



National Theme: "Fight Air pollution to Protect Human Life and the Environment".

1.0. Introduction

World Environment Day (WED) was formally designated by the United Nations Environment Programme on 5 June 1972, the opening day of the first World Environment Conference in Stockholm, and the first World Environment Day was held in 1974. Since then, nearly 150 countries have been involved every year, with activities that range from *raising awareness for environmental protection to encouraging action for recycling, sustainable development and consumption, fighting global warming, cleaning up pollution and many other issues*. UN Environment has aided in the formulation of guidelines and treaties on issues such as the international trade in potentially harmful chemicals, transboundary air pollution, and contamination of international waterways.

As the world gets hotter as a result of climate change and more crowded because of the ever growing world population, our engines and industrial plants continue to pump out dirty emissions in the earth's atmosphere, while residential biomass burning is becoming the lead contributor to disease burden in low income communities – due to lack of access to clean fuels or technologies. The very air we breathe is growing dangerously polluted – nine of out of ten people now breathe polluted air, which kills 7 million people every. According to the World Health organization (WHO), climate change could potentially increase the number of deaths from air pollution by hundreds of thousands between 2030 and 2050.

2.0. International and National theme

The World Environment Day 2019 will be celebrated globally under the theme "**Air Pollution**". The theme urges governments, industry, communities, and individuals to come together to explore renewable energy, green technologies and improvement of air quality in cities and regions across the world. The Global celebrations will be hosted by **China**. The national celebration will be hosted by **Moroto District Local Government** on Wednesday, 5th June 2019 under the National theme "**Fight Air pollution to Protect Human Life and the Environment**". In Uganda, the WED celebrations will focus on raising awareness on

the dangers of **air pollution** and other issues affecting our environment as well as a call to action to reduce pollution.

3.0. Impact of Air pollution

Historically, air pollution has had major and readily identified impacts on biodiversity in large cities and close to major industrial sources and recovery from these impacts may take decades, especially where there have been long-term effects on soil or water chemistry (Riojas-Rodríguez et al., 2017). The greatest global concern is now the effect of nitrogen deposition and ozone, which have a much wider scale distribution and are a threat to habitats such as bogs, grasslands forests, and heathlands (Riojas-Rodríguez et al., 2017).

According to WHO (2014), Air pollution represents the biggest environmental risk to health. In 2012, one out of every nine deaths was the result of air pollution-related conditions. Of those deaths, around 3 million are attributable solely to ambient (outdoor) air pollution. Air pollution affects all regions, settings, socioeconomic groups, and age groups. While all people living in a given area breathe from the same air, there are nevertheless important geographical differences in exposure to air pollution. Citizens in Africa, Asia or the Middle East breathe much higher levels of air pollutants than those in living other parts of the world. Some places have air pollution levels that are several times higher than those considered safe by the World Health Organization (WHO) Air quality guidelines.

Air pollution is used as a marker of sustainable development, as sources of air pollution also produce climate-modifying pollutants (e.g. CO₂ or black carbon). Policies to address air pollution also generate a range of benefits to human health. Consequently, concerns about air pollution are reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Air pollution levels in cities is cited as an indicator for urban sustainable development (SDG 11); access to clean energy – particularly clean household fuels and technologies – is highlighted as an indicator for sustainable energy (SDG 7).

4.0. How CSOs and the General public can participate

The national celebration will be hosted by **Moroto District Local Government** on Wednesday, 5th June 2019. Table 1 and Table 2 show activities organized by NEMA and Greenpeace & Advocacy Uganda which CSOs, and General public can participate in order to raise public awareness on pollution, and also advocate for better policies.

Table 1: Activities organized by NEMA

#	Activity	Contact details
1	Clean up activity in 4 regions	For details contact NEMA via 1. Dr. Daniel Babikwa (PhD), Daniel.babikwa@nema.go.ug 0772-667066 2. Aiden J. Asekenye Aidan.asekenye@nema.go.ug 0772-579683
2	Tree planting	
3	Radio Talk shows	
4	TV Talk shows (National)	
5	WED Marathon(Moroto)	

Table 2: Activities organized by Greenpeace & Advocacy Uganda

#	Activity	Comment	Contact details
1	Green Match	Will begin from Green park opposite the Railways and end at Centenary park.	For details contact Greenpeace & Advocacy Uganda 1. Akabwai Ogulei Emmanuel, akabwaiemmanuel@yahoo.com 0783-372 789 or 0701-555 451

5.0. Participation of Environmental Alert

Environmental Alert (see **Box 1** for details about Environmental Alert), and ENR-CSO network will participate in the World Environment Day 2019 through the following Activities:

- a) Active participation in the Green Match, including showcasing different lessons and practises.
- b) Issue based articles with policy and practice recommendations for wider dissemination through publication in the popular local media for increased awareness.
- c) Exhibit other IECs from other Civil Society Organisation members of ENR-CSO network

6.0. Challenges and Recommendations

The **Environment and Natural Resources Civil Society Organizations (ENR-CSO) Network** through their published **ENR-CSO Network Position paper 2018**, identified challenges and recommended the government through various line ministries to perform the following to combat environmental pollution:

Table 3: Challenges and Recommendation in the Environment Thematic Working Area

Challenges	Recommendations
<p>i). The enactment of the National Environment Act (NEA) and the related regulation such as Environmental Impact Assessment regulations is long overdue.</p> <p>ii). There are irregularities in the Environment Protection Police Force that is often times involved in land grabbing cases in forest reserves and wetlands and abating environmental crime.</p> <p>iii). Inter-institutional collaboration on environmental issues still needs to be strengthened; setting clear roles for Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), MoLHUD, and Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and how these interface with wetlands, forestry, lands, petroleum infrastructure and wildlife among others.</p>	<p>a. National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) fast tracks the enactment of the National Environment Bill and the related regulations</p> <p>b. MWE/CSOs undertake an audit to review the roles/responsibilities/deployment of the Environmental Protection Police Force (EPPF) in wetlands/forestry/environment more so on how they can support DLGs in abating environmental crime.</p>

Wetlands and **Forests** help in the restoration of the environment through filtering of the water from pollutants and air from toxic chemical respectively, therefore below are the challenges and recommendation to the government through various line ministries to perform in the restoration and conservation of Wetlands and Forests.

Table 4: Challenges and Recommendation for Forest Thematic Area.

Challenges	Recommendations
i. Failure to curb illegal logging in northern Uganda	a. Implement the presidential ban on logging
ii. The influx of refugees has presented stress on environment and natural resources	b. CSOs engage MWE and Office of the Prime Minister on sustainable utilization of environment and natural resources in refugee settlements.
iii. Failure to cancel land titles in forest reserves despite the plea from CSOs and commission of inquiry on land matters.	c. MWE, Forest Sector Support Department (FSSD), National Forestry Authority (NFA) and affected District Local Governments fast track the cancellation of titles in forest reserves and wetlands across the country.
iv. Inadequate funds to NFA, FSSD, District Forest Services (DFS) to implement their mandates.	d. CSOs support MWE in lobbying for increased funding of the sector, especially at parliamentary level.
v. Delay in the finalization of registration and recognition of community forests.	e. MWE/FSSD fast tracks the registration of community forests
vi. The District Land Board, sub-county chiefs (Senior Assistant Secretaries) and area land committees are not aware of their roles in ENR management, a reason for continued issuance of titles in reserves,	f. MWE engages MoLG and Ministry of Lands Housing and Urban Development (MoLHUD) on issuance of land titles in gazetted areas.
vii. A delay in up scaling collaborative forest management undermines community interest/role/responsibility in policing and enforcement of ENR management at community level.	g. NFA and DFS roll out Collaborative Forest Management especially those communities that have applied for memorandum of understanding.
viii. Boundaries for wetlands and forest reserves continue to be a challenge, especially with communities living adjacent to these resources.	h. MWE/NFA needs to fast track work on demarcation of wetlands and forest reserve boundaries

Table4: Challenges and Recommendations in the Wetland Thematic Area

Challenges	Recommendations
i). Donors, government, Civil Society Organizations continue to have low investments in the sector.	a) Donors, Government of Uganda, Civil Society Organizations should increase funding to the wetlands sector.
ii). Developers continuously reclaiming wetlands despite the awareness created.	b) Environment Protection Police Force (EPPF) should fast track wetlands reclamation and bring culprits to book.
iii). Bigger proportions of wetlands in the rural areas are not demarcated and are affected by agricultural expansion especially by large scale farms and industrial parks.	c) Ministry of Water and Environment to identify resources for demarcation of wetlands in rural areas.
iv). District local governments have a challenge of developing management plans for wetlands and yet they are underfunded.	d) Ministry of Water and Environment / Civil Society Organizations should promote Ecosystem Based Adaptation approaches that aim at sustainable utilization (for multiple benefits) of wetlands at community level.

References

Riojas-Rodríguez, H., Romieu, I., & Hernández-Ávila, M. (2017). Air pollution. In *Occupational and Environmental Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190662677.003.0018>

WHO. (2014). *Ambient (outdoor) air quality and health*. World Health Organization. <https://doi.org/9789241511353>

ENR-CSO Network (2018), ENR-CSO Network Position paper 2018, <http://enr-cso.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/ENR-CSO-Annual-Report201811March2019.pdf>

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 Sustainable 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>.

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