



STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT FOR UGANDA 2006/2007



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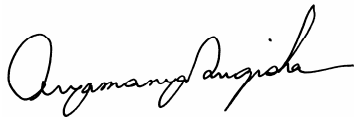
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) is again honored to present another edition of the State of the Environment Report for Uganda. This is the seventh report since the first one was published in 1994. The State of Environment Report has become a vital document in providing an insight to understanding the interactions between social, economic and environmental factors which are the pillars of development. It further answers many questions on what is happening to the environment in our country and what lies ahead in the future.

I sincerely thank all the organizations and individuals who provided data and information that was used as the basis for analyses in this report. All sources of data are acknowledged and referenced where they appear in the report. I wish to express my thanks to the team from EMA consult that compiled the report more especially Dr. Moyini Yakobo for his contribution and efforts in environmental reporting in Uganda.

I thank the technical staff of the NEMA for the role of coordination and review of the report. I look forward to receiving your positive critique and suggestions on the report. I wish you all good reading.



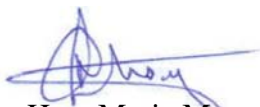
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FOREWORD

This year 2007 Uganda is hosting the Commonwealth summit with the theme “transforming Commonwealth societies to achieve political, economic and human development”. At the same time since the last State of the Environment report of 2004, new opportunities but also threats have emerged and these include: exploration and future production of oil, climate change and its impact on the communities in Uganda and innovations that encourage cleaner and more environmentally friendly sustainable consumption and production. Therefore, as the people of Uganda adapt to the new changes and challenges of climate change, they are also seeking accurate and up-to-date information about the state of the environment to help them make better decisions in all aspects of their lives. In light of The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 which urged nations to issue reports on the environment that would complement traditional fiscal policy statements, budgets, and economic development plans, I am pleased to present the National State of the Environment Report for Uganda for the years 2006 and 2007 with the theme “managing emerging opportunities and threats from the environment”. This is the seventh report for Uganda following from six other editions published earlier with the first produced in 1994.

The current report presents a picture of the condition of the environment and natural resources in Uganda. It is divided into five sections. Section 1 introduces the country overview and background. Section 2 deals with the state of the environment and trends under five themes of atmospheric, terrestrial, aquatic, cross-sectoral resources, and important linkages between environment and poverty, health and the potential value of ecosystems services. Section 3 covers emerging challenges which include among others: food security and climate change. In addition, the section covers an outlook based on the possible scenarios for Uganda’s environment and natural resources, ecosystems and human wellbeing, in line with the national long term planning perspectives of the Vision 2025. Section 4 gives the conclusions and policy options for action and section five are annexes. It is clear from the information contained in this report that the state of our environment will determine the level of our prosperity now and for future generations. Over-exploitation of our natural resources is increasingly leading to environmental degradation and contributing to reduced ecosystem services and disasters. Reduced ecosystem services in turn contribute to poverty. As we strive to address social equity and economic development in the years to come, our awareness and ability to improve the state of the environment and secure environmental sustainability will shape our future.

I do not only hope that this report will inform the people of Uganda about the state of our natural resources but also that the information contained in this report will be put to good use by every citizen.



Hon. Maria Mutagamba.

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This publication is the seventh report of the State of the Environment (SOE) for Uganda and it follows on from six earlier SOE reports with the first one appearing in 1994. The SOE publications have reported on the practice in environment and natural resources management in Uganda. Uganda moved away from an obscure regulatory system into a clear regulatory and policy framework for the Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) sector.

The theme for this year's SOER is "managing emerging opportunities and threats from the environment". It suggests that there are opportunities to be exploited beyond countering environment threats and overcoming sector weaknesses. Since the publication of the last SOER new opportunities and threats have emerged and these include: exploration and future production of oil, climate change and its impacts on the communities in Uganda, innovations that encourage cleaner and more environmentally friendly sustainable consumption and production.

BACKGROUND OF THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

In 2005, as evidence that Uganda was ready to market the economy from the environment perspective, the Government of Uganda invested US\$ 1 million in a campaign to promote the country's tourism potential on the Cable News Network (CNN). The promotion of the image of Uganda as a country gifted by nature was the first ever media campaign to market the country's tourism abroad.

There have been other developments as well. Since 2004, the number of administrative units in Uganda has increased from 56 Districts to 75 Districts. This has led to an increase in the administrative costs for environment and natural resources management at both local government and national levels. Uganda's population growth also continues to be amongst the highest in the world. The population in 2007 stands at 28.4 million an increase of 70 percent since 1991 and 16 percent since 2002. The country's population is expected to exceed 50 million and 127 million by 2025 and 2050 respectively.

ATMOSPHERIC RESOURCES

The intergovernmental panel on climate change indicated in 2006 that the African continent bears the greatest risk from climate change. Uganda's atmospheric resources of temperature, rainfall, sunshine and wind show trends which suggest the possible influence of climate change. In 2005, Uganda along with other countries in East Africa experienced a severe drought that led to a decline in the water levels of Lake Victoria. In 2007, Uganda has experienced its heaviest rains since the el nino of 1997/98. Moreover, the poorest regions of the country in north eastern Uganda: the Karamoja region, Teso region and the Lango region have been most affected.

TERRESTRIAL RESOURCES

Uganda has 7.2 million hectares of arable land under crop agriculture which is less than 50 percent of the arable land (16.8). But it has been suggested that available arable land for agriculture will run out in most parts of Uganda by around 2022. The land available in the eastern region is expected to run out by 2010. The rapid decline in the available land resource is attributed to the very high population growth rate. In addition the annual cropping practices that encourage high soil erosion and increased reclamation associated with new crop enterprises such as rice growing will also lead to the decline in the quality and quantity of the available land and soil resources.

The indicative annual cost of setting up and running institutions required under Uganda's land bill is US\$ 400 million. This amount is so large that it imposes a huge financial burden on the government; therefore it could prevent an otherwise good law from being implemented. Moreover, it is unlikely that the reforms suggested in the law will lead to significant increase in the supply of credit by commercial banks and agricultural productivity in the short and medium term.

FORESTS

Uganda's forest cover declined from about 5 million hectares in 1990 to 3.7 million hectares in 2005. This was a result of encroachment for agricultural production, deforestation to produce woodfuel, urbanisation, industrial growth, migration and problems of internally displaced people.

In Uganda forest governance is split at three levels: NFA for Central Forest Reserves, District forest services for community and the privately owned and managed forests. There has been increasing pressure to degazette Central Forest Reserves for industrial purposes from the Central Government. This has been the case for Namanve, Wabisi-Wajala (in Nakasongola district), Butamira forest reserve and more recently the intention to allocate part of Mabira central forest reserve to sugar cane growing.

The rapid increase in Uganda's population has certainly increased pressure on forest ecosystems for ecosystem services such as timber, fuelwood and food. This increases the risk of encroachment and deforestation unless viable alternatives are found. Nevertheless, opportunities for forest enterprises have emerged from commercial timber production and the Cleaner Development Mechanism. As a result the forest sector has one of the fastest rates of investment.

WILDLIFE

There has not been significant change in wildlife resources and their management since the last National State of Environment Report apart from the encroachment on Queen Elizabeth National Park by the Basongora pastoralists. The invasion of Basongora has increased pressure on the available food resources for the animals in the park and generated debate on pastoralists' activities vis a vis wildlife protected areas. On the other hand, there are

emerging opportunities in wildlife use rights such as trade, research and the development of a wildlife sector trade strategy.

AQUATIC RESOURCES

Uganda's wetland resources cover 13 per cent of the country's land surface. Increasingly these wetlands are under pressure from reclamation for agriculture especially rice production. While no estimates exist as yet, several districts have reported an increased use in wetlands for rice production as a result of the current government campaign (upland rice growing) in Uganda. Although upland rice can be grown far away from wetlands communities have preferred growing it near or within wetlands.

WATER RESOURCES

Uganda's water resources cover about 16 percent of the country's total area. The biggest pressure on the water resource is from the growing population and poor waste management practices of industries located near the water system. Uganda is on track to meeting the Millennium Development Goals for access to improved water within the country of 100 percent by the year 2015.

FISHERIES

Fisheries activities provide an important source of livelihoods to many Ugandans and foreign exchange to the country. Between 2002 and 2006 Uganda's fisheries export increased by 82.5 per cent from US\$ 78.15 million to 142.69 million. Fish harvest increased from 249,000 metric tonnes in 2004 to 416,000 metric tonnes in 2005. 58 percent of Uganda's fish harvests come from Lake Victoria followed by 16 per cent from Lake Kyoga and 26 percent from the remaining lakes and rivers.

The major pressures on Uganda's fisheries resources come from the growth in international market demand for Nile perch and Tilapia, deterioration of water quality due to excessive pollution, re-invasion of the lakes by the water hyacinth, poor fishing practices and prevalence of diseases especially HIV/AIDS in the fishing communities.

BIODIVERSITY

Given Uganda's location in a zone between the ecological communities that are characteristic of the drier East African Savannas and the more moist West African rain forests, combined with high altitude ranges, the country has a high level of biological diversity. Recent survey reports reveal the occurrence of 18,783 species

The principle threats to biodiversity in Uganda persist, including habitat loss, modification and alteration along with unsustainable harvesting, pollution as well as introduction of alien species.

RURAL WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

Access to safe water supplies in rural areas has increased steadily from 57 per cent in 2004/2005 to 61 per cent in 2005/2006. Latrine coverage has also increased from 51 per cent in 2003/2004 to 58 per cent in 2005/6. This level of latrine coverage is still very low. The lowest coverage is in the Karamoja region ranging from 2 per cent to 10 per cent. Latrine coverage declined, for example, in Busia and Kibale district by 2 per cent and 5 per cent respectively because the funding for sanitation programmes and enforcement of by-laws were weak. Notably, 75 per cent of Uganda's disease burden is preventable since it is caused primarily by poor hygiene and inadequate sanitation.

TOURISM

There have been increases in the number of tourists' arrivals since 1997 from 175,000 to 468,000 in 2005. The arrivals were mostly from Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda. Europe contributed 10 percent mostly from United Kingdom and Germany and a good number from USA.

ENERGY

Uganda has an abundant although unexpected variety of potential energy sources from solar, bio-mass, hydro, petroleum and geothermal. The energy sources that have been exploited so far include bio-mass, petroleum and hydro power. The National consumption of energy sources by type is 93 per cent, 6 per cent and 1 percent for bio-mass, petroleum and hydro power respectively. Only 5 per cent of Uganda's population has access to electricity, two-thirds of the power generated in Uganda is consumed in residences, 14 per cent in commercial buildings, and 10 per cent in industry and the remainder in the transport sector.

In May 2006, a consortium affiliated with the Aga Khan Development work signed an agreement to build the Bujjagali hydro power station. The project has already started and is valued at US\$ 500 million. There are two other electricity co-generation projects one at Kakira sugar cooperation and SCOUT and 15 other mini-hydro stations.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

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