

A *Monthly* from the East African Sustainability Watch Network founded by Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD), Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) and SusWatch Kenya

Tanzania CSOs call for More Stakeholder Engagement in Review and Implementation of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)



Participants during the meeting in Dar. Photo: TaTEDO

On September 27, 2019, The Tanzania Traditional Energy Development and Environment Organisation (TaTEDO) organised a civil society coalition meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, that was attended by 21 participants composed of CSOs; and Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the sector of energy and climate change. The main objective of the meeting was to discuss and agree on joint policy recommendation to the respective government authorities regarding review and implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). It was organised as part of the East African Civil Society for Sustainable Energy & Climate Action (EASE-CA) Project

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are the main instruments put forward by countries to deliver on the promise of the Paris Agreement adopted on 12 December 2015. They constitute an articulation of governments' commitment to tackle climate change, including emissions mitigation pledges and adaptation related targets, that countries consider achievable through various actions and investments that align with development priorities. The Tanzania Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) was submitted in 2015, following a brief stakeholder consultation process coordinated by the VPO. In April 2018, Parliament voted unanimously to ratify the Paris Agreement. Hence, formally Tanzania joined the Paris Agreement in May 2018.

The review process for the NDCs and development of the implementation plan is at the final stage and is expected to be completed this year. However, during the civil society discussions, it emerged that none of those present in the room had been involved in the on-going review process. This limited engagement might be due to lack of an effective national framework to coordinate NDCs processes horizontally and vertically. Therefore, Tanzania CSOs called for more recognition and involvement of non-state actors such as CSOs and private sector in achieving the commitments under the NDCs and the Paris Agreement. As NDCs review processes need to follow a bottom-up approach, consultations with relevant stakeholders including non-state actors is important including understanding private sector aspirations and challenges for investment, in line with the objectives of the NDCs.

'Meaningful multi-stakeholder engagement in climate action has many benefits and is indispensable. Engaging with these stakeholders, understanding can be built for their priorities, expectations and concerns', emphasised Mary Swai from TaTEDO. CSOs also recommended increased awareness and knowledge on climate change and NDCs to communities at large. Hence, Tanzania's NDCs should be unpacked, simplified and translated to Swahili to enable community to understand and act accordingly.

The Paris Agreement entered into force in 2016 a year after adoption. In 2018 countries adopted the Paris Agreement Work Programme which fleshes out the details governing its implementation. In 2020, countries will put forward next round of updated NDCs as part of the regular five-year cycles to strengthen ambition as laid out in the Paris Agreement.

Nakaseke Calls for restoration of tree cover & degraded Nabiika Local Forest reserve



Participants during the awareness seminar in Nakaseke: Photo: JEEP

Joint Energy and Environment Projects (JEEP) is implementing local actions under the East African Civil Society for Sustainable Energy & Climate Action (EASE-CA) Project (that involves 5 other partners in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania). As part of the Project, JEEP carried out an awareness seminar for 33 district leaders in Nakaseke district. The objective of JEEP's work under the project is to empower poor, rural communities in three districts in Uganda (Nebbi - Parombo and Kucwiny sub counties, Nakasongola – Kasangombe sub county and Nakaseke – Nabisweera sub county), and in East Africa more generally, to get access to clean energy and improved livelihoods in an economic and climate friendly way, as well as to refine methods from previous projects to realise this.

Nakaseke District is made up of two ecological zones namely; the rangeland/ cattle corridor dominated by pastoralists and the southern crop based zone dominated by cultivators. The pastoral ecological zone covers more than three quarters of the District. It has a less population of human beings and a high population of animals.

zone is crop farming/ less than a quarter of southern part of the been covered by agriculture begun.

From the meeting, JEEP is very much welcome to Nakaseke because EASE-CA project objectives fit very much into what Nakaseke wants to realise for its environment.

The southern ecological cultivation zone, which is the total land area. The District is believed to have forests before farming/ This forms areas like

Semuto, Nakaseke, Kasangombe and large parts of Kapeeka, Kito and Kikamulo Sub-counties. This vegetation is typically composed of trees, thickets, shrubs and grasslands.

According to the District Environment Action Plan (Nakaseke DEAP, 2012), Nakaseke district is facing serious environmental challenges. These include; deforestation, soil erosion, lack of clean water, reduced soil fertility, vermin, land wrangles, poor sanitation, poor waste disposal & management, pollution, loitering animals, bush burning, poorly planned structural establishments, pits left behind after soil excavation. With regard to deforestation, the main cause is unsustainable charcoal production, large scale clearing of land for farm establishments and bush burning. The fact that charcoal production is a major contributor the district local revenue makes law enforcement and regulation difficult especially without full support of all stakeholders. It is alleged that charcoal burners/ producers come from as far as Kamuli, Iganga, Kaliro Mayuge, Jinja, Mukono and Kayunga district in central and eastern Uganda. These leave the area degraded and run back to their mother districts (Nakaseke DEAP, 2012).

During the awareness seminar, JEEP learnt about forest reserves that has been heavily encroached upon, for which Nakaseke district requested JEEP's support to restore one of them (Nabiika Local forest reserve in Kyamutakasa parish – Nakaseke sub county). From the meeting, JEEP is very much welcome to Nakaseke because EASE-CA project objectives fit very much into what Nakaseke wants to realise for its environment. The participants therefore called for increased community awareness and education about environment conservation alongside on-going development activities. There was concern about the increasing number of industries which are likely to impact on water and other natural resources. Hence, it was proposed that communities and project proponents in Nakaseke district should uphold existing laws and policies regarding environmental management.

As part of the EASE-CA project, JEEP plans awareness seminars in Nebbi and Nakasongola districts

Desertification Conference Flags out Land Governance and Tenure as It Launches a Roadmap for Scaling up the Africa-led Great Green Wall Initiative



UNCCD Chairperson – Sarah Kisolo at UNCCD COP14 in Delhi. Photo: S. Kisolo

The fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 14) held at Greater Noida Expo in New Delhi, India from 2nd – 13th September 2019, ended with a call on country parties to follow up the adopted decisions that included guidance on how to implement four thematic policy frameworks approved at the last UNCCD COP13, addressing gender mainstreaming, sand and dust storms, as well as desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) as drivers for migration. The COP 14 also agreed to include land governance and tenure as an emerging issue and a new thematic area under the Convention.

The Conference was opened by Sun Guoji, on behalf of COP 13 President Zhang Jianlong, Minister of State Forestry and Grassland Administration, who highlighted achievements since COP 13 and expressed China’s continued commitment to combating desertification by offering capacity-building opportunities for developing countries.

Many meetings were conducted and decisions were made by the COP. One of the central themes of the COP14 High-Level Segment emphasized building momentum towards a global movement on land restoration, and stressed the political management in handling land governance and tenure at local levels as the later leads to human and animal migration as well as civil conflicts within the various regions. Other initiatives launched at COP14 included: a Road Map for scaling up the Africa-led Great Green Wall Initiative to restore 100 million hectares of land and create 10 million green jobs by 2030.

CSOs were very active and contributed substantially in the activities of 13 Working Groups during COP14. They cooperated on five priorities that included: recognition by policy makers, financial institutions and others that community-led initiatives are contributing to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN); Land tenure security of communities in general, and of women, young people and vulnerable groups specifically must be secured through a COP14 decision on implementation of FAO’s Voluntary Tenure Guidelines; participation of civil society and especially women and youth groups throughout the decision-making processes regarding Land Degradation Neutrality target and National Drought Plans is crucial to guarantee sustainability; finance must be accessible and appropriate for civil society organizations supporting communities especially women and young people in achieving LDN and/or monitoring the implementation of LDN projects; transform our society so as to achieve greater sustainability and equity, especially gender equity.

As the COP14 host, Prime Minister of India - Narendra Modi announced his country’s commitment to enhance implementation of the UNCCD through, among other actions: establishing a centre of excellence to promote South-South exchange; raising its 2030 land restoration target from 21 million hectares to 26 million hectares; and taking into consideration land-based solutions for climate action and biodiversity conservation and the mutually supportive implementation of the three Rio conventions.

Following the Earth Summit, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 47/188 calling for the establishment of an Intergovernmental negotiating committee for the elaboration of a convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa. The UNCCD was adopted on 17 June 1994, entered into force on 26 December 1996, and currently has 197 parties.