Lake Tanganyika ecosystem management strategies

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Abstract

Lake Tanganyika is a large East African rift valley system holding about 1/6 of the world's liquid freshwater with about 2000 species of organisms (fauna and flora), of which about 700 are endemic. The lake faces a number of threats including excess sedimentation, overfishing, pollution, habitat destruction, along with climate change. Efforts to better understand these involved an assessment of the magnitude of the threats, through the Lake Tanganyika Biodiversity project (LTBP) in which a number of outputs such as Draft conventions, special study reports and the Strategic Action Programme were achieved. The preparation of detailed projects to address the threats through the Lake Tanganyika Management Planning Projects (LTMPP) was another strategy, as well as projects prepared for management of catchment and pollution control, along with fishing management. It can be concluded that Lake Tanganyika faces essentially man-induced threats compounded by climate change, probably resulting in declining productivity of the lake and declining water levels. It is concluded that in order to maintain sustainability of the lake, both regional and global joint efforts are required.

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