

# UCSD News Bulletin December 2007

Monthly News Bulletin from the Secretariat of Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD)  
*Rio and beyond.....*

---

## Summing up 2007: The Mabira debate and the Millennium Declaration

As we close 2007, UCSD would like to highlight 2 major issues in 2007 that preoccupied public debate (and action) for sustainable development in Uganda and beyond:

- The **Mabira Campaign** that sucked in, and united Ugandans, concerned citizens and partners around the world as a learning point and an experience will be kept as a moment in Uganda's history. The controversial proposal, which would have turned over 17,500 acre Mabira forest to the Indian-owned Mehta Group, had caused alarm in environmental circles and stirred up racial tensions. Though the 'dust is not yet fully settled on this matter' (Uganda Government seems to have rescinded on this intention), one needs to ponder over the future of similar resources that Government(s) hold in Public Trust, and how to secure that 2008 brings in more practical recognition of this doctrine (*please see UCSD News Bulletin July, August and October 2007 for more about the Mabira forest debate*)

- The **Millennium Declaration / 2015 Goals (MDGs) midpoint** in July 2007. While it seems that most if not all MDGs will not be achieved by 2015, for Uganda, eradicating poverty and securing environmental sustainability are so intertwined that probably explains the public reaction during and after the April 12, 2007 demonstration on the proposed Mabira forest degazettement. But the Millennium Declaration anchor - MDG 8 (aid, debt and trade) remains unattended to. This is the reason why UCSD prepared and launched - *A Civil Society Evaluation of the Global Partnership on Aid, Trade and Debt in Uganda* (*please see UCSD News Bulletin September 2007*).

On this note, UCSD wishes to thank YOU for all the cooperation in 2007 and wishes YOU a happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year!

## Key outcome from the UN Bali Climate Conference, December 3 - 14, 2007

2007 has been referred to as 'the climate change year' due to the rise of the issue up the public and political agenda. Hence the UN Bali Climate Conference - COP13 was probably the most crucial UN climate change summit since the Kyoto Protocol was agreed ten years ago.

The Kyoto Protocol was a useful first step in international efforts to tackle climate change. But it was never going to be enough. A 'first commitment period' was originally agreed to, running from 2008-2012, in which developed countries committed to reducing emissions by at least 5% from 1990 levels. It is crucial, therefore, that an effective 'global framework' is in place ready for when the first phase of the Kyoto Protocol runs out in 2012. The Bali negotiations on the global framework were expected to start this year and be concluded by the end of 2009 as it is likely to take at least three years for sufficient countries to ratify a new treaty so that it can enter into force. Hence all eyes were on COP13, to see if it would launch the critical negotiation process leading to a comprehensive post-2012 framework.

According to Tearfund, overall it was highly significant that an agreement was reached to launch negotiations on the future climate change regime and conclude them by 2009, given that the required outcome for Bali was to agree a process for negotiations for 2007-2009 (referred to as the 'Bali roadmap') which must include much more ambitious emissions targets for developed countries in line with the science, and increased commitment and financial support for adaptation in poor countries. Adaptation has been included as a key building block for the post-2012 framework, with many references to addressing the needs of poor countries; the desperately needed adaptation fund can now start operating where current levels of funding for adaptation are a fraction of a fraction of what is needed. However, the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies from developed to developing countries, for both mitigation and adaptation needs was a disappointment.. Read more about **Tearfund's provisional assessment of the outcomes of Bali** as at December 15, 2007: <http://www.tearfund.org/Campaigning/COP+coverage/Bali+conference+initial+assessment.htm>. Also read **WWF's five-page Beginners Guide to the Climate Change Negotiations** (November 28, 2007) for a short overview over the architecture and the topics that have been important during and beyond the UN Bali Climate Change Conference: [http://assets.panda.org/downloads/wwf\\_media\\_background\\_bali22nov07\\_final.pdf](http://assets.panda.org/downloads/wwf_media_background_bali22nov07_final.pdf)

## New Part time staff for UCSD

Ms. Anja C. Sakaly will join UCSD as a part time Development Worker to work with Secretariat and Thematic Groups in scaling up fundraising and related efforts. Anja will be available January to June 2008 for approx. 15 hrs/ week. We welcome her on board!