



African Maritime Resource, Fishing And Aqua-Development Aids In The Lake Chad Basin

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Abstract

The African maritime area has been continuously under the threat of internal and foreign explorers. The situation is undermined by the fact that the African maritime area is overtaken by multiple problems like terrorism in the Gulf of Guinea and Lake Chad, militia activities in Niger Delta and Cabinda and armed confrontation in the Nile. Unfortunately, it is the fishing industry that employs most of the traditional subsistent farmers that carry the bulk of the burden. This fishing industry has been overtaken by the challenge of over-fishing and illegal fishing. The study reveals that there was a lot of development aids that were sent to the Lake Chad to develop the fish and maritime resources. It also reveals that when the Battle of Kinasara between Nigeria and Chad was resolved, the activities of criminals and religious fundamentalists like the Maitatsine and Boko Haram that found the Lake Chad environment as a safe haven for their terror activities, soon began to turn the borders of the Commission States into their operational headquarters thereby triggering a new form of security diplomacy to check the Boko Haram terrorism. It recommends the use of international legal instruments in controlling the multiple threats to the African fishing and maritime resources.

Keywords: Exploration, Maritime resources, Fishing, Lake Chad, Africa.

Introduction

The African continent is specially blessed with numerous maritime resources. Some of these maritime resources are the major sources of mineral and black gold for the African states like the Niger Delta area and the Cabinda region. The Gulf of Guinea remains of high strategic value to the African continent as a major link to other parts of the world. Ironically, the nature of exploration of maritime resources in Africa is dominated by the activities of informal criminal elements from host communities, the international multinational cooperation and other legally or culturally approved operators. The culturally approved operators are mainly the traditional fishermen and aggro-farmers like fishermen who have since time immemorial continued to harvest the resources of the water resources around them as the gift of God for their development. The multinational corporations on their part are often a collection of international companies that are in the continent to explore and exploit the African aqua-resources. The imperial nature of their activities is such that they target primarily to plough back massive capital from host African country to their Euro-American and Asian parent company. This quest for massive capital accumulation tends to undermine the interest of host communities, thereby raising opposition, agitations and unlawful activities from host communities (Ogonnowo, 2022).

The unlawful exploitation of maritime resources in Africa has manifested in the excessive oil exploitation and environmental damages in the Gulf of Guinea, Nigerian Niger Delta, Cabinda region of Angola and Chad. There have been massive loss of life in the Nile River Basin over the hydro-power projects of Egypt and Ethiopia. The criminal activities in the Gulf of Eden has remained problematic and unregulated in their exploitation of maritime resource. The manifestation of criminal gangs within the African maritime areas affects both the economy and people of Africa. Unfortunately, the case of Lake Chad is worrisome considering the large influence of Boko Haram and climate change on it. Lake Chad is the largest Lake in West and Central Africa, the fourth largest in the African continent and the eleventh largest in the world (Ani, 2012:89). Lake Chad Basin occupies parts of eight countries and covers about 2.2 million square kilometers in area within its peak years (Idris, 1969:69). The eight countries are Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger, Sudan, Central African Republic, Algeria and Libya. The agreement for the establishment of the Lake Chad Basin Development Fund was signed in October, 1972 and it came into existence on 1st January 1973. Earlier in 1972, the Heads of State of Lake Chad countries approved the proposal for the harmonization of legislation on fishery in the Lake Chad, with special focus on facilitating free movement of fishermen. A draft agreement was presented to the Head of States in 1993 but the then Executive Secretary of the Commission was the problem that militated against its adoption was mainly political. The Lake Chad environment generates movement of people as they are pushed to the area in order to enhance their economic status. Climate change and the drying-up of the Lake Chad disconnected a lot of people from their carrier as well as hand work. Those who lost their employment in different aspects of the aqua-industry of the Lake Chad began to search for alternative means of survival. While some were lucky to eke-out a living, others could not. Some of those that could not soon went into stealing as a way of making a living, thus stealing and robbery remains popular forms of security within the Lake Chad region.

Mamari (1975:2) maintains that the Lake Chad Basin Commission is an “organization formally established with the common accord of our states (and remains) one of the best frameworks of cooperation and sub-regional solidarity, the existence of which can vividly serve as a model of rapprochement towards the realization of African unity”. The Lake Chad Basin Commission was established in 1964 to promote harmonious development around the Lake Chad region. Within the first seven years, the Commission undertook a survey of the water resources of the Basin, with the financial and technical assistance of some of the United Nations agencies (Shaib, 1975). The Heads of State of Chad, Niger, Cameroon and Nigeria on May 21, 1964 established the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC). Later, in 1994, Central African Republic was admitted to LCBC and in July 2000 Sudan was admitted. The Commission, with its headquarters in Ndjamena, Chad has expanded to include Congo Brazzaville, Democratic-Republic of Congo and Libya.

The Ngala Extension Workers School supplied extension services to all the farmers including the fishermen freely on skeletal basis. In order to promote the fishing area within the Lake Chad, FAO proposed the linking of River Chari to Serbewel and El Beid. The goal was to promote the even development of the fishing area, especially the part of Cameroon up to Gamboru in Nigeria, that records little quantity of water within the year. Chad on its part maintained that “such diversion of Chari-Logone waters would limit the quantity of water flowing into the Lake (1975, p.29). Besides, the diversion of the Chari River will directly affect the Chadian developmental projects that depend on water to survive. The Chadians were very afraid that it would be dangerous to their national interest for them to support the diversion of water from the Lake Chad, which they depend largely on; at a time, the water level was progressively fluctuating. “On the proposal to undertake a feasibility study of the project, Chad expressed the fear that such an enterprise would almost certainly be a waste of fund, as it would not yield any positive results (1975, p.29). Those championing the project especially the Nigerian and Cameroonian states, were of the position that a canal linking Chari to Serbewel and El Beid was to conserve the quantity of water which was lost through flooding and evaporation. They maintain that a canal will not in any way affect the normal of Chari and Logone into the Lake Chad. Cameroon argued strongly that the canal will conserve water resources of the Basin for the well-being of its people as stipulated in the Statutes of the Commission. The country maintained that the canal will provide more water for economic uses, all year round.

Malloum (1975) the former President of Chad stated that the Lake Chad Basin Commission is an organization formally established with the common accord of states within the region and it has grown to be one of the best frameworks of cooperation and sub-regional solidarity as well as a model of possible rapprochement towards the realization of African unity. The above position of Chadian Former Head of State is a beautiful dream and worthy idea that captures the vision of the Lake Chad Commission in its early years. Unfortunately, the years that followed has witnessed the collapse of this great vision due to multiple intervening forces of climate change, weak governance, nationalism, conflicts and terrorism in the Lake Chad Basin.

Statement of Problem and Research Objective

The African maritime resource have been under multiple threats. There are state -driven threats due to competition over sphere of influence as found in the River Nile struggle between the Egyptian and the Ethiopian States. There is also the competition over the influence of foreign Chinese fishermen as witnessed in the Gambian maritime areas, where they have dominated the the indigenous people with their superior technology and fishing skills. It would be recalled that in its early days, the Lake Chad Basin was a centre of positive and negative aqua-related activities that gave rise to a robust multilateral diplomacy, development of the Lake area as well as the robust enhancement of the lives of the citizenry (Okekeke-Ogbuafor, Gray, Ani, & Stead 2023). However, the forces of climate change gave a heavy blow to the lake by increasingly drying its waters. Gradually, states within the Commission began to develop and act diplomatically to protect its own national interests within the Lake and adjoining areas. That nationalistic body-language of the sovereigns within the federating states of the Commission encouraged the citizenry to intensify their quest to grasp as much resources as possible within the Lake Chad. Fish was and remains the most cherished resource for competition by peasant farmers and residents of African maritime border areas.

Within the Lake Chad Basin; there has been fluctuations and differences between the water level in the South Basin and the North Basin. Over the years, the South Basin tends to record more water and vegetation. While there is fishing in other parts of the lake, the Chari Delta records high degree of fishing. There are a lot of factors that contributed to the disappearance of some fish species within the lake. Fish species like Alestes, Latex and Mormyrids suffered virtual disappearance due to high level of water occasioned by flooding. The recurrent cases of drought in the area has also negatively affected the degree of fish production in the area. When there is a rise in the water level of the lake due to flood, it will cause slow amount of oxygen been dissolved in water leading to decrease of fish population. Such cases are difficult for fishes to survive except Clarias, Polypterus and Tilapia that are resistant fish species. The North Basin of the lake is often the fastest to dry-up. There is little or no fishing activities there, except around Mala-Fatori, where water from the Yobe helps in sustaining low scale fishing. The flooding of the Logone and Chari also affects the fishes in the El Beid. There is also the problem of over-fishing from the lake by fishermen. The growth of vegetation within the fishing areas reduces the flow of water and fish movement. It also reduces the oxygen content of the water as some fishes cannot tolerate water with low oxygen content.

Soon, the conflict of interest amongst the Nigerian and Chadian fishermen escalated and received the backing of the military forces of both countries leading to the Battle of Kinasara between Nigeria and Chad. The study has the objective of identifying the nature of aqua diplomacy in the Lake Chad Basin and how it has contributed in fishing conflicts in the area. Fundamentally, the later part of the study investigates the place of aqua-resources and fishing in multilateral diplomacy of states within the Commission as well as other factors that interacted with the above variable to generate conflict.

Theoretical Framework

This study is centred on the theory of rationality and irrationality in international politics. This theory argues that government establishment take decisions out of their own values, goals and psychological idiosyncrasies (Weber, 1978). In the international politics between the West and African states, the tendencies of Western countries and donor agencies to stretch their goals, aims and objectives irrespective of the difficulty and impossibility of such ideology or way of life surviving in Africa and many other parts of the developing world has remained problematic in the analysis of game of nations. This manifested as a problem in the nature of the developmental aids from Western-championed inter-governmental organizations to Africa and the Lake Chad Basin Commission.

Zagare (1990) identified the difference between procedural and instrumental rationality. He maintained that western thinkers easily assume that their procedural disposition to matters is often rational using their sense of cost-benefit calculus. For many of the western actors in international relations, their national interest often supersedes the interest of the state and people that they relate with. Zagare (1990) maintain that procedural rationality excludes misperceptions as well as psychological and emotional deficiencies. In Western civilization, rational action has normally been taken to mean action that is predictable, prudent, reasonable and appropriate in the light of dominant social values and preferences of a given geopolitical area (Dougherty & Pfalzgraff, 1997: 380). Instrumental rationality is limited to the realities of life in a given geopolitical area. The instrumental rational player is one who has a logical consistent order of preferences on which choices are based, regardless of whether they impress others as rational on ethical, strategic, political or moral grounds (Zagare, 1990). While the individual and institutional decision makers can be rational in limited sense and irrational in the sense of the proceduralist, it is naturally worrisome when international actors take an irrational decision in their politics of aids and grants. Cashman (1993) outlined the impediments to rational decision making within bureaucratic and state organisations. They include that:

Not all decision makers are completely rational in terms of the rational interest; some at all levels may act out of subconscious psychological needs;

Misperception may thwart an accurate image of the international situation;

In crisis situations, leaders may have to make decisions under conditions of stress and lack of sleep;

The quality or quantity of information required for rational decision may be lacking;

The time available may be limited, not used efficiently or shortened by a desire for speedy action;

The ability to predict likely outcomes of various policy options in the time of crisis is often imperfect;

Performing adequate cost-benefit analysis on all feasible alternatives is a daunting task within other given constraints; and

Individuals within various advising and decision groups vary in their rational assessment of policy options, preferred means and likely outcomes.

Review of Diplomatic Aid in Lake Chad

From 1974 and through the support of Spanish aid, the Commission successfully constructed the Lada Dam near Diffa in Niger Republic. It was in July 1974 that the Spanish delegation visited Ndjamen, Chad to discuss with the Executive Secretariat on the area of cooperation between the Spanish Government and the Commission. At the end of their discussion, the Spanish delegation requested to be taken round the Commission's project sites. After their inspection, they promised to send aids for the hydraulic works in the western region of the Basin. That promise materialized in the construction of the Lada Dam and a number of boreholes in the region. Sequel to the approval of the project by the Commission's Committee on water resources, the Spanish Government returned in April 1975 to the Commission's Headquarters in Ndjamen and deposited \$200,000.00 in one of the Commissions' account for the project. By May, 1975, the dam was completed under the supervision of the Commission's Hydrogeologist, who worked day and night to see to the success of the project. The Spanish Government built four boreholes, a dam and a canal (Lake Chad Basin Commission, 1975:19).

During the 20th session of the Lake Chad Basin Commission held in N'Djamena from 8th-11th December, 1975, the Commission pleaded for financial aid from the UNDP for the construction of dormitories and classrooms for the Commission's Fishery Development Centre. The meeting advocated for the rise of Fishery Development Centre around the lake. Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon will have their own fishery development centres within their sphere of influence on the Lake Chad. The centres were initially funded and sponsored by the UNDP and FAO. The USAID Representative to the Lake Chad Basin Commission in 1975 confirmed that his agency was prepared to release the promised grant of \$1 million United States for the final engineering design of the roads within the Lake Chad Basin, including the river crossing (1975, p.40). it should be noted that through the support of Swiss aids, three stores were

built in the Agricultural Development Centre of Kousseri, Koundoul and Diffa. In 1974, the UNDP approved \$715,909.00 for well drilling projects around the Conventional Basin of the Lake Chad (Lake Chad Basin Commission, 1975:18). In 1972, the UNDP approved the sum of \$250,000 that was used in setting up fishery centres at Gortogol.

The role of the United Nations' agencies was not only positive and progressive; the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) also constituted a major challenge towards the development of the manifest destiny of the Lake Chad Basin. For instance, in 1974, FAO sent a large number of candidates for the vacant position at the Commission. "In accordance with the terms of their own letter, we selected a good number from their list and requested that they be recruited early. That was all we heard of the matter for six months, when they proposed entirely new candidates, totally ignoring our previous choices" (Lake Chad Basin Commission, 1975:19-20). It could therefore be argued that FAO was not interested in supporting the LCBC with the requisite human resources that they need for their transformation. Rather, FAO was interested in undermining human resource efficiency and output of the Commission by the above action. Evidence from the Commission went on to reveal that:

We can go on enumerating instances of impediments which the FAO systematically put in the way of our programme implementation efforts over the years... For what on earth makes people think that we should agree with them on what represents the best solution to the major development problems of the world; that we should share FAO's views on what constitutes development or what may be classified as economic aids; or what should be the solution to the world's population problem or the role which mechanization should play in bringing development to the poorer parts of the world. Living, as we do in one of these parts, I believe we should know what is good for it and we should continue to resist any attempt to tele-guide our actions and orientations. This is a sacred mission (Lake Chad Basin Commission, 1975:19-20).

The Commission also expanded the feeder canal, which was completed by the first week of July, 1975. The dam measures 83 metres long and 22 metres wide at the base as well as 5 metres high. The canal on the other hands measures 200 metres long. At the end of the construction, the Diffa Dam was holding 4 million cubic metrics of fresh water that was over sufficient to irrigate over 300 hectares of land, all the year round. The implication is that the farming families of Diffa and Lada had extended their fishing occupation into wider level of farming throughout the farming season within the year. The Spanish aid was the first aid to the Commission that was entrusted wholly under the control of the Executive Secretariat, without the characteristic imperial attachments that goes with foreign aids and grants (Shaib, 1975). Sequel to the Spanish financial support, the Lake Chad Basin Commission began to construct boreholes proposed for irrigation at the Agricultural Centre in Diffa. They include four boreholes in Diffa and two in Bosso that were completed by march 1976. The Canadian Government within the same period construction of twenty-nine cemented wells planned for the Assale/ Serbewel project. Nineteen, out of the twenty nine cemented wells were constructed from the fund by FAC. The wells supply an average of 2.8 cubic metres of water per hour to the Animal Husbandry Division of the Commission. With the above funds and aids, the Lake Chad Basin Commission brought an additional 520 acres under its irrigation scheme in Kousseri, Koundoul and Diffa.

Consequently, the above programs and initiatives brought the number of cultivated area to 1000 acres of land. This farming acres of land are distributed across major member states of the Commission. Koundoul, Chad had 500 acres, out of which 320 acres were sustained through irrigation. Over two hundred trained farmers were settled there to cultivate rice, cotton, sorghum, mellons, chillies, and strawberries. At the peak of the farm seasons, "the more diligent of our trainee farmers had yields as high as 5 tons of rice per hectare, 3 tons of cotton per hectare and 10 tons of mellon per hectare. This level of productivity represents 130,000 francs CFA per annum for cereals and about 400,000 francs CFA for melons and that in a region where income per capita is less than 65,000 francs CFA. Koundoul employed 400 people in its peak" (Shaib, 1975:6). Another farming area that was expanded by the irrigation activities sponsored by foreign donors was Kousseri. Kousseri in Cameroon had over 150 hectares under irrigation. The average production was about 3 tons per hectare of rice. There is also the Diffa farm where about 180 acres of land were cultivated.

Again, Chibundu (2004) wrote that LCBC members signed a draft convention on the harmonization of regulation concerning the flora and fauna of the Chad Basin. Similarly, since the acceptance of Central African Republic into the LCBC; the Inter-Basin Water Transfer Project from the Quibangui River (in Central African Republic) into the Lake Chad has started. The Primary aim is to "recharge" the eco-system and the water level at large. Nigeria offered \$2.5million (out of the \$5million proposed) for the feasibility studies (LCBC, nd). President Olusegun Obasanjo disclosed the payment on 21st June, 2004 "in Abuja at the opening ceremony of the 51st Session of the Council of Ministers of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)" (Taiwo, 2004:1).

It should be noted that the whole aid as presented above have one central goal, which is the strengthening of the African maritime resources. However, the vast nature of these maritime resources as well as the lack of sustainable maritime security in Africa has continuously undermined the continent's quest to attain its aqua-resource development.

Discussing the Exploration of African Maritime Resources and Fish Security

This exploitation of maritime resources includes the exploitation of both living marine organisms, and also of non-

living resources, as well as many intangible resources. For instance, while the resources that regenerate quickly, such as fish, shellfish and algae, can be exploited sustainably, provided that their habitats are secure and harvesting is regulated to ensure that some species are retained for reproduction. On the other hands, mineral and energy resources are formed over millions of years in a limited quantity and the process of equitable exploitation must be considered. Unfortunately, that is not the case in many African countries. These exploitation negatively affects the economic status of African countries, which by extension undermines the rule of law in many countries where there is both the legal and illegal competition for maritime resource exploitation (Ani, Oko Otu & Ojakorotu 2021).

The problematic competition for such maritime resource exploitation have led to threats of war between Egypt and Ethiopia, while sending Nigeria and Cameroon to the Hague for jurisdiction on the rights to the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula. It is these problematic influence of maritime resource exploitation and the place of law in managing it that is the focus of this part of the study. For instance, the Chinese National Fishing Corporation (CNFC) are increasingly undermining the African aqua-rights through their illegal fishing activities. The Chinese Distant Water Fishing (DWF) companies have been implicated in Senegal, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Ghana over documented cases of illegal fishing from 2000 to 2014 (Greenpeace, ND). These Chinese fishing companies engage in excessive fishing within the African maritime areas. They also form alliance with indigenous middlemen, who attend to their numerous needs quickly and they are in return given different forms of rewards by the Chinese fish explorers thereby giving the foreigners unauthorised fishing rights.

The unauthorized and unregulated exploitation of marine resources is a significant problem that is jeopardizing the African ecosystems, food security, and livelihoods around the continent. Africa is a protein-hungry planet because it faces an unprecedented problem of over-exploitation of marine fish resources that hitherto supplied the protein needs of the rural dwellers. 85% of all commercial fish stocks are now exploited to their existential limits or beyond in many African countries due to the intervention of foreign fishermen that uses mechanized fishing strategies as against the traditional fishing style.

Fishing activities that are inconsistent with domestic or international laws has continued to be witnessed in many parts of Africa. The illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing distorts the growth and maturity of fishes as well as create unhealthy competition, jeopardizing coastal communities, increasing tax evasion, and is generally associated with trans-national crime. The role of oil multinational corporations (MNCs) in resource exploitation within the African maritime areas and its wider effect on the immediate onshore environment cannot be over-estimated. The alliance between the Nigerian Government and the oil multinational corporations led to the pollution of the Ogoni and wider creeks of the Niger Delta in Nigeria. The negative aggregate effect was resource curse as farmers lost their farms, fish in the ocean were poisoned, communities resisted the activities of multinationals and that led to the death of many people in their large numbers. This human death is in addition to the widespread poisoning of the maritime areas (Ani & Uwizeyimana, 2021; Ani, Ojakorotu & Uwizeyimana, 2019). The same was the experience in Cabinda, Angola; where the gift of oil became a major source of conflict and threat to national development.

Furthermore, Nigeria and Cameroon ended up in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), Hague as they competed over the land and its inherent rich oil deposits in Bakassi Peninsula. That crisis led to widespread loss of lives and properties as well as massive pollution of the aquatic environment leading to the loss of fishes in the Peninsula. The recent exploration of oil in Chad has started recording oil pollution and the reaction of government by penalizing the Chinese multinational corporation. The negative effect of these oil exploitation is that the green economy turns into a polluted marine economy. The pollution of the aqua-culture in turn pollutes the aqua-resources consumed by man and the long run effect is the manifestation of all manners of diseases that undermine the manifest destiny of men and women living in the affected maritime environment in Africa.

The unlawful over exploitation of living resources or non-living maritime resources has negative impact on Africa. The role of international trade in influencing maritime resource and fishing exploitation in Africa cannot be neglected. It is the activities of international multinational corporations that influences unlimited fishing and oil exploration in Africa (Okekeke-Ogbuafor, Gray, Ani, & Stead 2023; Ani, & Ojakorotu 2018). The exploitation of oil in many African states and the dynamics of maritime insecurity has led to all manners of trade on the African coastal waters. It has even led to the adoption of "free on board" (FOB) contracts that forces the seller to pay the additional price of ensuring the safety of goods until they pass the ship's rail into the hands of the buyer. The English legal system maintain that FOB contracts keep changing as found in the case of *Pyrene Co Ltd v Scindia Navigation Co Ltd* (1954). The safety of African maritime resource has been badly undermined by the terrorists operating in the Gulf of Guinea and other forms of insecurity.

The Gulf of Aden is generally associated with the activities of terrorists and sea pirates. The Gulf of Guinea is also a major shipping destination when compared to the Gulf of Aden, which is a maritime transit area. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea explained piracy as the facilitation or acts of violence or hostage taking of crew members and passengers of a ship or aircraft within or outside the territorial waters of a state. The activities of sea pirates threatens navigation safety across the Gulf of Guinea. It also affects many fishing vessels as many are captured and their contents

sometimes looted by the pirates. The activities of these pirates, causes mass economic losses in the region. In only 2016, there were over fifty five attempted cases of piracy in West Africa. In the Niger Delta, a combination of the Niger Delta militants and other criminal gangs on the high sea regularly attacks oil-loaded vessels and even sell their stolen cargo. Chatham House, London maintains that such attacks from criminal gangs forces Nigeria to lose about USD 1 billion per year in revenue. From 2013, companies began to take additional steps in order to secure their ships and cargo off the waters of Nigeria, Togo and Somalia.

South Africa's maritime zones, including its territorial waters, exclusive economic zone and continental shelf claims to cover approximately 1.26 million square nautical miles. Through these waters, ships bear cargo that sustains the regional economy through both imports and exports. South Africa's Ministers of Defense has noted that the country's ports annually play host to 12,000 ships that carry 200 million tons of freight being imported and exported. Given the extremely large distances involved, policing South Africa's oceans currently poses a significant challenge to the South African Navy and other government departments tasked with patrolling and securing the country's waters and ports entry. As the level of economic activity at sea grows to match that envisioned by the Oceans Economy Initiative, it is a certainty that the level of illegal activity such as illegal fishing, abalone poaching, drug and human trafficking, hijacking and other crimes at sea including piracy is growing.

Another form of resource threat faced by the African maritime and fishing areas is the challenge of exploring the aqua-area for dams, irrigation and other forms of hydro-power generation. In the Nile River Basin, the upstream countries led by Ethiopia and the downstream states that has Egypt as their hegemonic leader, have been facing years of violent communication over the rights to explore the Nile for hydro-power and irrigation projects. At the peak of their crisis, Egypt threatened to go to war against Ethiopia. On the other hands, the ambitious dam projects by Egypt has led to massive loss of lives. There was massive loss of arable land due to landslides in Ethiopia, which happened in Tekeze during the construction of the Tekeze hydroelectric dam. Similarly, the construction of the Merowe reservoir of about 174 kilometres led to the displacement of over 50,000 people from the fertile Nile Valley to arid desert locations.. The Kajbar Dam project led to the displacement of 10,000 persons. The Gibe III project was also estimated to have 'condemned' half a million people into migration, hunger, conflict and vulnerable lifestyle.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The unlawful exploitation of maritime resources in Africa has manifested in the excessive oil exploitation and environmental damages in Nigerian Niger Delta, Cabinda region of Angola and Chad. It has led to massive loss of life in the Nile River Basin due to the competition over the hydro-power projects by Egypt and Ethiopia. The criminal activities in the Gulf of Eden has remained problematic to the development of the African fishing industry. However, the study maintains that unregulated exploitation of maritime resources is a serious crime and its affects both the economy of African states and the rural people. The study used specific examples from African states to present the multiple dangers of fishing and maritime exploitation on the African continent. There are national and international instruments from the United Nations that are fundamental for the management of these problem in Africa.

The UN Resolutions 2011 of 2018, 2019 and 2012 had the world powers coming up with strategies to tackle piracy and insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea. This is because there is need to prevent and eliminate unlawful and unreported exploitation of fish and other marine resources in Africa. That can be achieved by placing the activities of illegal groups before the International Criminal Court of Justice in Hague for determination and prompt punishment. While China have over the years engaged in uncontrolled exploitation African aqua-resources, the ICJ judgement will help to checkmate its activities. African States must also use their funds in developing technological infrastructure and equipment's that would be used to monitor and regulate crimes and over-exploitation that occur in the countries maritime zones.

There is the need to manage the relationship between national boundaries and national interest across many other African States, especially in relation to maritime areas where people from two or more countries engage in fishing. This has become important because there is no certainty and predictability of international transactions when there is conflict of laws. The international Lex mercatoria which contains the legal framework for international trade include norms that could be explored to promote ethical trade, should be promoted in order to ensure the entrenchment of due process in African maritime resource exploitation. It would be recalled that the excessive exploitation of maritime resources in Africa is driven by activities of criminals and pirates, especially in the Gulf of Guinea. Thus, there is need for strong counter-piracy and the arraignment of those caught in such criminal operation in competent national, regional and international courts.

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