

THE EAST AFRICAN SUSWATCH E-BULLETIN

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

The 2022 Kigali Sustainable Energy for ALL Forum Needs a BOLD Call for *Local Solutions*



The 2022 Sustainable Energy for ALL (SEforALL) Forum will bring together people from different parts of the world physically and virtually, to take stock of progress, showcase success and identify solutions to achieve faster, broader gains towards sustainable energy for all. According to the organizers, it is a platform to broker new partnerships, spur investment, address challenges and drive action towards realizing

Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7) and a global clean energy transition. In 2022, SEforALL is following through with a revamped and multi-year campaign called BE BOLD that is about giving everyone—governments, businesses, development and financial institutions, and everyday citizens—a set of actions to help realize affordable and clean energy for all.

The SEforALL Forum takes place in the final decade (2020 – 2030) to achieve SDG7 and against the backdrop of UN Ministerial Thematic Forums on Energy (June 2021), the UN High-level Dialogue on Energy (September 2021), and the Glasgow UNFCCC COP26. The Forum is also a major milestone to build up the agreed global call for new and bolder commitments and ambition at COP27 in Egypt later this year. The Forum seeks to among others, inspire and mobilize further bold action, partnerships, commitments, and resources by showcasing innovation and impact that underpin economic recovery, empower women and youth, drive universal access to healthcare and disrupt business as usual in order to achieve SDG7 by 2030.

During the virtual UN Ministerial Thematic Forums on Energy, the International Network for Sustainable Energy (INFORSE) shared lessons on Local Solutions, Eco-Village Development and 100% Renewables based on experiences from South Asia and East Africa. Also, in a policy brief to COP26, INFORSE partners noted that the conditional mitigation parts of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the East African Countries represent the most ambitious contributions to the Paris Agreement on climate mitigation. Specifically, INFORSE partners stressed that ‘The East African countries and funding partners must cooperate to realize the updated NDC targets with priority of sustainable local solutions that also contribute to poverty reduction and development and with a target of 100% renewable energy’.

The periodic Global Stocktake (GST) to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Paris Agreement and its long-term goals should recognize that non-party stakeholders (including Civil Society stakeholders) are an important source of information and can help to monitor compliance with states’ obligations and pledges. Hence, INFORSE partners look at the GST as an important process to identify and close the gaps in national climate plans to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, to which it calls for inclusion of the missing solutions (*especially local solutions*) that can contribute to reduce emissions from fossil fuels and from overuse of biomass.

Ahead to COP27, INFORSE partners stress that renewable technologies are flexible, can be decentralized are available at competitive (decreasing) prices, and are much cheaper than nuclear options. INFORSE partners add that ‘Climate funds must be used on the *real* solutions and not on unsafe, false solutions such as nuclear or geoengineering ones. In Africa, there is also abundant renewable resources and potential for local solutions with mini grids with solar and wind, improved efficient cook stoves using less firewood, household biogas for cooking, solar collectors, dryers, solar cookers etc.’

INFORSE is a network of CSOs (including East Africa). Since 1992, INFORSE and its members have worked for sustainable energy to reduce climate and environmental impacts of energy for poverty reduction and development.

Read More about INFORSE’s work globally and in East Africa from here: <https://www.inforse.org/> and the Catalogue of Local Sustainable Solutions – East Africa from here: <http://www.localsolutions.inforse.org/>

Stockholm +50: Perfect Chance to Rekindle the Implementation of Eco-Policies in East Africa

The UN Conference on the Human Environment took place in Stockholm, Sweden from 5-16 June 1972. It was the UN's first major conference on international environment issues, leading to the creation of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), which is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. This Conference laid the foundation for a global outlook, and identified (26) common principles to inspire and guide the preservation and enhancement of the human environment. Thus it came up with key proclamations duped the Stockholm Declaration and Action Plan for the Human Environment.

In May 2021, governments agreed to convene the Stockholm+50 meeting in Stockholm from 2-3 June 2022, during the week of World Environment Day, to commemorate the 1972 Stockholm Conference's outcomes as "a contribution to the environmental dimension of sustainable development to accelerate the implementation of commitments in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development, including a sustainable recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

As part of this important review process, national consultations to reimagine a common, prosperous future on a healthy planet are underway in 58 countries with financial support from the Government of Sweden and facilitation by UNDP including Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. In these consultations, Stockholm+50 calls for an inclusive approach that reflects the richness and diversity of voices and perspectives of various stakeholder groups: local governments, cities, civil society, women, indigenous peoples and local communities, faith-based groups, academia, youth, industry, finance, and philanthropic foundations.

Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development participated in the hybrid CSO consultations that involved group work, where a contribution was made under Leadership Dialogue 1: *Reflecting on the urgent need planet and prosperity of all.* practices and pathways to restore relationship with nature; actions scale up the change towards a and vulnerable groups could initiatives designed to restore a more sustainable and resilient relationship with nature and how to safeguard the rights of people and nature, including indigenous peoples and local communities, environmental defenders, women, youth, future generations in Uganda.

Reflecting on these (26) Stockholm principles today, from an East African lens points to a huge task ahead, 50 years later!

Participants gave views on good and regenerate a positive including policies / structures to healthy planet; How marginalized benefit from policies and

That aside, the Stockholm Declaration underscored 26 principles. Reflecting on these principles today, from an *East African* lens points to a huge task ahead, 50 years later! On one side, East Africa has been vigilant on *cooperation on international environmental issues* as evidenced in Articles 111, 112 and 114 of the East African Community Treaty that provide for co-operation in environment and natural resources. The EAC Partner States have agreed to take joint effort to co-operate in efficient management of these resources. Key priorities of the sector include Climate Change adaptation and mitigation, natural resource management and biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction and management, and pollution control and waste management.

On the contrary, whereas there has been commendable efforts to *safeguard wildlife* through cooperation, public awareness and information; a lot remains to be done with regard to illicit wildlife trafficking. According to TRAFFIC, East Africa is remains a wildlife trafficking hotspot. The region's rich biodiversity and international transport links make it an ideal poaching ground and a key transit route for international wildlife trafficking! East Africa is also still struggling with *pollution* as a growing environmental challenge – arguably exceeding the environment's capacity to clean itself especially in many of its fast growing urban areas, for example around Lake Victoria. According to the East African Community secretariat, almost 90% of the energy sources in households in the region is from traditional technologies that not only contribute to air pollution, but negatively impact on human health and the environment! **Follow & preparations for the Stockholm +50 (June 2-3, 2022):** <https://www.stockholm50.global/>

East African Community Secretary General's Forum: Provide Sustainable Energy to Health Centers Across the Region



The Consultative Dialogue Framework (CDF) is a platform for the East African citizenry to directly contribute to policy making process by identifying issues that directly affect them and seeking both regional and national solutions. One of the main avenues for engagement created by the CDF is the East African Community (EAC) Secretary General's Forum – an annual meeting consisting of civil society, private sector and other interest groups that takes place once a year and rotates across all the EAC partner States.

The 2022 Secretary General's Forum due to take place in Nairobi in May 2022, is on the theme 'Towards a Post COVID-19 recovery for socio-economic transformation' with subthemes on positioning the private sector towards recovery; inclusive governance and institutional strengthening for post COVID-19 recovery; and rule of law and development in the EAC – shrinking space in the EAC.

A build up Uganda National consultative meeting organized by the Ministry of East African Community Affairs (MEACA) was held on April 21, 2022 in Kampala. It was attended by CSOs, private sector, media and other interest groups. The First Deputy Prime Minister of Uganda and Minister for East African Community Affairs – The Rt.Hon. Rebecca Kadaga who was the chief guest, noted that theme of the Dialogue fits with the EAC campaign for free movement of goods free movement of goods, workers services and labor; the right of establishment and residence. She added that since adoption, the dialogues have scaled up level of interaction between parties and built synergy and collaboration between dialogue parties and Government of Uganda.

Participants openly brought issues of concern to the Rt. Hon. Kadaga, to which she responded. These included the importance of gender parity in the EAC processes, institutions and operations; need for increased transparency in budget information across the EAC partner States; CSO operations hampered by closures of several NGOs and a key funding entity (the Democratic Governance Facility); challenge of EAC Partners moving alone when negotiating trade deals; sustained Non-Tariff Barriers resulting in traders reportedly being harassed; demand for work permits in some EAC Partner States. She particularly expressed concern about the 'protectionist policy' that still reigns in the region. Presentations followed by plenary discussions were also made on *Uganda on positioning the private sector towards economic recovery; Inclusive governance and institutional strengthening for post Covid19 recovery; Rule of law and development in the EAC; and Leveraging Local Government Local Economic Development policies for post Covid19 recovery.*

It was interesting to hear concerns and options from participants on what a people-centered recovery post-COVID-19 should entail. There was general agreement that the Covid19 crisis exposed and magnified the social and economic inequalities in communities particularly the most vulnerable. It has also deepened inequalities including limited access to information, education services, food insecurity, and the situation of women and girls, and a significant increase in gender-based violence across households, societies and regions.

Because the pandemic laid bare the inadequacies in health care services across the region, this calls for a scaled up response in the health sector by investing in primary health care, health promotion and disease prevention. In line with the Abuja Declaration, 15% of government budgets should be earmarked to strengthen health systems and ensure their preparedness for emergencies. Lack of energy for health centers was glaringly missing during the Covid19 pandemic period to service the bloated number of patients. Therefore, a key take away for the EAC as part of the post covid19 recovery is increased provision of sustainable energy supply to health centers as 'front liners' in addressing health needs of communities. It is preferable that this is renewable energy as it provides dividends as part of Agenda 2030.

The Annual EAC Secretary General's meeting provides a forum for frank exchange of views on particular aspects of the East African integration process, and comes up with recommendations for consideration and implementation either by the dialogue parties or organs and institutions of the EAC.