

and initiate the process for development of the National Climate Change Act;

- For Departments within the Directorate of Environment and the autonomous institutions attached to it, the Government should proportionately increase funding within the respective votes, that measures with the mandates of the institutions;
- Demarcation of wetlands and forest reserves has been a major undertaking for government for the last 4 years but actual demarcation has not been fully effected due to a number of technical, social and institutional factors. The Government should avail the necessary financial resources in order for mandated institutions to be able to open wetland and forest reserve boundaries and abate further gross degradation of wetlands, especially those in urban areas;
- The nullification of all land titles in wetlands issued less than 10 years ago was welcomed by a wider layer of stakeholders as a big step in abating further degradation of the remaining wetlands. The ENR-CSO Network urge government to find resources to enforce the nullification of the titles and consequently evict the concerned parties. In addition, the Government is encouraged to nullify land titles in forest reserves too whilst insulating the process against corruption;
- There is an ongoing review process for the National Environment Act and the National Environment Management Policy. The Government should cease this opportunity to clarify the mandates of the many institutions

in the sector (NEMA, WMD, NFA, UWA, UNMA) to avoid future contests between institutions that would rather be collaborating to manage the country's natural capital;

- Government should identify additional financial resources, adequate logistical facilitation and additional staffing to the Environment Protection Police Force so that it can effectively carry out its mandate;
- The ENR sub-sector lacks information to guide its action. Government should allocate adequate financial resources to facilitate the information gathering process and production of annual state of wetlands report, state of forests report to inform decision making in the sub-sector.

**In order to attain the above recommendations, the sub-sector actors should enhance their professionalism to improve on the image of the sub-sector, develop mechanisms for generating and motivating political and galvanise non-traditional funding (such as cooperate social responsibility) to support the sub-sector.**

In conclusion, the Civil Society Organizations in the ENR sub-sector pledge to continue partnering with the Ministry of Water and Environment to deliver development in the sector and be part of the recommendations to develop a clear and effective roadmap towards improved financing and governance of the sub-sector and ensure the implementation of the recommendations and undertakings for the FY 2014/2015.

#### About the ENR-CSO Network

The ENR-CSO Network in Uganda was founded in 2009 as a loose network with a diverse membership of CSOs in environment and natural resources operating at national and sub-national levels. Since then the Secretariat of the ENR-CSO Network is hosted at Environmental Alert.

**Vision:** The Vision of ENR-CSO Network is, 'Uganda's natural environment providing goods and services,

on sustainable basis, for national socio-economic development.'

**Mission:** The Mission of ENR-CSO Network is to, 'Mobilize CSOs to effectively promote good governance, effective management and sustainable utilization of Uganda's natural resources.'

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This position paper was produced by the ENR-CSO Network in partnership with the Forest Resources Sector Transparency Program coordinated by Care International in Uganda



**'Call to Government of Uganda to improve financing of the environment sub-sector in order to secure our environment, wetlands and forests.'**

### The CSOs' position paper

## WATER AND ENVIRONMENT JOINT SECTOR REVIEW 2013/2014



*Escalating forest degradation in a private forestry in Kyebando Sub-county in Kibaale district. Photo by WWF.*

Over 90% of the Ugandan population directly or indirectly depends on products and services from environment and natural resources (ENR). Currently ENR contribute over 50% of the country's gross domestic product and the sector contributes more than 92% of energy requirements for the country (National Forest Plan, 2013) ENR form a major source of employment to millions of Ugandans (both formal and informal) and are a key source of raw materials for industries. They as well contribute towards food security, revenue generation and foreign exchange earnings through tourism.

*Over 90% of the Ugandan population directly or indirectly depends on products and services from environment and natural resources*

Currently, the trend is that natural resources (and their management) continue to deteriorate in quality and quantity, affecting the standard livelihood Ugandans. The poor are becoming poorer as environment conditions become severe due to impacts of climate variability which, in part, are a result of mismanagement and/or maladministration of natural resources. Several parts of the country are increasingly becoming food, water and energy. Besides, other forms of vulnerability are on a rise. The ENR per capita ratio is getting lower every other year as levels of encroachment continue to escalate and remain unchecked.



*Nansubuga Hill located within the Mabamba Ramsar site Wetland catchment in Kasanje, Wakiso district. Photo by Environmental Alert.*

The 5 year National Development Plan (NDP 1) that is remaining with one year of implementation, prioritized the promotion of sustainable use of the environment and natural resources for the benefit of the population. The NDP 1 classified environment and natural resources among the primary growth sectors that directly produce goods and services to support development. Unfortunately, the current state of our environment and natural resources does not measure up to the provisions and aspirations of the population as expounded in the NDP 1. This is mainly due to the low funding of the Environment and Natural Resources sub-sector. Consequently, there is deteriorating governance of the ENR sub-sector characterized in inadequate management regimes, poor enforcement and compliance level and involvement of communities in the governance and management of the

country's environment and natural resources. This is in spite of the abundance of good policies and laws for sustainable natural resources management in the country.

It is for these reasons that the Network of Civil Society Organizations in the Environment and Natural Resources sub-sector (ENR-CSO Network) is making a case for improving financing of the ENR sub-sector in order to secure our environment, wetlands and forests. Furthermore, to popularize the link between ENR and food security. Reminding the civic and political leadership of the existing constitutional, policy, ministerial commitments and undertakings, in particular for the financial year (FY) 2013/2014 Joint Sector Review (JSR) Agreed Undertakings which among others were to:

- a) Collect and verify baseline data for ENR sub-sector performance measurement framework by the end of the FY 2013/14, and put in place a system for analysis and quality assurance and update it by the end of the FY 2014/15.

Whereas baseline data collection for the Environment and Natural Resources Performance Measurement

Framework and related indicators has been piloted at sector institutions (Wetlands Management Department (WMD), National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Department of Meteorology and some Local Governments), it still remains clear that there is a lack of information across the sector to guide and inform decision making in the management of environment and natural resources. The status quo is that adhoc decisions are taken which are not based on researched information and facts. Subsequently, the resultant deceptions in environment and natural resources management today.

- b) Complete demarcation of 6 new wetlands and commence the opening up boundaries of 3 local forest reserves/ finalize and implement the management framework

of these ecosystems by the end of FY 2013/14. Whereas there is commendable progress (based on the undertaking) resulting into the demarcation of 120 Km of 6 wetlands and over 113 Km of forest reserve boundary, it is still a public concern that boundary opening requires a lot of funding and that communities and government do not know boundaries for wetlands and forest reserves. This leads to uncontrollable encroachment, which undermines the integrity of the environment and natural resources.

- c) Operationalize the Oil Contingency Plan for the Albertine Rift Graben by the end of FY 2013 / 2014  
Despite the efforts to develop an Oil Contingency Plan and an Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA), the plea of the citizenry is to improve the governance of oil exploration and identify specific resources to support and enforce ecosystem restoration by oil exploration companies and interested community members to guard against future environmental disasters.
- d) Develop a pragmatic mechanism for enhancing and improving Local Governments' technical and financial capacities in ENR by the end of FY 2013/14  
Whereas over 60 District Environment Officers were trained in effective ENR planning management as well as resource mobilization for ENR Management at Local Government level, forestry and wetlands sub-sector have continued to be understaffed. This leads to high levels of encroachment in forests and wetlands. Despite existence of approved staffing structures for the Water and Environment Ministry, the Ministry of Public Services has acted sluggishly in the recruitment of the proposed positions to enhance the capacity of the ministry to execute its oversight functionality in ENR management.

The Tree fund as provided for in the National Tree Planting and Forest Act 2003 and approved by Cabinet has never been set up thereby denying the Country an institutional framework that would be dedicated to community mobilization and resources for tree growing in the country.

In the spirit of delivering development through partnership, 48 NGOs that are members of the ENR-CSO Network invested USD 6,549,951 in the sub-sector. These resources have been utilized to network and expand the negotiation space through meetings, workshops, awareness and communication initiative in support of the above undertakings. In addition, the network has promoted legal timber trade and forest certification as alternative approaches to ensure responsible forest management. The ENR-CSO Network also participated in the review of the National Environment Management Policy as well as the National Environment Act. Furthermore, the network engaged on governance issues of the sub-sector, particularly advocating for improved accountability, effectiveness in delivery of services. The ENR-

CSO Network promoted the use of information technology to curb illegalities, ecosystem restoration and farmer managed natural regeneration – a process involving growing of trees from stumps, roots and natural germinations in the wild.

The ENR-CSO Network acknowledges Government's achievements in the sub-sector. However, the following key performance challenges continuously hamper the securing of environment and natural resources service delivery and require urgent attention for subsequent sectoral planning and financing.

There is limited facilitation for the District Natural Resources Offices (forestry, environment, wetlands) yet they manage the decentralized natural resources on private land. Districts continue to miss out on Government funding through conditional grants and this has escalated natural resources degradation.

Despite the recent effort to nullify illegal titles in wetlands, there is increased partitioning of in wetlands and forest reserves because the district land boards have not been adequately facilitated to clarify the status of tenure and the respective ministry has equally failed to offer the much needed support of securing tenure of wetlands and forest reserves.

Despite the existence of the Environment Protection Police Force (EPPF), there is weak enforcement resulting into high encroachment levels in both wetlands and forest reserves. The EPPF remains a weak enforcement structure, lacks numerical capacity to protect environment and therefore can hardly deliver its mandate. Going forward, sector institutions will require resources to effectively execute their mandates. Overall the Directorate of Environment (and the departments there in such as the forest sector support department, the climate change department, the environment department) is underfunded. The autonomous bodies too (such as NEMA, NFA and Uganda National Meteorological Authority) are struggling to find resources to execute their mandate.

**The ENR-CSO Network therefore, recommends the following to address the above sub-sector challenges:**

- The implementation of the natural resources conditional grants for Local Governments from which each sub-sector (forestry, wetlands, environment and climate change) can draw resources using a vote calculated based on percentage should be expedited;
- For weather and climate change, the ENR-CSO Network urges Government to establish a vote function for Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA) to leapfrog its operations. In addition, the Government is urged to allocate adequate resources for implementation of the recently approved National Climate Change Policy