

World Meteorological Day – 23rd March 2019.

1.0 Introduction

The **United Nations' (UN) World Meteorological Day** is annually held on or around March 23 to remember the **World Meteorological Organization's (WMO)** establishment on that date in 1950. The day also highlights the huge contribution that **National Meteorological** and **Hydrological Services** make to the safety and well-being of society. It also features other meteorological phenomena such as rainbows, halos, snow devils and hailstones. World Meteorological Day is used to get all the Climatic Conditions Knowledge to the people. The World Meteorological Organization plays a crucial role in contributing to people's safety and welfare. Its work is important in providing food security, water resources and transport. World Meteorological Day has been observed on March 23rd each year since 1961.

1.1 Key Message by Environmental Alert in respect to the theme

Environmental Alert calls upon the Uganda National Metrological Authority (UNMA) to step-up the implementation and improvement in the early disaster warning systems, and weather related information for access among stakeholders and the public through targeted and simplified. This will help in informing appropriate adaptation actions across different sectors at different scales thereby contributing to climate resilience.

2.0 Background

Each year, on 23rd March, the World Meteorological Organization, its 191 Members and the worldwide meteorological community celebrate World Meteorological Day around a chosen theme and the theme for 2019 is **"The Sun, the Earth and the Weather"**. The theme was selected to create awareness about the relationship between the Sun, Earth and the Weather in terms of determining the weather conditions, so that adverse weather and climate conditions are adapted to but also mitigated, calling on reading the weather information as a means of readying and eventually counter hazards resulting from changing weather and climatic conditions.

The Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) in collaboration with key partners successfully held the first ever UWEWK in March 2018. The event attracted high-level political participation including the Vice President of the Republic of Uganda and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda. Stakeholders presented information, exchanged knowledge, built relationships, and deliberated on pertinent sector issues. Based on the success of the first UWEWK, the MWE will hold the second UWEWK at the Water Resource Institute in Entebbe from Monday 18 – Friday 22, March 2019. The event will conclude with the annual commemoration of three important International Environmental Days: World Forest Day (March 21st), World Water Day (March 22nd) and World Meteorological Day (March 23rd).

The **World Meteorological Day** is of greater importance in many aspects, part of which

- a) Updates people on the information about the World Weather and Situations of the Climate, atmospheric pressure, and its cause in the daily life of the people.

- b) It provides the people with information about the occurrence of the Natural Calamities, and its effects on the life of the citizens, may help predicate and avoid upcoming calamities (exact Time and the Location of the Natural Calamities to occur in that place).

The **Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA)** supports districts by establishing functional weather stations which generates data that is used in producing early warning information. Currently 32 districts out of 115 districts have functioning weather stations which translates into 28% coverage (Water and Environment Sector Performance Report, 2017)..

Environmental Alert (see **Box 1** for further information) **as a Civil Society Organization (CSO) will participate in the events celebrating World Meteorological Day, and will be involved in several activities marking the day, and will showcase** recent innovations, technologies and developments in the Water and Environment sector for efficient Water and Environment services delivery. **Thus, it will participate in exhibitions during which they will interact with key duty bearers to share their concerns and recommendation to advance** Weather, climate, and climate change thematic area (with showcasing of several other livelihood options like pest and drought resistant crops to avert hunger which may have come as a result of change in the weather, climate) **and sustainable development at the community level.**

Environment and Natural Resources Civil Society Organizations (ENR-CSO) Network through their published **ENR-CSOs Sector Performance Report FY 2016/ 2017**, under Weather, climate, and climate change thematic area recommended the following in order to promote and grow the sector.

- a) MWE to fast track the process for drafting the climate change bill.
- b) District Local Governments should be supported by the Climate Change Department to mainstream climate change in the district development planning process as well as the district environment action planning process.
- c) ENR CSOs to compliment efforts of the central government to create awareness about climate change resilience mechanisms through community based adaptation mechanisms.
- d) There is need for specific undertaking for the Weather, Climate and Climate Change for easy tracking of progress.
- e) Fine-tune the data collection tools for the landscape to ease submission of information.
- f) Expedite the formulation of the NAP whilst undertaking comprehensive CC vulnerability assessment of key sectors of the economy and evaluate the national vulnerability index.
- g) Explore (Public Private Partnership) PPPs, economic instruments e.g. carbon levies, develop proposals to International Financing Institutions (GEF, GCF, AF).
- h) Empower the District Natural Resources office & Disaster Management Committees through a conditional grant on CC so as to implement climate actions at district level.
- i) MWE fast tracks the development of the UNMA Strategic Plan.
- j) MWE engages Operation Wealth Creation and the media in disseminating weather advisories.
- k) MWE expedites procurement of automated equipment e.g. weather radar & satellite Aviation Data distribution systems and re-tool zonal meteorological centers.

Box 1. About Environmental Alert

Environmental Alert (EA) was founded in **1988 and this year (2018) marks 30 years** of contribution to improved livelihoods and development in Uganda through several interventions in sustainable agriculture, environment and natural resources management. EA is officially registered with the NGO Board as a Ugandan non-governmental organization, incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. EA is governed by an independent Board that is responsible for providing strategic oversight of the organization including ensuring its integrity as a voluntary service organization.

EA is a 1st prize winner of the Energy globe award for environmental sustainability-2005 under the category, earth.

EA is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and a Member of The IUCN National Committee for Uganda.

EA envisions, *'Resilient and dignified communities, managing their environment and natural resources sustainably.'*

EA's mission is to, *'Contribute to improved livelihoods of vulnerable communities by enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainable natural resources management'*

Program and institutional Components:

1. Environment and Natural resources management;
2. Food security and Nutrition;
3. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene;
4. Finance and Administration;
5. Resource mobilization and Investment.

Scale of Implementation:

EA operates in selected districts for generation of evidence to inform policy engagements on agriculture, environment and natural resources at National and International levels. Currently EA's operations are in 20 districts across the country. EA undertakes area wide targeted awareness on selected issues in agriculture, environment and natural resources engagements

EA is a Secretariat for following networks:

- a) The Network for Civil Society Organizations in Environment & Natural Resources Sector (ENR-CSO Network) - <http://enr-cso.org/>;
- b) Uganda Forestry Working Group - <http://ufwg.entalert.org/>;
- c) The Standards Development Group (for promotion of responsible Forest Management in Uganda); and
- d) Promoting Local Innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resources management (PROLINNOVA-Uganda Network) - <http://www.prolinnova.net/uganda>.
- e) National CSO Network on Renewable Energy.

Further information about **Environmental Alert** is available at: <http://entalert.org/>

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