

# Drying African lakes pose health threat

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A U.N. report this week warns of unprecedented deterioration of Africa's 677 largest lakes, with Lake Victoria dropping three feet during the past decade.

Rapidly increasing populations, climate change, deforestation, poor farming methods and pollution are blamed for the problem, the Times of London reported.

Although Lake Victoria is the source of the White Nile, of most concern is the Volta river basin in West Africa, which is shared by Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mali and Togo, and where resources are now at the breaking point, the Times said.

Former German Environment Minister Klaus Töpfer, now executive director of the U.N. Environmental Program, presented the report during the 11th annual World Lakes Conference, being held this week in Nairobi.

The report presents past and current satellite pictures to demonstrate the increasing dangers to African lakes, which contain about 7,200 cubic miles of water -- the largest volume on any continent.

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