



Status of Natural Resource Management in Uganda, the efforts by CSOs, Challenges and Opportunities for collaboration and partnership with the Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources to advance to advance sustainable Management of Natural Resources.

Presented during the **Half-day Meeting with the Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources Committee** held on **1st August 2019** at Imperial Royal Hotel, Organized by **UWASNET**.

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1) Key Messages

- A. There are **several initiatives by the Government of Uganda, Development Partners, Civil Society and Private sector** to conserve, sustainably manage and addressing Water and Environment challenges at different scales.
- B. **Despite this unfortunately, the statics of the status of the Water and Environment in Uganda are appalling, thus clear negative trends for the status of forests, wetlands,...**
- C. The **projected trends in a Business as Usual Scenario has serious future implications for Citizen's survival, sustainable development and National transition into middle income status.**
- D. The **Increasing population pressure excerpts more pressure on the Water and Environment resources.**
- E. **Several sectors (Agriculture, Energy, Industry, Health, ...) depend on the Water and Environment for products and services.**
- F. The **inadequate investment in the Water and Environment sector (now at 4% of the total national budget) resulted into several National Development Plan II targets not being adequately delivered upon by the respective Ministries, Departments and Authorities.**
- G. There are **several opportunities in the Water and Environment Sector** that should be tapped into.
- H. The **Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; the National Planning Authority and Development Partners reflect and re-think the model/formulae applied for financial allocation to the Water and Environment sector**, among other priority sectors. Otherwise, the **National Development Plan III targets Will NOT BE ACHIEVED!** Thus, **additional resources should be allocated to the Water and Environment Sector.**
- I. There is need for **tapping into the demographic dividend** through proactive targeting for **effective participation, involvement and benefits to Youth** from Water and Environment management initiatives.

2) Status of Natural Resource Management in Uganda – key highlights

2.1 Uganda Country Context – Key statistics

- **Population annual growth rate** in Uganda is **3.3%**, thus Uganda is ranked **32nd globally in 2018** and is estimated at **45 and 61 million Ugandans currently/now and by 2030**, respectively. *This means high/increasing demand for environmental products and services = increased pressure on environment*
- Uganda's current forest cover stands at **9% reducing from 24% as it was in 1999** (Sector performance report by the MWE 2018). Its not surprising as the **annual forest loss is 250,000 Ha** (MWE, 2016).
- Wetlands national coverage has reduced from **13% in 1994** to about **8% by 2016**
- **By end of 2018, 28% of the population** accessed electricity.
- **Poverty** level is at **27%**, up from 19.7% in 2012/2013 (Uganda National Household Survey 2016/17)
- **Very low per capita energy consumption in the world with 215 kWh per capita per year** (Sub-Saharan Africa's average: **552 kWh per capita**, World average: **2,975 per capita**) (Energypidia, 2019).
- **High levels of unemployment** especially **youth unemployment 78%** in 2012/13 and 66% in 2015;
- **High income inequalities, regional imbalances, gender disparities**
- **Vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change and external shocks;**
- **Decreased potential for economic growth (3.9% in last two years)**, below the **Vision 2040 & NDP II** targets;
- Uganda has **16 cubic kilometers of renewable water** and **annual per capital consumption of 2,800 cubic meters**
- **The cost of Water Treatment has increased 4 times in the last 10 years due to increased dosage of chemicals used in treatment of increasing poor water quality due to pollution.**

2) Status of Natural Resource Management in Uganda – key highlights

2.2 Key responses and initiatives by the Government and Partners:

1. Commitments made in several multi-lateral agreements of the United Nations *e.g. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; United Nations Convention on Biodiversity; United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; The Bonn Challenge; Nationally Determined Contributions;*
2. Commitments made by Government in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals;
3. National Vision – Vision 2040;
4. National sector policies and legislative frameworks – related policy and legislative reviews by the Cabinet and Parliament;
5. National Development Planning (NDP) frameworks – now NDP III being developed;
6. Sector Development/Investment Plans for Ministries, Departments and Authorities;
7. Strategies to implement various policy commitments through structured programs and projects;
8. Regular planning, budgeting and approvals by Parliament;
9. 5-years District Development plan;
10. Country strategies and related programs for various Development Partners;
11. Strategic plans and related programs/projects for Civil Society and Networks;

2.3) Key emerging issues in the ENR sub-sector

i) Several ENR policies and laws are under review to address emerging issues. Some of these include: *Wetlands policy/bill; Forestry policy & law; Energy policies/laws (Energy, Renewable energy, Nuclear policy, ..*

ii) Sustainable Water access & utilization – *under the current climate variability/change and increased demands for water for domestic use; production (agriculture/irrigation; Oil exploration activities; Industrial development;..*

iii) Balancing environmental management and development

- Several Urban forests at risk of conversion due to pressure from industrialization and urbanization;*
- High encroachment and conversion of wetlands in different parts of the country e.g. Lwela wetlands converted for rice production*
- Oil exploration and development in the Albertine rift;*
- Proposed degazettement of part of Bugoma Central Forest Reserve for sugarcane production;*
- Conversion of Murchison falls for hydro-power generation;*

iv) Technology, Innovation Development & Transfer for advancing climate change adaptation and mitigation across sectors– **Need to prioritize the research needs and advance appropriate investments**

2.4) Key emerging issues in the ENR sub-sector

v) *A large proportion of Uganda (about 94%) still depending on biomass (using rudimentary techniques) for their energy needs. Per capita energy use still very low and hence high energy poverty!*

vi) **Uganda's National Forest Stewardship Standard** was approved by the Forest Stewardship Council. Thus, being the 1st & 8th FSC National Forest Stewardship Standard in Africa and Globally, respectively. Thus, present an opportunity of promoting responsible forest management through forest certification.

vii) **Limited financing for investment in Environment and Natural Resources sector.** This is a major challenge which compromises service delivery in the sub-sector. Furthermore, it results in weak ENR policy implementation and law enforcement at all levels.

viii) **Increasing influx of refugees** greatly impacting on the environment and natural resources in the host communities. This is largely due to high demands for energy *i.e. fuel/charcoal, fire wood; building materials; water.* Situation is worsened because often the preparedness by host communities is inadequate. **A comprehensive National Refugee Response Plan** developed, but requires adequate resources allocation for implementation.

ix) **Increased incidence of climate change impacts** yet there is limited investment in preparedness and weak adaptation capacity at community levels.

2.5) Key emerging issues in the ENR sub-sector

- x) Development of Natural Resource based enterprises value chains for community livelihood improvement and environment and natural resource restoration in landscapes and catchments. For example: Shear nut butter, Apiary/bee keeping, tourism,*
- xi) Waste to energy generation to contribute to energy demands in the cities to deliver sustainable cities*
- xii) Fast-tracking the Climate Change bill into law to support enforcement of the climate change policy aspirations – commitments and strategies*
- xii) Advancing catchment and landscape management approaches for sustainable ENR management within the 4 water management zones and the 7 forest landscapes across the country. This will improve coordination among state & Non-state actors*
- xiii) The National Development Plan III is being developed. Its focusing on industrialization as an engine for development using a 1 program/project approach, landscape/catchment management approach; Natural resource based value chain approach. It requires a change of attitude & mindset among stakeholders.*
- xiv) Available International funding for ENR and climate change (Green Climate Funds, Adaptation Funds, Global Environment Facility,...) to tap into – but it requires to build a requisite technical and institutional capacity for resource mobilization.*



3) The efforts by CSOs,

3.1 The ENR-CSO Networks efforts since 2009 to date are as follows:

- a. **Improving coordination and reporting** – to Government through the respective Ministries i.e. Water and Environment; Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries & Fisheries; ...
- b. **Advancing structured evidence-based policy engagement to influence policy formulation and implementation** at the national and local levels;
- c. **Targeted research for generation of information and facts** to inform alternative recommendations;
- d. **Contribution to environment restoration and community livelihoods improvements** within forest landscapes and water management zones;
- e. **Issue based targeted area awareness creation** (*forestry, wetlands, climate change, renewable energy, oil and gas, green growth...*);
- f. **Targeted technical capacity building** for members of the network and the community;
- g. **Advancing structured collaboration/partnership with strategic partners**;
- h. **Review/development of the Network strategic plan** – now have a **10 years** strategic Plan;
- i. **Membership mobilization, growth & outreach** – **50 members, 6 sub-regional platforms and national levels engagements & district based engagements in over 60 districts across the country**

3.2) Key achievements of the Network achievements over the years

(i) Considering the Network members continuous participation in Annual Joint Sector Review since 2009 to-date, the Network has influenced some decisions and policy implementation at the national and local level.

E.g. Annual undertaking and Agreed actions made during the annual JSR for the Water and Environment Sector as Government of Uganda commitments to be delivered upon by the end of the financial year. Several recommendations by the ENR-CSO network which have been adopted within the annual undertakings are available in the various ENR-CSOs annual consolidated performance reports and position papers published since 2011 to date.

3.2) Key achievements of the Network achievements over the years

(ii) Increased participation and use of policy engagement spaces at different levels e.g. in the annual Joint ENR Sector Review over the period the number has increased from 3 including (Environmental Alert, IUCN and ACODE) in 2008 to an average of 20 CSOs representatives every year to date. Besides, even spaces at the local government level (e.g. Technical Planning Committees, District Council) are being utilized through engagements coordinated by the district coalitions on environment and natural resources.

(iii) Published ENR-CSOs annual performance reports and Positions over the years, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018. The former is published as a chapter in the annual sector performance report for Water and Environment.

3.2) Key achievements of the Network achievements over the years

(iv) **Increased recognition and request by duty bearers for ENR-CSO Network's input/contribution** in various policy making processes (e.g. Input into the National Development Plan II; Review/development of the National Forest Plan, 2012-2022; Input into the Forest Investment plan and the Strategic Program for Climate Resilience; Representation of the network on key Government of Uganda led strategic initiatives/committees).

(v) Establishment and operationalization of **district environment coalitions** in selected districts in the Albertine rift (including: *Bulisa, Hoima, Masindi, Kabalore, Kiryandongo*) and **6 sub-regional platforms** across the country. This has increased presence of the Network at the Local level and its involvement in policy implementation at district level to influence policy and practice change for sustainable environment management. Besides, this as well facilitates linkage of the local environment issues into the national agenda for the betterment of the sector through informed decision making by the duty bearers.

3.2) Key achievements of the Network achievements over the years

(vi) Increased collaboration among members of the network through joint planning and implementation of ENR programs and projects to address specific issues in the environment and natural resources sub-Sector in different parts of the country.

(vii) **Promoted and supported mainstreaming of climate change in local government development planning and implementation.** Thus, members of the network (i.e. Environmental Alert, Kulika Uganda, RUCID, EMLI, VEDCO and ARUWE) facilitated stakeholder engagements that resulted in the establishment of operational district Climate Change Task Forces (in *Mubende, Nakasongola, Kiboga, Luweero, Nakaseke and Ssembabule*, respectively) that are charged with a key role of influencing the incorporation of climate and natural resource agenda into district budgets and planning process.

3.3) Key lessons learnt

- a. **The strength of the network lies in its members.** Hence, there are several opportunities within the members, which should be harnessed and leveraged to contribute towards achievement of the shared goals and aspirations of the respective members through the network as a delivery mechanism;
- b. **With effective coordination and unity among the network's members,** a lot can be achieved through structured engagements targeted towards achievement of shared agenda. This provides motivation for attracting external support from development partners;
- c. **The active participation of the respective governance structures of the network** based on their mandates, roles and responsibilities enables the network to keep alive and relevant. This should be upheld to keep the networks focus given its vision and mission statements.
- d. **The district coalitions and sub-regional platforms on environment and natural resources** provide space for leaders to openly voice their concerns and interests in the management and use of environment resources.

4.0) Challenges & Opportunities for collaboration and partnership with the Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources to advance to advance sustainable Management of Natural Resources.

4.1 Opportunities

- *Structured engagement with the committee for inputs into the ongoing ENR legislative reviews e.g. Climate change bill, wetlands bill, forestry bill, energy bill,...*
- *Structured engagement with the committee for inputs into the annual national planning and budgeting process*
- *Regular sharing of information and emerging issues on ENR with the committee*
- *.....*

4.2) Challenges

- a. Adhoc engagement with the committee on Natural Resources;*
- b. Lack of a clear and structured engagement mechanism with the committee on Natural Resources;*
- c. Limited engagement with the Parliamentary Committee on natural Resources;*
- d.*



5) About the ENR-CSO Network

- Founded in **2009**, the **ENR-CSO Network** is a **semi-formal network** whose **Vision** is, *'Uganda's natural environment providing goods and services, on sustainable basis, for national socio-economic development.'*
- **Mission:** *'To Mobilize CSOs to effectively promote good governance, effective management and sustainable utilization of Uganda's natural resources.'*

Objectives of the ENR-CSO Network

- The ENR-CSO Network has three major objectives:*
 - Proactively influence conservation and development policies and programmes for good governance, effective management and sustainable utilization of Uganda's environmental resources.*
 - Build a credible and recognized Network within the Environment and Natural Resources Sector.*
 - Strengthen ENR-CSO Network and members' capacity to implement the Mission of the ENR-CSO Network.*
- The **ENR-CSO Network Secretariat** is hosted at **Environmental Alert**.
 - Further information is available at: <http://enr-cso.org/>



6). About Environmental Alert

Environmental Alert was founded in 1988 and is officially registered Non Government Organization with board. Thus, in 2018 – EA made 30 years of contribution to food security and sustainable environment and natural resources management in Uganda.

Environmental Alert is a *1st prize winner of the Energy globe award* for environmental sustainability- 2005 under the category, earth.

Environmental Alert is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and a Member of The IUCN National Committee for Uganda.

Environmental Alert envisions, *‘Resilient and dignified communities, managing their environment and natural resources sustainably.’*

Environmental Alert’s mission is to, *‘Contribute to improved livelihoods of vulnerable communities by Enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainable natural resources management.’*

Further information about Environmental Alert is available at: <http://envalert.org/>

Environmental Alert as a Secretariat mobilizes and coordinates 250 CSOs/CBOs for joint action engagement at national and local levels through the various CSO Networks

Environmental Alert hosts Secretariat for following networks:

- a) The Network for Civil Society Organizations in Environment & Natural Resources Sector (ENR-CSO Network) <http://enr-cso.org/> ;
- b) Uganda Forestry Working Group <http://ufwg.envalert.org/>;
- c) The Standards Development Group; and
- d) Promoting Local Innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resources management (PROLINNOVA-Uganda Network) <http://www.prolinnova.net/uganda>.
- e) National Renewable Energy CSO network

Thank you for listening. For God and my County.





Thank you for listening!!

Asante sana!!