

A Monthly from the East African Sustainability Watch Network and INFORSE East Africa

UCSD to Rally Support for *Planetary* SDGs as Part of Joint CSO engagement on Agenda 2030 at National and Global Levels in 2023



UCSD member at the previous AGM held in July 2018 in Kampala

On December 22, 2022, Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD) virtually held its 8th Annual General Meeting (AGM) that was attended by 22 members and partners. UCSD Chairperson – Ms. Sarah Kisolo regretted that the AGM was previously missed due to COVID 19 restrictions in 2019, and financial limitations afterwards in 2020 and 2021. This has necessitated UCSD to explore the online options. Hence the 8th virtual AGM in 2022 was to catch up with the missed ones in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

She commended UCSD secretariat staff for keeping the organization visible especially through the regular monthly *East African SusWatch INFORSE East Africa E bulletin* and other contributions to Joint CSO advocacy initiatives.

‘UCSD appreciates Nature Palace Foundation, JEEP, the Renewable Energy CSOs Network and other members and Partners for working closely with secretariat to implement different activities as part of the East African Civil Society for Sustainable Energy and Climate Action (EASE CA) project and other interventions,’ she noted. She also informed the meeting that the EASE CA Project has enabled UCSD to work closely with INFORSE, SusWatch Kenya, TaTEDO, the Nordic Folkecenter for Renewable Energy and JEEP with support from CISU Denmark, to promote sustainable energy (SDG7) and climate actions (SDG 13) from local level to global level.

In remembrance of departed colleagues in 2019 – 22, including Mrs. Patience Muramuzi (NAWAD) and Mr. Kefa Kaweesa (UEEF / ECOVIC Uganda) as well as members that had lost relatives and friends to the COVID19 pandemic, a moment of silence was observed.

UCSD’s Programme Manager – Kimbowa Richard, on behalf of the Chairperson presented the progress report from 2019 to 2022, noting that, UCSD sustained focus on its mission and objectives. He highlighted two out of five development objectives that were the main focus of work during the reporting period, namely: To undertake advocacy work to promote sustainable development principles at national, regional and international levels; and To provide and facilitate forums for exchange and dissemination of information. This was in form of the *EASE CA Project (2019-22)* whose overall development has been increased access to sustainable energy and other climate solutions to local communities in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania with both women’s and men’s full and effective participation and leadership for improved livelihoods and reduction of poverty. This has been realized by combining CSO activities on local, national and international levels in mutually reinforcing ways.

He highlighted achievements made under the EASE CA project, including joint policy positions developed with INFORSE East Africa, EA SusWatch Network, the Renewable Energy CSOs Network, CAN Uganda, and others, that were shared at the global, regional and national level including through INFORSE’s *Sustainable Energy Newsletter*; participated in INFORSE partners’ UNFCCC side events organized in 2019, 2021 and 2022; contributed to a joint CSO submission on the Global Stocktake in 2021 and 2022 as well as INFORSE Uganda joint statement to COP27, the Global Green Growth Institute Week 2022 and the Uganda Renewable Energy Conference 2022 & EXPO. Also the 100% Renewable Energy Plan for Uganda was formally launched at COP27.

A draft work plan 2023 for UCSD was presented and discussed. This will build on the achievements of the last three years with focus on *Planetary SDGs* (as entry point): SDGs 1,5,6,12,13,15,17) as part of national and global CSO engagement on Agenda 2030; Climate action at local level (local solutions); tracking implementation of Uganda’s updated national climate plan; women and youth empowerment; sustainable energy and scaling up national dialogues on global Climate negotiations, and just transition. The draft is open for members’ input until January 31, 2023.

UN COP27 Outcome Hazy on ‘Clean Power Generation’ & ‘Low-Emission Energy’



The COP27 Summit in the Egyptian resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh made history when developing countries secured a new fund to support the victims of climate disasters. The decision to set up this new fund for “loss and damage” resulting from climate change marked the climax of a decades-long effort by small island states and other vulnerable nations.

According to CarbonBrief.org, COP27 agreed an overarching “cover decision”, known as the Sharm el-Sheikh implementation plan, reusing language on 1.5C and phasing down coal from last year’s Glasgow Climate Pact. This Plan “requests” countries that have not yet done so to “revisit and strengthen” their 2030 climate targets by the end of 2023, “as necessary to align with the Paris Agreement”. However, it failed to advance ambition on 1.5C and ignored growing calls for fossil fuel phase-out as a follow up from COP26 in Glasgow.

COP27 also discussed funding for mitigation and adaptation. The promised climate finance of 100 billion US\$ / year in the period 2020-2025 is not fully provided, and part of this finance is loans, diluting its value as climate finance. COP27 expressed serious concern that this target has not been met and urged developing countries to provide enhanced support.

Parties at COP27 also asked Multilateral Development Banks to scale up climate funding and to allow simplified access to climate funding. In parallel, the countries negotiated for a new goal for climate funding after 2025, negotiations that are planned to continue until 2024.

COP27 agreed on a “work programme for urgently scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation”. The work programme shall work with the sectors defined in IPCC Guidelines: energy, industrial processes and product use, agriculture, forestry and land use, waste. Activities will (as a minimum) include two global dialogues, regional dialogues, and investment focused events to unlock climate finance. Proposals are sought by 1 February 2023 for topics for the work programme.

According to Gunnar Olesen (INFORSE Network), ‘Following dialogues at COP27, in the coming year one main process will be the Global Stocktake of climate action with evaluation of the current national climate plans (NDCs), that shall inform the countries in updating and enhancing their climate actions and support, as well as enhancing international cooperation on climate action. ‘In INFORSE we work to include local, sustainable energy solutions and policies for sustainable lifestyles in this, both of which can enhance climate actions and lead to additional reductions of emissions’, he stressed.

The COP27 agreed a total of 55 documents, including further rules for how countries can transfer rights of emission reduction between each other, allowing some countries to pay others to reduce emissions rather than doing it at home. There is a risk that this can weaken climate action, as previously seen with the Kyoto Protocol.

A contentious issue was the proposed call for a phase down oil and gas use, similar to the call from COP26 to phase down coal use. This was rejected by several oil producing countries. Instead, the countries called for adoption of policies to transition towards low-emission energy systems, rapidly scaling up clean power generation and energy efficiency measures, including accelerating efforts to phase down of unabated coal power and phase-out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. The countries also emphasized the urgent need for immediate, deep, rapid and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions including through increase in low-emission and renewable energy, just energy transition partnerships and other cooperative actions. However, Gunnar expresses fear about the lack of clarity on what clean power generation and low-emission energy stands for, in addition to renewable energy, as it could be fossil fuel use with carbon capture and storage (CCS), fossil gas or biomass or even nuclear power.

Read a short overview of the results of COP27 and some next steps by Gunnar Boye Olesen, INFORSE from: https://www.inforse.org/doc/INFORSE_on_COP27_What_Next.pdf

UCSD Joins Global Call to Action for All Governments and National Stakeholder Groups on UN Secretary General’s Report: “Our Common Agenda”



Urgent global action is needed to reverse loss of wetlands (global commons)

In September 2022, Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD) was part of the Global Forum for National Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Advisory Bodies from more than 20 countries that gathered in Cape Town, South Africa, to discuss the role of institutionalized SDG multi-stakeholder advisory bodies in accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achieving sustainable transformation.

A Joint Call to Action has been issued for all governments and national stakeholder groups seeks to support the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres’s proposals in “Our Common Agenda” – that looks ahead to the next 25 years and represents his vision on the future of global cooperation.

The representatives of the Advisory Bodies reflected on the various strategic topics raised by Secretary-General António Guterres in his report “Our Common Agenda”. As suggested in his report, the Advisory Bodies call on all respective national governments and other stakeholders to take bold action, by taking concrete steps at both national and local level and bridging them with international tools and mechanisms.

In a Joint statement, the SDG advisory bodies call on all governments and national stakeholder groups to focus specifically on the topics that are relevant for institutionalized stake-holder processes and platforms: specific steps to account for the interests of future generations; renew social contract across a scale and rebuild trust by transforming institutions and systems; to develop strategies for achieving the “how” of preserving global public goods, such as oceans, atmosphere and rainforests; to move beyond profit and growth as a measurement of success and wellbeing and to achieve the transition to green and circular economies; and Inclusive participation of stakeholders to deliver just transitions across all the SDGs.

On the need to develop strategies for achieving the “how” of preserving global public goods, such as oceans, atmosphere and rainforests, the Joint Call to Action calls for a paradigm shift in financial efforts to protect global public goods for future generations by behaving as good ancestors to them. To protect global commons beyond national jurisdictions, the Secretary-General Guterres calls for strengthening the governance for global public goods and global commons.

To revive multilateralism, ‘We call for global funds established under the principles of global public investment, allowing all countries to financially contribute to, and politically decide on, the transparent utilization of funds for global common goods. All contributing countries must have the chance to take part in the fund’s decision-making processes’ reads the Joint Call to Action in part. The Joint call goes ahead to suggest a need to map areas where we need more and larger-scale protection of ecosystems and global public goods, to activate new and meaningful stakeholder engagement, to sensitize on the need to protect global public goods, to redistribute existing financial investment, to attract additional investment in protection measures, and to create clear incentives for the protection of global public goods like a clean environment, health, knowledge, property rights, peace and security.

The Global Forum for National SDGs Advisory Bodies hosted by *The African Monitor* (Cape Town, South Africa) in partnership with *The Partnering Initiative* (Oxford, UK) is a global network of multi-stakeholder advisory bodies, sustainable development commissions and councils that are actively taking part in national sustainable development policy processes such as the drafting of Voluntary National Reviews. The Platform creates spaces for action, provide marketplaces of ideas, and aim to mediate conflicting interests to foster social acceptance of transformation. It also calls for a strategic involvement of multi-stakeholder platforms in all strategic policy processes, for sustainable development at local, national and international level, as well as the strengthening of partnerships to achieve the common goal. **Read the full Joint Call to Action for all governments and national stakeholder groups seeks to support Secretary-General António Guterres’s proposals in “Our Common Agenda” from: https://www.nachhaltigkeitsrat.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Global_Forum_Joint_Call_to_Action_2022.pdf**