

World Fisheries Day

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Fishing sector recovers amid challenges

Recovering. The fish industry is showing signs of recovery since the government decided to take it as one of its priorities.

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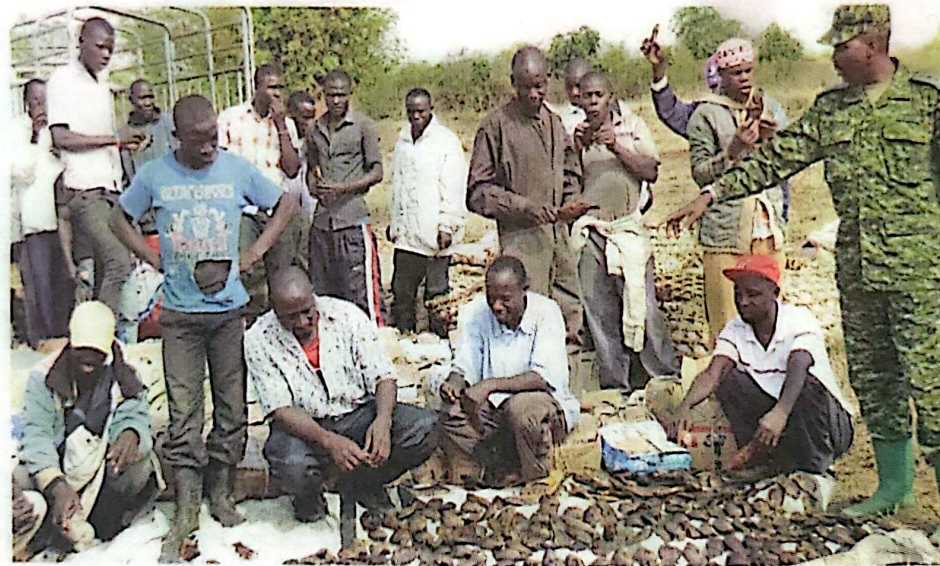
KEY ISSUE

The Ministry of Agriculture formulated the National Aquaculture Policy, 2017 which has helped in guiding Public and Private sector investment for sustainable commercially viable, competitive, and market-oriented.

Uganda's fishish sector continues to register drastic falls in production. This is attributed to the increasing population and pressure on fisheries resources, which has resulted in a decline in the quantities of fish from natural lakes.

According to Dr Anthony Taabu Munyaho, the director of National fisheries Resources Research Institute (NaFIRRI), there is a tremendous increase of over fishing, which in simple terms can be regarded as too many fishermen chasing for a small fish and in this case, Nile perch.

"Back in 1999, there was a ton of 1.9 million Nile perch



Suspected fish dealers who were arrested with immature fish in Nakasongola District recently.

FILE PHOTO

but currently, there are 900 to 1million tons of Nile perch in the water," he says. Mr Mu-

nyaho says fish factories have also decreased from 21 factories previously to only six, which

means many people have lost their jobs in the process.

Other threats include, captur-

ing of immature fish, over fishing, poor quality of the feed and the cost of feed in Uganda being higher compared to other countries.

The number of exported fish, according to Mr Munyaho, has tremendously decreased within the last five years, which is affecting the industry as well.

"A total of 35,000 tons to 45,000 tons of fish were exported three to four years ago, but the figure has dropped down to 17,279 tons," he adds. He, however, says that since the government has shown interest in the fish industry, it is slowly getting back to its feet.

"The fish industry is showing signs of recovery since the government decided to take it as one of its priorities. Deploying the army to fight immature fish and other bad methods of fishing shows that government is committed to develop the sector," Mr Munyaho said.

