

THE INSPECTION PANEL

INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT 1818 H Street, N.W. Telephone: (202) 458-5200
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IPN REQUEST RQ99/6

November 22, 1999

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

Dear Sir:

Re: Request for Inspection – Kenya: Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project (IDA Credit 2907-KE) (GEF TF 23819)

On October 12, 1999, the Inspection Panel (“the Panel”) received, through the World Bank Office in Nairobi, Kenya, a Request for Inspection (“the Request”), dated September 28, 1999. It was submitted by RECONCILE (Resources Conflict Institute), a Kenyan non-governmental organization, acting for and on behalf of persons in the area known as the Nyanza Gulf of Lake Victoria within the Republic of Kenya (the Requesters). RECONCILE is also authorized to represent OSIENALA (Friends of Lake Victoria) an NGO located in Kisumu, and the Kenya Chapter of Ecovic (the East African Communities Organization for Management of Lake Victoria Resources) who represent communities living along the Kenya side of Lake Victoria. On November 9 1999, the Requesters, at the request of the Chairman of the Panel, clarified some points surrounding the delivery of the Request.

The Requesters claim that the communities they represent are likely to suffer harm as a result of failures and omissions of the International Development Association (IDA) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the Bank), which is the implementing agency of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), in the design and implementation of the water hyacinth management component (Part B) of the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project in Kenya (the Project). The project is financed by the above-referenced IDA Credit and GEF Trust Fund Grant. (Similar financing for this Project has been provided to the United Republic of Tanzania and The Republic of Uganda.) Specifically, the Requesters claim that the proposed use of a mechanical method for removal of water hyacinth from the Lake by shredding and sinking of the weed to the bottom of the Lake, selected without a prior Environmental Impact Assessment or appropriate community consultation, will result in ecological decay and environmental degradation, that in turn will adversely affect communities living on the shores at the Nyanza Gulf. These communities depend directly on the Lake for

their livelihoods, since the “Gulf is home to fresh water fish and the source of water for domestic use” and these, and the ecosystem, will be endangered by the resulting pollution.

The Requesters’ allegations could constitute violations of *inter alia* the following Bank Policies and Procedures:

OD 4.01 on Environmental Assessment;
OD 4.15 on Poverty Alleviation;
OP 10.04 on Economic Evaluation of Investment Projects; and
OD 13.05 on Project Supervision.

I am notifying you that I have, on November 22, 1999, which is also the date of the dispatch of this notice, registered this Request in the Inspection Panel Register. Since the Panel's "registration" process is often misunderstood, I would like to emphasize that "registration" is an administrative procedure established by the Panel and that it implies no judgment whatsoever concerning the eligibility of the Request.

In accordance with paragraph 18 of the Resolution and paragraphs 2 and 8 of the *"Conclusions of the Board's Second Review of the Inspection Panel"*, Bank Management has been notified that it must provide the Panel, no later than December 23, 1999, with written evidence that it has complied, or intends to comply with the Bank ’s relevant policies and procedures in relation to the above-referenced credit. The subject matter the Management must deal with in a response to the Request is set out in paragraph 3 and 4 of the *'Conclusions of the Board's Second Review of the Inspection Panel.'*

After receiving the Management response, the Panel will, as provided by paragraph 19 of the Resolution, “determine whether the Request meets the eligibility criteria set out in paragraphs 12 to 14 and shall make a recommendation to the Executive Directors as to whether the matter should be investigated.”

The Request has been assigned IPN Request Number RQ99/6.

Yours sincerely,

Jim MacNeill
Chairman

TO: Mr. Michael Ochieng Odhiambo
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