

The LVEMP II Civil Society Watch E-bulletin

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

July 2017



Get Ready: Engage the Key Actors through Consultative Processes to Develop Uganda's Climate Change Law



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



Uganda has already witnessed some of the negative effects of climate change. These include severe water shortages, increased incidence of drought, reduced food and cash crop

production, reduced potential for hydropower development due to a reduction in rainfall, and damage to major road infrastructure due to the El Nino phenomenon.

Sadly, Uganda still lacks a substantive law that deals with climate change. Nevertheless, there are existing laws to address this challenge, but really not meant to directly respond to it. These include the National Environment Act (Cap 153 Laws of Uganda); and the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act, 2003. In view of this gap, a process to develop a comprehensive climate Change law that is harmonised with other related national laws, policies, strategies and international agreements (including the Paris Agreement) is now underway. According to the Ministry of Water and Environment, it is envisaged that this process will incorporate feedback from relevant public and private stakeholders including CSOs, Communities in climate change 'hotspots' (Bududa, Mbale, Kasese, the Cattle corridor among others); as well as deliberately reaching out to vulnerable social groups like small holder farmers, fisherfolk, People With Disabilities, Women, Youth and others.

In this regard the Climate Change Department's roadmap envisages stakeholder consultations across the country through Technical Working Group meetings, regional stakeholder workshops, consultative workshops for selected districts, private sector, CSOs, MPs (including the Natural Resources Committee / Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change, National Climate Change Advisory Committee, Water and Environment Sector Working Group, Permanent Secretaries Forum and the Policy Committee on Environment. This will lead to the final technical process (report writing) before the final Climate change bill is put before Parliament. But CSOs under the Climate Action Network are also gearing up to contribute to development of this important legislation by organising parallel consultations to supplement those by Government.

Ideally, the Climate change bill should go through 3 readings. In the first reading during plenary, the Minister of Water and Environment is expected to introduce the Climate change bill to Parliament - accompanied by a Certificate of Financial Implication issued by the Ministry of Finance. The Speaker will refer the Bill to the Committee on Natural Resources that is mandated by Parliament to oversee the activities and programmes of the Ministry of Water and Environment. This is currently chaired by Hon. Byarugaba Alex. In this Committee, the Bill will be scrutinized - specifically involving: inviting various stakeholders from civil society and government (including the Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change as a lobby group); reviewing relevant and related laws/documents; calling responsible Ministers. The committee will then write a report including proposed amendments. During the second reading, the Minister of Water and Environment is expected to move and justify a motion for second reading of the Climate Change Bill. Here the Natural Resources Committee chairperson will present a report on the Bill (as well as the minority report, if any). The Bill will be referred to the Committee of the Whole House (a committee composed of the whole body of MPs and chaired by the Speaker/Deputy Speaker. At this stage, The Committee of the Whole House approves and amends clauses and schedules of the Bill.

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After this, plenary will resume and the Minister of Water and Environment is expected to report the outcome of the Committee of the Whole House. Plenary will then vote for the Third Reading of the Climate Change Bill. Parliament Clerk's Office will then prepare copies of the authentication. A copy will be sent to the Office of the President for Assent. Once the Bill has been assented to (signed) by the President, it becomes a law and is published in the Government Gazette.

What you can do to contribute to this important process

1. **Actively participate** in the consultations organised by the Climate Change Department and those for CSOs by Climate Action Network, whenever called upon.
2. **Sensitize other citizens, Community members and groups** about this important process to enable them to provide useful input to the process when called upon
3. **Share your experiences and viewpoints directly with your Member of Parliament** to secure inclusion when the Parliamentary process begins
4. **Follow updates on the regional consultation strand** from CAN Uganda, UCSD: www.ugandacoalition.or.ug and other NGOs by regularly visiting their websites or Facebook pages; sign up any petitions / campaigns in support of a fair and equitable climate change law
5. **Once the bill comes on the floor of Parliament, follow updates on the Parliamentary process strand** by regularly visiting the Parliament Watch: www.parliamentwatch.ug and the Parliament of Uganda (Including the Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change Uganda): www.parliament.go.ug

Lake Victoria Site Champion Training Workshop Highlights Human Pressure on Kakamega Forest in Kenya

Site Champions are individuals or organizations with an interest and ability to either advocate for or implement conservation actions at the Key Biodiversity Areas (Sites contributing significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity). The first of the planned four Site Champion training workshops was held in Kakamega, Kenya (July 25 – 26, 2017). The training workshops are part of the *Lake Victoria Freshwater Biodiversity Project* funded by the MacArthur Foundation and coordinated by the IUCN Global Species Programme and facilitated by RUBICON and UCSD. In Kenya, Kakamega forest KBA area has recently been identified as a freshwater KBA, based on the presence of *Commelina albiflora* - a plant endemic the Kakamega forest that occurs in this moist forest along streams at 1,500-1,700 m above sea level

This workshop was attended by 17 participants including CSOs, Community Groups, Kenya Wildlife Society, Kenya Forestry Service, and Nature Kenya among others. Speaking at the opening session, the Kakamega Forest Ecosystem Conservator - Mr Martin Wandabwa noted that Kakamega forest is an 'island' that need conservation efforts amidst human pressures, due to population growth challenge (being the second most populous county in Kenya). 'It is not possible to suddenly stop people from using the forest, but rather engage them to support sustainable management of this forest', Mr Martin Wandabwa added.

After this workshop, three others that reflect the newly identified Freshwater KBAs will be conducted in August 2017 in Mara Bay and Masirori Swamp (Tanzania) that has at least 3 fish species; Lake Wamala Catchment (Uganda) that has the same three fish species and hosts a dragonfly classified as 'Vulnerable' by IUCN Red List; and the west system of the Nyabarongo Wetlands (Rwanda) that hosts two Vulnerable fish species.

The workshops aim at sharing among all stakeholders, the knowledge about the biodiversity importance and ecosystems services of the area and provide local communities with tools to identify and address threats to freshwater biodiversity.

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UCSD Holds CSO Campaign Group Meeting for the PIPA Project in Uganda



The Meeting in session
Photo: UCSD

As part of the *Project to Implement the Paris Agreement in East Africa* (PIPA), UCSD held a Coalition Group meeting in Kampala, July 12, 2017 that brought together 19 CSOs. At the meeting the CSO partners were briefed on the progress in project implementation since the PIPA Project inception meeting held in March 2017, the Uganda National Advocacy strategy and Campaign Plan for the PIPA Project was presented to Partners for buy-in and to seek areas of engagement / synergy with CAN Uganda and other climate actions by CSOs.

The meeting also brainstormed and came up with focus areas for the planned national policy briefs from Uganda during (June 2017 – June 2018) within limits of the PIPA project.

CSOs underlined the need to make sure that the collaborative organizations have tangible activities on the ground to bring in learning experiences and raised the need to simplify the climate change language so that more people can appreciate the on-going negotiations at the global level

In addition, there was an observation that CSOs need to tap into the private sector so that they can be engaged in climate action in Uganda. Regarding the climate change bill that is being prepared, CSOs noted its importance and need to engage the key actors – Parliament (through the Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change Uganda), the Climate Change Department and the Minister of Water and Environment.

As a way forward, the meeting agreed members present agreed in principle to be part of the Uganda Campaign Group; that suggestions and additions (synergies, potential engagements) be incorporated in the advocacy plan in as far as the Project focus is concerned, a Uganda PIPA Project google mailing list be created as a platform for information sharing and update; gradually engage interested CSOs trained (Hoima, Mbale, Lira) and others interested via the google mailing list.

In addition, the geographical scope and climate action implemented by the Campaign Group members will be a guide for engagement in implementation of the Uganda National advocacy strategy and campaign plan. The meeting also agreed that the identified focus areas after the brainstorm be fine-tuned to inform the planned National CSO policy statements.

At this meeting, Miriam Talwisa (CAN Uganda) presented a CSO road map for July –December 2017 geared towards collective engagement of CSOs and government in advancing advocacy work on Civil society engagement in Climate change Bill; Civil society engagement in the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process; Civil society engagement for the Nationally determined Contribution (NDC) process; Civil society engagement in international days and events; and facilitating CSO participation in the upcoming UNFCCC COP23 in Bonn.

Promoting Implementation of the Paris Agreement (PIPA) in East Africa is a regional Civil Society Project with a focus on pro-poor low emission development (running from January 2017 to June 2018) and implemented in Tanzania by Tanzania Traditional Energy Development Organization (TaTEDO), in Kenya by Sustainable Environmental Development Watch Kenya (SusWatch Kenya) and in Uganda by Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD). The three EA partners work in partnership with Sustainable Energy (SE) of Denmark and International Network for Sustainable Energy (INFORSE).