical systems. Expansion is securing resources through increased appropriation of human and extra-human *natures*. Exclusion is securing resources through increased shrinkage of the group in control. By means of expansion the groups benefiting from hierarchical relations can grow. A precondition for expansion is the availability of land and resources in plenty. Expansion

continuously extends control over land and resources. Like capitalist appropriation, expansion co-produces its limits by increasing competition and depleting its supply-base. Within the groups oppressed by expansion the same pattern will be reproduced as a strategy to achieve a better position or to ensure survival. This system hence results in many layers in which groups aim to sustain or improve their position through oppression and appropriation of others. Expansion, in form of appropriation of cheap *natures*, is a key strategy of the capitalocene. But competition about resources is not exclusively a characteristic of capitalism. Power and hierarchies – conquest, appropriation, exploitation, and exhaustion of *natures* – have been at play without focussing on *labour productivity*. The introduction and maintenance of exclusivity are a main mean of how capitalist regimes create, manifest, and reproduce oppression, discrimination and destruction of social groups and other *natures*. Specific to capitalist rationales is that they neglect some *natures'* productivity. These *natures* are excluded from the benefits of their production, and from being taken care of their needs. To take away benefits ensures and improves accumulation of capital for a global elite of capital owners. Owning capital is considered worthy and worth striving for, because it enables to sustain production. Exclusion hence is a strategy of ensuring resource access that exhausts *natures* and manifests and increases the gap between those that are capital rich, and those that are poor.

The analysis of local fisheries at Lake Victoria Uganda and the observations regarding developments of fisheries worldwide show that a new global regime emerged. Competition over ever scarcer resources spurred a shift towards securing production through privatization. To sustain production it is no longer sufficient to control the distribution of costs and benefits, own the means of production, and appropriate ecosystem and community work. Increasing effort has to be put towards securing resource supply. The new regime's interests in Lake Victoria are conflicting with those of the fisher folk. Instead of including local communities into the regime, local fishing communities are rather in the way of securing *productivity*, and hence become legally and physically displaced from the access to, control over and benefits from the places in which their communities are situated and their livelihoods build upon. This development is fuelled in particular through Public Private Partnerships. International corporations and the local elite increasingly privatize land- and water scapes at Lake Victoria Uganda, motivating fisher folk to turn to illegal practices. Transnational corporations in

fisheries and other sectors sustain their production through the choice of those business locations with the best conditions for appropriation. Uganda's welcoming attitude to public private partnerships and relatively low social and environmental standards attract investors of different industries. They seek to appropriate cheap *natures* at the lake and thereby further displace the fishing communities. Following capitalist rationales, these industries can be expected to develop some areas, as the fishing industry did. But it might development towards the wrong direction: increasing the gap between rich and poor.

Additionally to ownership becoming increasingly exclusive, the social frontiers of appropriation shift. Defining new under classes and establishing a moral that individualises responsibilities to react upon problems, the creation of new human *natures* in core- and periphery-zones facilitates socially unequal exchange. Defining worth or unworthiness is part of externalizing processes. They justify and normalise false needs and irrational rationales of appropriation, exploitation, manipulation and control as necessary means to ensure the worthwhile *labour productivity*, and thereby ensure the dominance of the elite owning the means of production. Being increasingly strengthened by this relation, capitalists can use their power to shape and build institutions that work with and within this value-system and therefore give further privileges to the capitalist elite and further oppress cheap *natures*. Ownership also becomes exclusive through the emergence of a second value of productivity, which appears to be highly disconnected from any place-based production: the productivity of money. These processes further speed up the growing gap between the rich and the poor, the rich become richer because they are rich. The establishment of a new value of productivity is thus another strategy of preserving a system based upon production when faced with scarcity of cheap resources. Today's wave of enclosures is the capitalist system's reaction to scarcity of currently appropriated cheap *natures*. Resource supply is ensured through increasing ownership of reproductive *natures* that previously were disregarded as unproductive. In addition, new *human* and *extra-human natures* to appropriate are continuously created and with the scarcity of land social problems caused by unequal ecological exchange increase. In respect to global fisheries development, new types of privatization, property relations come to not only shape our relationship to resources, but also the relationship to life and ourselves. Thereby the recent sub-cycles of capitalism establish new forms of disconnectedness.

Applying human ecological perspectives to the history of fisheries at Lake Victoria Uganda I sketched out the complexity behind today's situation. There is no simple good or bad, no noble savages and single group of people to blame. Problems of unequal distribution of access to, control over, benefits from, and costs of resource extraction are co-created and intensified by a system of relations that is based on an irrationale of disconnectedness – capitalist logic. Moore (2014) wonders if today's severe crisis is not only due to neo-liberalism, but capitalocene reaching its final limits. I argue that creation, appropriation and capitalization of cheap *natures* continue, but in new, placeless arenas. The gap between rich and poor continuously grows, the group of those benefiting from hierarchical relations shrinks. The definition of new human natures takes spaces and resources from those that are said to not deserve their needs to be taken care of, thus facilitating new cycles of appropriation. We need to ask how long this strategy can and will continue. Which kind of elites and cheap *natures* are going to be created in future? And what will they result in? Capitalist rationale is destructive and benefits an increasingly small elite. It intensifies problems of resource scarcity, creates new kinds of natures to escape the scarcity it co-created, and thereby disconnects productivity not only from nature and land, but also from labour and life. With the SSF Guidelines COFI acknowledges the importance and needs of small-scale fishing communities. Now, their implementation will decide whether or not the guidelines can really contribute a more just fisheries policy making. When capitalist rationales shape the way those guidelines are read and put in practice the result will be capitalist oppression, exploitation, and destruction.

Today's crisis is a crisis of values, rather than a crisis of resource-scarcity. The analysis of fisheries history in relation to capitalism only revealed competitive, individualizing strategies. Genuine cooperation, as rooted in empathy and intrinsic value of being seems not to be at place. We need to find cooperative ways to overcome hierarchical dualism. We need to reconnect socially, culturally, and ecologically. Acknowledging the relevance of a plurality of focus areas and strategies, and initiating cooperation amongst them is one way how reconnection can oppose the individualisation of resistance. And there are many ways to do so. The interviews and group encounters that accompanied this thesis allowed me to gain insight into the experiences of the participants, which I later could link to theories that I find particularly helpful for understanding history and present developments. More importantly,

the methods chosen allowed me to personally engage with the participants. We connected. Direct interaction and time spent together before and after interview situations added deeper shades of meaning to my perspective on and attitude to the overall theme of this study. Reconnecting in our every-day lives, as well as, through research, and activism we can explore alternative perspectives and thereby deconstruct capitalist and other oppressive rationales. This might sound naively optimistic, but I am painfully aware of today's crises. However, I am also inspired and nourished by the strength, solidarity and visions I encountered amongst the people I met at Lake Victoria Uganda, the activists fighting for just fisheries, and others who practice resistance, striving to live a culture of care. It leaves me with the confidence that cultures of connectedness are not only necessary, but possible.

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Appendix

A Outline for group-discussions in Mukono district

Overview of the main themes

“M” symbolises the possibility to visualize the answer to this question on a map.

- 1 Community
- 2 Everyday life
- 3 Women's livelihoods in relation to fishery development
- 4 Places

Introduction round: each one please briefly state:

Who are you?

Where do you live now?

Where do you come from?

1 Community: I would like you to tell me about the life here

M Could you explain the geographical boundaries of your community for me?

M How did the boundaries change over time?

How did the number of people living here change over time? Housing patterns?
(last 5 or 10 years?)

What kind of people live in this community? Compared to the neighbour communities?

What kind of people are moving here?

What are the major causes for people moving here?

When there would be new people coming: What kind of people are welcome?

What kind of people are not welcome?

Are the people here much alike, or different?

How are they different?

- What did it mean for you to move? Do you miss something? Did you lose something?
- How much does it influence who you are and how you live?
- Did you bring new things to this community?
- How does it change the community when new people arrive here?
- Are there conflicts? Do they change how the village looks?/ What you do?

- If there would be a disagreement between different social groups: Which social groups would have more power?
- Which people are disrespected by this community?
- Is there discrimination? Of whom? Job, age, gender, others?
- M Which different social and economical clusters are in this community?
 - How do these boundaries affect the community?

- If there is a problem (someone gets sick, need money, can not care for the kids), how does the community hold together? Did that change?
- If there is a big event (e.g. wedding) how does the community work together?
- What is the community helping the people with?
- How well does the community hold together?

- How proud are people to say that they come from this community?
- How did the quality of life change over the past 20 to 30 years? Why?
- Imagine you would get the chance to move away: to where ever you want: where would you move to? Why? What are the major causes for people moving away?

- What is the local governance system like?
 - Is it working for the people here?

- Who is it working for?
- If someone would move here newly: What would that person need to know?
Which state laws and regulations are important for/ affect this community?
- How much say does the community have about local resource-use?
- Who can make the decisions?
- What do you think will the future of this community look like?
- Summarize - *Does everyone agree with what was said? Did everyone say something?*

2 Every day life

- What are the main things you spend most time of the day with?
- Can you tell me what the every day life in this community looks like?
- Imagine the every day life of your parents and grand parents: what are the major differences?
- Which daily tasks do you enjoy?
- Which daily tasks do you not enjoy?
- What / who influences these activities?
- What makes your life complicated?
- Imagine you would cook a meal for your family: what would you cook ,with which ingredients, and how much would it cost? Where would you get the ingredients from?
- Remember you 10 years ago, or your mum making a meal: what would it be then?
- If someone's house breaks or if they do not have luck for a while: is that their own fault?
- How much influence do you think people have about what is going on in this world?
- How much is it your responsibility? / Is it you who decides about your own faith?

- What makes a good person?
- What is bad behaviour/ bad moral?

- What is nature to you?
- What makes humans special?
- Are humans above nature? Or nature above human, or same? Or different?

- M Where do you meet other people? and celebrate?

3 I am very interested in learning more about the jobs and the land use here.

- M Which businesses are here?
- Which is the best business? Who owns them? Who profits?
- M How are people earning a living? Where from do you get what you need?
- What is the relation of agriculture-fishery and other land uses?
- M Who owns and manages which land in the community?
- M What land is not available to the community?
- How did the situation look like in the past?
- M Is land here owned by resource-extraction industries? Which?
- Does the land you live and work and move on belong to private people or to the community?

- Summarize - *Does everyone agree with what was said? Did everyone say something?*

Let's look more into the jobs that have been here in the past:

- Who fished? Who was the fish mongers? Who was processing?
- Which fish? Which other things from the Lake? Or the Land? (Garden? Forest?)
- With which methods?
- M Where did they fish? Garden? Use the forest?
- How was it regulated?
- Who controls the fishery?

- Summarize - *Does everyone agree with what was said? Did everyone say something?*

Can you tell me more about the development of the fishery-sector until today?

- What are the best developments in fisheries here?
- What are the worst developments in fisheries here?
- Have the changes affected men, women, old, young,... differently?
- Who profited, who lost?
- How did the importance of the fishery for the people change?

- summarize - *Does everyone agree with what was said? Did everyone say something?*

4 Places: I am curious to learn more about places around the Lake that are important for you.

M Which are the most important places for you, that have something to do with fishing? (preparing, boat building, fishing, landing, selling, processing, material sources,...)

M Which places were important for your ancestors?

Do you think living here is the same as living elsewhere? Or is this place unique? Could you just leave this place, or would you miss something? Imagine you had to move away: What would you miss?

M Which places that you used to visit when you were young do you no longer visit?
Why?

M Which places are you forbidden/ restricted/ otherwise impossible access to?

Are these places here of meaning/ for your family/ ancestors?

M Which places are important for the community? Do they have a special meaning?

M Can you tell me about the beaches: which are the most important beaches? Why?

Are there any spirits in the water? In the forest? ...

M Are there holy places? Sacred places?

Which role did the Lake play for this community?/ What did the lake mean for this community?

M Can you tell me which landing sites are old, which are new?

M Do different people use different parts of the beach? Which group uses which part?

Are the beaches and landing sites only used for landing fish? What are they used for? How is that different from the past?

M Are there any special natural features that distinguish the community from others?

How did the nature here change? The animals? The air, the water, the forest, the soil? What does that mean for the people? Changes in fish, molluscs, birds, crocodiles, water plants?

What is the use of a healthy ecosystem?

Who has to care about a healthy ecosystem?

What is their role in the ecosystem?

What are the major threats to natural resources in the community?

Summarize - *Does everyone agree with what was said? Did everyone say something?*

5 Closing discussion

Is there anything that you want to add? Did we forget to talk about anything important?

B Outline for single interviews in Mukono district

Overview of the main themes

- 1 Personal story
- 2 Culture and everyday life
- 3 Livelihood practices and fisheries
- 4 Fisheries
- 5 Places, and personal migration

“M” symbolises the possibility to visualize the answer to this question on a map.

1 Personal story

- How old are you?

1.1 Childhood places

- M Where were you born?
- M Where did you go to school?/ grow up?
- M Where did you play when you were a child?
- Can you describe the place where you grew up?
 - How have they changed?
 - Why did they change?

1.2 Moving around & today's places

- M Where do you live today?
 - Have you always lived in this neighbourhood?
 - Since how long do you live here?

Do you feel home here? Why? Why not?

M Can you describe your neighbourhood?

When did you move there?

M Where did you live before?

Why did you move away?

What brought you here?

Do you want to stay here? What keeps you here?

What is the best thing here?

What is the worst thing here?

Is the city/ village important for who you are?

M Which place did you like most? What made it special?

What do you miss about these places? (sound, scene, food, culture, people)

How important is it to visit these places?

What did you like about that place? Can you tell the best things about it?

M Which place did you like least? Why?

M At which places do you feel safest? Why?

M At which places do you feel unsafe? Why?

M Do you travel ? Where to? How often? What for?

Are you getting homesick? What do you miss most?

M Where do you work? Can you tell me about that place? What kind of people are there?

What does your daily routine look like?

M Where do you go to relax? Why? What do you do?

1.2 Family and home

M Where do your parents come from?

M Where is your father born? Where is your mother born?

M Where do they live now?

When and Why did they move?

Do you know stories about how your family came to this area?

Is the place your parents come from important for who you are?

Do they live with you? Why?/ Why not?

What do/did they work with?

Who do you live with?

Are you married?

Do you live with your husband?

M Where does he live? Why?

What does he work with?

Would you want him to stay here?

Do you think he will be able to stay here? - For which reasons?

Do you have children?

Do you live with them?

How old are they?

What do they work with?/ What do they do?

M Where do they live? Why?

Would you want them to stay here in future?

Do you think they will be able to stay here? - What are the reasons?

- Who would you prefer to have as a first-born child? Boy or girl? Why?

- Do you have grand-children?
 - Do you live with them?
 - M Where do they live? Why?
 - Would you want them to stay here in future?
 - Do you think they will be able to stay here? - For which reasons?

- Other people? Why do you live with these people?
- Do you live with your grandparents?
- Did you live with your grandparents or extended family? What changed? Why?

- Is the land of your ancestors different from where your parents come from?
- M Where do your ancestors come from? Which meaning does this place have for you?
- To what extend do you feel like you belong to the place where your parents come from? What makes you belong there?
- To what extend do you feel like you belong to the places where your ancestors come from? What makes you belong there?
- M Where do you belong? Why?
- M Are you proud about your connections to these places? What makes you proud?
- M Are you ashamed about some places?
- What would you like your children to feel about these places? Do they belong somewhere else than you do? To which places do you think they belong ?

- Which values do you share with people from these places?

- Which values are different?

- What is your role in your family?
- What does family mean for you?
- To what extent do you think that it means something different for the elderly/ younger?

M Where do you meet with your family?

M Where are your ancestors buried?

- How often do you go there?

- Did that change over time?

1.3 Friends and associated networks

M How close by do your friends live?

M Where do you meet them?

M Where do you know them from?

2 Culture and every day life

2.1 Community

M Could you explain the geographical boundaries of your community for me?

- How many people do you think live here? How did that change over time?
(last 5 or 10 years?)

- Which sense of community do you experience?

- What makes you a part of the community that you live with?

- Do you depend on it? How?
- What is the local governance system like?
 - How are decisions in the community made? Who makes them? Your say?
 - Which state laws and regulations are important for/ affect this community?
 - Are you a member of any organizations? Which? (Why?)
 - How much say do you have about local resource-use?
 - How much say does the community have about local resource-use?
 - Who can make the decisions?
 - Did that change over time?
- Can you tell me what the every day life in this community looks like?
 - M Where do you meet other people? and celebrate?
 - What is different from every day life in the past?
- What are the major causes for people moving here?
- How well does the community hold together?
 - What keeps the community here together?
 - What threatens it?
 - What are the main conflicts in this community?
- How proud are people to say that they come from this community?
- How did the quality of life change over the past 20 to 30 years? Why?
 - What are the major causes for people moving away?
- M Which different social and economic clusters are in this community?
 - How do these boundaries affect the community?
- Who owns the land on which this community lives?
 - If not them: do you claim ownership?
- Where do you meet the community?

- What do you think will the future of this community look like?

2.2 Cultural practices

- What are the most important holidays? Explain them? what happens there? With whom?
 - M Where are holidays celebrated?
 - Are there special spiritual or holy places?
 - Are there holidays that you celebrated in the past but not any longer? Why changes?
 - Which traditions or cultures do you try to preserve? Why?
 - Is it hard to preserve them? What are the challenges?
 - Which are lost? How did they get lost?
 - M Who used to practice them? Where?
 - Who thought you these traditions? When? Where?
 - How did these traditions change over time?
 - Is there music, stories, art, dance that is related to the work on the Lake and the fields, forests?

2.3 Social norms

- What is considered disrespectful?
- What is considered respectful?
- How important is the individual in the culture?
- How important is the group?
- What are the criteria for individual success?

2.4 Everyday

- Where do people meet?
- Are there different places for men and women? Which? Why?
- Are there places for special groups? rich/ poor, old/ young? locals/ foreigners?
Which? Why?
- What do people do for recreation?

- How is public space used? For example, do people tend to “hang out” on the street, or are they in public because they are going from one place to the next?

2.5 Religion & other believes

- Which religion do you practice?
 - M Where do you practice it?
 - M What are important places for your religious practice?
- How much can an individual influence his/ her own life? Other's lives?
- What is the role of luck in people’s lives?

2.6 Nature, health, medicine, crafts

- What does nature mean for you?
- What is the relationship between humans and nature? (e.g., do humans dominate nature? does nature dominate humans? do the two live in harmony?)
- Can you tell me about any places where plants are collected for medicine, food, or other purposes?
- How were plants used in the past?
 - Was there a specific place that trees and shrubs were chosen from?
 - Which Lake Victoria species did people use as medicine, if any?

M Do you know of any places where plants are collected for medicine, food, or other purposes? Where are they located? For example, berry patches?

Are the medicines sold commercially? Do any families harvest for their own use?

Do you know people in the community doing medicinal harvesting?

Do you know of people doing crafts?

Is craft making important in your community?

What is the main market for the crafts that people make?

What does health mean to you?

Who is responsible for someone's health?

What influences people's health?

What are health practices?

Who knows about healing? Where do they get that knowledge from?

Do you use home medicine? Where does it come from? Where is it practised?

Traditional medicine? Where does it come from? Where is it practised?

Spiritual leaders? Shamans? Others? Where does it come from? Where is it practised?

2.7 Diet

M What are your eating habits? When do you eat? With whom? Where? What?

M Where do you eat? Who else is there?

What is the most important meal of the day? Why is it important?

What is traditional food? Who makes it? Where do you get the ingredient from?

Can you tell me about traditional food you used to prepare or consume

Why not?

What does it mean for you? Have they changed over the years? How?

How many different fish can you prepare?

How many fish do you know?

- Was any of that for special celebrations? Or rare?
- M Where did you get it from?
- Can you still get all those? Why not?
- What else from the Lake do you prepare?
 - Where do you get the food from?
 - Where can you buy/sell fish?
 - Did these places change over time? For the better or worse? Why?
- How do you think will your children and grandchildren cook and eat?
- What do you think will change?
- Which food is not eaten any longer?
 - M Where did it come from? Who made it? Where did you get it from?
 - What difference does it make? What did it mean to you?
- Which food is new?
 - M Where did it come from? Who made it? Where did you get it from?
 - What difference does it make? What did it mean to you?
- What food is taboo for: men, women, children, boy, girl, old, poor, rich? Why?

3 Culture and livelihood practices

3.1 Labour and other livelihood practices

- How do you make a living today?
- Are you practising traditional work?
- What have you been working with in the past? For most of your life?
- Are the practices currently claimed as recognized and protected rights consistent with traditional practices?
- What are the most popular jobs? Why?

- What are most people working with? What is the worth of these jobs?
 - Are there jobs / tasks that people do not practice any longer? Why not?
- Which perspectives for income have girls that grow up here today?
 - How was it different in the past?

3.2 Livelihood practices and land use

- M Which businesses are here?
 - Which is the best business? Who owns them? Who profits?
- M How are you earning a living? Where from do you get what you need?
 - What is the relation of agriculture-fishery and other land uses?
 - What is the connection between land use in the area to history and culture?
 - Who owns and manages which land in the community?
- M What land is not available to the community?
- M Is land here owned by (resource-extraction) industries? Which?
 - Can you tell me if the land you live and work and move on belong to private people or to the community?

4 Fisheries

- Who fished? Who was the fish mongers? Who was processing?
- Which fish? Which other things from the Lake? Or the Land? (Garden? Forest?)
 - Which were the most common fish when you were young?
 - Which fish were the best food fish?
 - Which fish are now very scarce?
 - Which fish do you think are very important to your life and to your village?
- Which methods do the people use to fish?
- M Where did they fish? Garden? Use the forest?

- How was it regulated? What were / are local restrictions on whether or how marine resources can be harvested?

4.1 Personal fishing activities

- Are you working with fish/ the lake?
 - How did you get started? Why? What made you interested?
- Are you/ Have you been fishing?
 - How long have you been fishing?
 - Did you work for a Commercial Fishery?
 - What traditional practices do you practice in fishing?
 - What do you value most about what you do? Why?
 - What do you think is the future of this tradition?
 - Are you proud about doing it? Why?
 - What makes it important for you?
 - Are others learning it? How?
 - Is there any special time of the year that you like to catch fish?
 - What fish do you typically catch?
 - Do you know where to best get it?
 - Where do you like to get fish?
 - Can you access these places?
- How do you catch fish? Which gear do you use?
- How did the fishing methods change over the years?
- What caused the changes?

- Are you connected to the lake/ the fish /fishery?
- How does the fishery influence who you are?

4.2 Traditional landing sites

M Can you tell me the location of any new or old landing sites/ markets/ harvest grounds?

If new, was it made by a local person or non-local person?

M Which landing sites are still being used?

Why did that landing sites change?

How do you access the landing sites? With which means?

What is the furthest you go to?

What do changes in location mean for you?

M Could you tell me about the oldest landing site is in this area?

M Could you tell me about the location of any old fisher peoples communities?

Was this a permanent community or was it a seasonal camp?

4.3 development of the fishery-sector

What are the best developments in fisheries here?

What are the worst developments in fisheries here?

Have the changes affected men, women, old, young,... differently?

Who profited, who lost?

How did the importance of the fishery for the people change?

What do you know about where the female may lay their eggs?

What do you know about places that people can see juveniles?

Can you remember a time when the fish population was low or there was more than there is now?

4.4 (Fishing) Industry as new places

In what ways do you feel this industry will benefit your community?

- What negative effects do you think this industry will have on your community?
- Can you suggest ways that potential effects can be reduced? Who should do that?
- How will industry development affect young people in the community?
- Which effects does industry development have on the land and water? fish?
- Which effects does industry development have on the people?

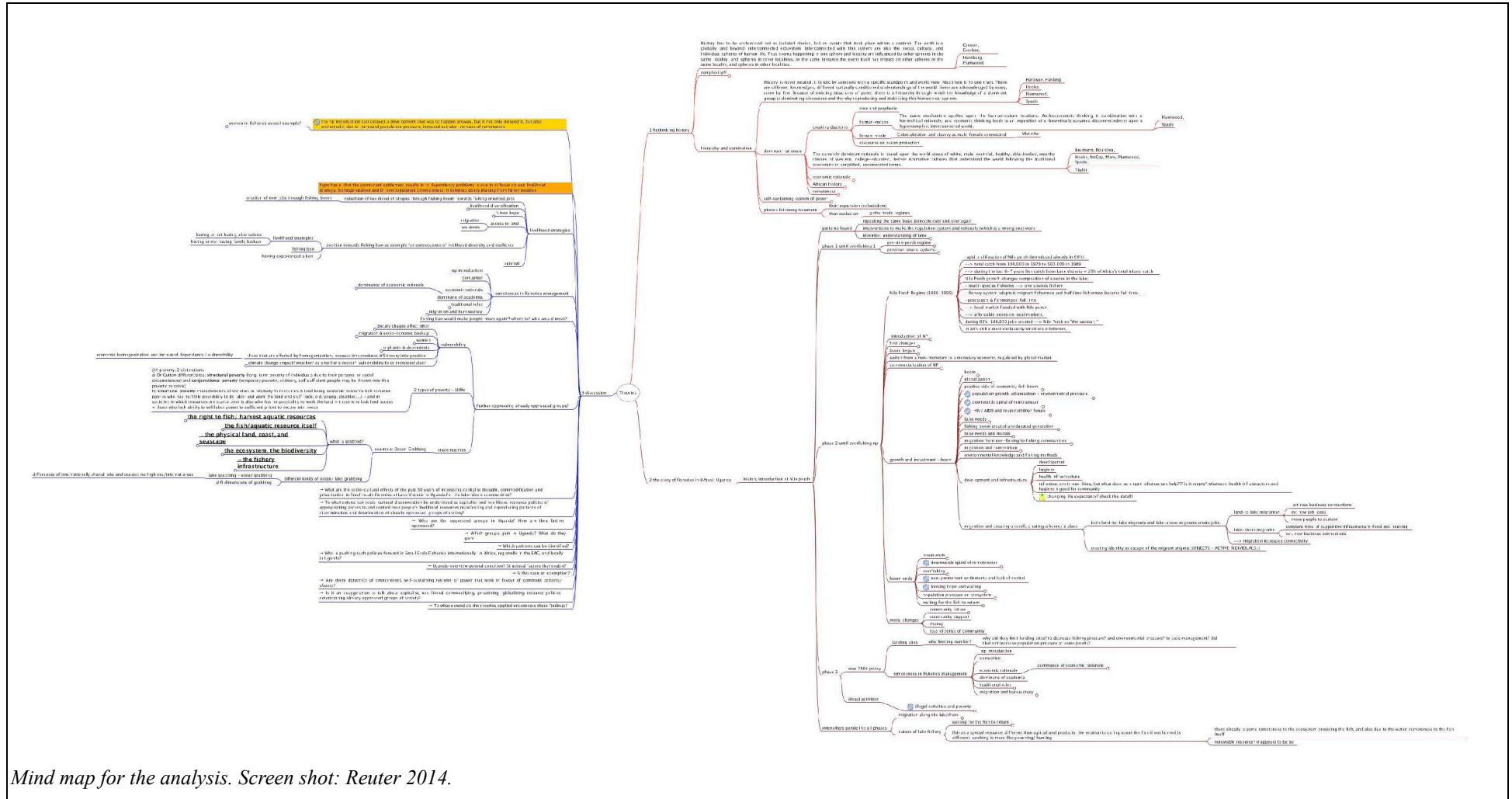
5 Places around the Lake (Water, coast, landing site, beach, mangrove)

- M Which are the most important places for you, that have something to do with fishing?
(preparing, boat building, fishing, landing, selling, processing, material sources,...)
- M Which places that you used to visit when you were young do you no longer visit?
Why?
- M Can you tell me about the beaches: which are the most important beaches? Why?
- M Do different people use different parts of the beach? Which group uses which part?
- Are the beaches and landing sites only used for landing fish? What are they used for?
How is that different from the past?
- M Can you tell me about the importance of the lake?
- M Are there any special natural features that distinguish the community from others?

6 Closing discussion

- Is there anything that you want to add? Did we forget to talk about anything important?

C Screen shot of the analysis' mind-map



Mind map for the analysis. Screen shot: Reuter 2014.