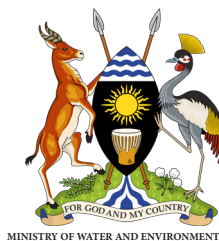


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UGANDA
W&E
WEEK



THE WATER FRONT

Newsletter

The Uganda Water and Environment Week

(UWEWK) 2020 will run from Sept 13th – 18th, 2020. Theme: *Water and Environment Resources for Inclusive Growth, Employment and Wealth Creation.*

Sub-theme:

- i. Water and Environment Security for Inclusive Growth
- ii. Water and Environment for Employment and Wealth Creation
- iii. Climate Change and achievements of NDP III goals



President Yoweri Museveni opened the UWEWK 2020

Museveni calls for gazetting of wetlands, forests and river banks

The UWEWK 2020 was opened by President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni. In his speech, delivered by the Vice-President, Hon. Edward Ssekandi, Museveni noted that Uganda continues to lose 846km of its wetland coverage every year. He attributed this to poor farming practices, unplanned urbanisation and settlements, excessive water abstraction, poverty, poor intra and inter sector coordination, leading to issuance of land titles in wetlands, sand mining and industrialisation. "I have, however, noted that at times developments in the fragile ecosystems such as wetlands and river banks are carried out by misguided people and we need to educate them so that they can stop those bad practices. In this way, we can all continue to enjoy the many benefits those natural resources provide us," Museveni said. The President also called for the need to secure, gazette and protect wetland boundaries, river banks and forests that play

a critical role in averting the impact of climate change. "There is a need to protect and restore water catchments, especially those that have been degraded," Museveni noted. He called for the need to remove pressure from wetlands, river banks and forests by creating alternative livelihood options that are economically viable. Uganda is experiencing a rise in water levels causing flooding in several parts. He called for climate change resilient irrigation schemes to provide reliable and sustainable water solutions.

to enhance agricultural productivity, food security and avert rural poverty, create local job opportunities, and achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth. He stressed that water is an indispensable input in agroindustrialization. "It must be available in adequate quantities and quality to contribute to the achievement of increased household incomes and quality of life," he said.

The Uganda Water and Environment Week goes online

The 3rd Uganda Water and Environment Week (UWEWK) organized by the Ministry of Water and Environment and partners began on September 13, 2020 and will run to September 18th, 2020.

The week-long event will be held online via Zoom, under the theme, 'Water and Environment resources for inclusive growth, employment and wealth creation'. The overall goal of the 2020 UWEWK is; improved understanding of the importance of sustainable management and development of water and environment resources in sustainable industrialization for inclusive growth, employment and wealth creation.

The objectives of the UWEWK 2020 are;

i. Highlight how water and environment contribution to sustainable industrialization for inclusive growth, employment and wealth creation.

ii. Focus on the inseparable link between security of water, energy, food and ecosystems which is critical to underpin inclusive growth, employment and wealth creation hence achievement of NDP III

iii. Deliberate on the role of effective water and environment management and governance in ensuring coordinated and sustainable national infrastructure projects. The Water Front newsletter will document daily highlights from UWEWK 2020.

A number of activities including keynote addresses, high level panel discussions, paper presentations, practical trainings, career talks and exhibitions are planned under the following sub-theme; Water and Environment security for inclusive growth, Water and Environment for employment and wealth creation, Climate Change and achievement of NDP III goals, the panel discussions will comprise a mix of prominent leaders, thinkers, researchers, institutional heads and personalities.



Hon. Sam Cheptoris speaking during the opening session

Water and environment are vital to life - Hon. Cheptoris

Speaking during the opening session of the 3rd UWEWK 2020, the Minister of Water and Environment, Hon Sam Cheptoris noted that water and environmental resources are vital to sustaining life, promoting development and maintaining livestock. He said that there is no activity that can take place without water. "Access to clean, safe water and improved sanitation are a prerequisite to a healthy population and directly impacts on the quality of life, wealth creation and the productivity of populations," he said. He mentioned that water is vital for livestock, industry, hydro -power regulation, agriculture, marine transport, fisheries, tourism and environmental conservation. "Sustainable water resources management is important in times like this when the country is faced with COVID-19, floods, rising water levels and job loss," he said. He regretted that due to the confirmation of Covid-19 in Uganda in March 2020, the sector was not able to commemorate three critical sector days namely; World Water Week, World Forest Day and the World Metrological days. "I am happy the Ministry of Water and Environment with support from its strategic partners was able to commemorate the 3rd edition of UWEWK 2020 and will effectively contribute towards attaining the goals of National Development Plan (NDP) III." said Hon. Cheptoris.



Dr. Florence Grace Adongo

UWEWK online session will be model for others

The Chair of the National Organizing Committee (NOC) of UWEWK 2020, Dr. Florence Grace Adongo, said UWEWK going online will be a model for other sectors. Dr. Adongo also serves as the Director of the Directorate of Water Resources Management (DWRM) at Ministry of Water and Environment. "We are excited that this digital event experience has come to pass and has even reached bigger numbers audiences both nationally and internationally. This digital event will be a model for other sectors and the decisions we are going to make will guide our society and country at large," said Dr. Adongo. She acknowledged the support of the different stakeholders in organizing this event.

Water is key to sustainable development - Dr. Muhumuza

The keynote address during the opening session was made by Dr. Fred Muhumuza, a Policy Development Analyst and Lecturer, School of Economics, Makerere and Kyambogo Universities. He called for the need for policy, legal and institutional reforms to trigger changes in planning, budgeting and implementation. He emphasised the need to link water to development for the benefit of humanity. He called for the need to ensure that water is available and accessible to all. Dr. Muhumuza said water and environment resources are core to sustainable development and are critical for socio-economic development, healthy ecosystems and for human survival. Muhumuza said the quest for industrialisation as a strategy for inclusive-growth, employment, and wealth creation is being undermined by the failure to address the aspects of water and environment. "Industrialists faced with high utility costs will ask for subsidies that will increase the Government borrowing," he explained, saying the restoration of forests and tree cover has not kept pace with the annual loss of forest cover and loss of individual trees.

He said it's critical to strengthen local government and urban authorities. He called for the need for innovative policies and practices to address the persistent challenges of degradation of forests, wetlands, water resources and climate change. He called for harmonisation and strengthening coordination at all levels of policy, planning, budgeting and implementation.



Dr. Fred
Muhumuza

Panelists

ELLY KARUHANGA,
Chairman, Private Sector
Foundation

Citizens must understand that water and the environment is central to their overall existence and demand government agencies to do their work.. He said the role of private sector is to support in turning water and environment into a money making venture like bio-gas, support irrigation technologies and development. .



KEEFA KIWANUKA, Chairperson,
Natural Resources Committee

Conservation is not the sole responsibility of the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) or the Ministry of Water to protect the environment. We are all exposed to the calamities that result from environmental degradation. Be the person to champion the environment protection in your area. Parliament is blamed for not prioritizing the water and environment sector in the budget allocation but you need to understand the process. The parties involved go through the budget process and only bring to us what is finalized. All we do is to review accordingly.



ALFRED OKOT OKIDI, Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Water and Environment

The lack of compliance and enforcement of sector policies is a hindrance to the sector. There is need to demarcate the wetlands and forests and if people fail to leave voluntarily, then use enforcement in a humane way. In highlighting the sector's response to Covid-19, the PS said that the sector is working tirelessly to ensure that there is access to water and sanitation. We have tried to ensure that the most vulnerable have access to safe water and no disconnection to people who have not cleared their water bills. We have installed hygiene facilities, extended water and translated the COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures in local languages.



ELSIE ATTAFUAH, UNDP Resident
Representative for Uganda

Water and environment need to be at the center of development, this will ensure we leave no one behind and propel us to achieving the SDGs and NDP III targets. There is need to optimize technology through online platforms and building the capacity of players to full filing their respective mandates.



GODBER TUMUSHABE, Associate
Director Great Lakes Institute
for Strategic Studies:

As a country, we should challenge ourselves. We have done a lot but the parameters still tell us that we have a problem. This means something is missing. By the end of the week, let us look back at the first and second UWEWK and now the third and ask what we have achieved.



Prof. Pamela Mbabazi, Chair National Planning Authority,

She emphasised the need to follow a programmatic approach to development rather than working in silos. She called for the

need to build the capacity of sector staff and align budgets to plans in order to appotion sufficient resources to the sector.



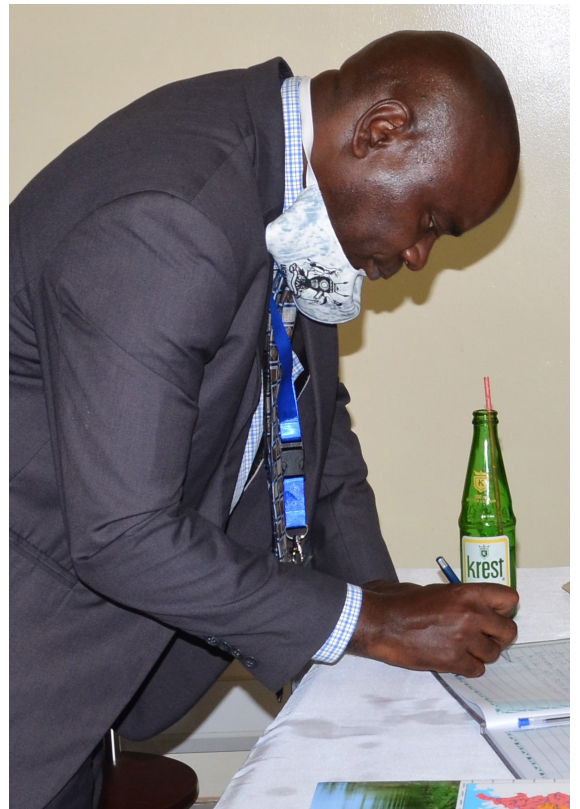
UWEWK 2020 Exhibition



Hon. Keefa Kiwanuka, the Chair of the Natural Resources Committee of Parliament at the UWASNET exhibition stall



Hon. Sam Cheptoris, the Minister for Water and Environment signs the guest book at the UWASNET exhibition table as Hon. Beatrice Anywar, State Minister for the Environment reads one of the publications produced by UWASNET



Dr. Fred Muhumuza signing the guest book at the UWASNET stall during the exhibition at UWEWK 2020

Pre-events to UWEWK 2020



(Middle) Hon. Sam Cheptoris, the Minister of Water and Environment speaking during a press conference launching the UWEWK 2020 in March 2020 before confirmation of Covid-19 in Uganda. On his left is Dr. Callist Tindimugaya, Commissioner, Water Resources Planning and Regulation and on the right is Mr. Festus Luboyera, the Executive Director, Uganda National Meteorological Authority

Walking 330km to save River Rwizi

The walk, started on March 10, 2020 from Mabira Forest, was aimed at creating awareness on the need to save River Rwizi from drying out due to man-made factors. River Rwizi, which covers about 8,200km is a source of water for livelihood to both people and animals in Rakai, Lyantonde, Isingiro, Lwengo, Kiruhura, Mbarara, Bushenyi, Buhweju, Sheema and Rubirizi. However, it faced extinction due to climate change and degradation. The Archbishop of Church of Uganda, His Grace Steven Kazimba Mugalu, flagged off and blessed the walkers who included conservationists, sector leaders, private sector.

The National Organizing Committee (NOC) held a number of meetings chaired by the Director, Directorate of Water Resources Department at Ministry of Water and Environment, Dr. Florence Adongo. There were publicity campaigns using print, electronic and social media with support from the sector and its partners.



His Grace Kazimba flags off the walkers in March (before COVID-19)



Walkers at Parliament in March 2020 (before COVID-19)



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