



UGANDA WATER AND ENVIRONMENT WEEK-2020 (UWEWK-2020)

Call for Abstracts

This is a call for conference abstracts that address the theme: **“Water and Environment Resources for Inclusive-Growth, Employment and Wealth Creation.**

Abstracts may be drawn from research papers, case studies, topical reports, photos, videos and posters

Background

The Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) in collaboration with key partners has so far held the two annual UWEWK in March 2018 and 2019 respectively. These events attracted high-level political participation including the Vice President and the Prime Minister, and other stakeholders both nationally and internationally. In addition, the sector professionals, private sector and academic communities presented papers, exchanged knowledge and built relationships.

Based on the success of the previous UWEWKs, the MWE through the Water Resources Institute (WRI) will hold the third UWEWK at the Water Resource Institute in Entebbe from **Monday 23rd March to Friday 27th March 2020**. The event will start with the annual commemoration of three important International Days: World Forest Day (March 21st), World Water Day (March 22nd) and World Meteorological Day (March 23rd) on 23rd March 2019.

The UWEWK 2020 is intrinsically linked to: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); achievement of economic goals such as reaching middle income status by 2020; and to Uganda’s National Development Plan III (NDP III), which focuses on achieving structural transformation through increased industrial activity, with emphasis on manufacturing, including value addition in agro-processing. As Uganda seeks to industrialize and meet national development goals, development and management of water and environment resources will be critical to ensuring steady growth of the manufacturing, agricultural and service sectors.

Abstracts are requested in line with the following sub-themes:

1. Water and Environment Security for Inclusive-growth

Water and environment resources support life and social economic activities. Water is central to agriculture, the mainstay of Uganda’s economy, from which about 85% of the population derives their incomes and livelihoods. Provision of adequate water for agriculture will spur transformation of the economy through increased productivity for both livestock and crops. Water is also required as an indispensable input in agro-industrialization. It must, therefore, be available in adequate quantities and corresponding quality at the right time and right place in order to

contribute to the achievement of the development goal of increased household incomes and improved quality of life of the population.

Environment and natural resources are under increasing pressure despite their importance in ensuring water and environment security and social and economic growth. For example, the forest cover has declined from 24% (or 4.9 million ha) of Uganda’s total land area in 1990 to 9% (1.83 million ha) in 2018, a reduction of 57% in just 25 years. This majorly attributed to biomass fuel cooking/combustion with other auxiliary drivers such as expansion of agricultural land, sporadic urbanization, and income poverty, industrialization and inadequate incentives for private plantation forests. About 90% of Ugandans use fire wood and charcoal for cooking. Other challenges include encroachment, illegal harvesting and titling. Similarly, the national wetlands coverage as a percentage of the total land area declined from 15.6% in 1994 to 8.4% in 2016. It is estimated that Uganda loses 846 km² of its wetlands annually. The major causes of wetland degradation are poor farming practices, unplanned urbanization and settlements, excessive water abstraction, income poverty, poor intra and inter sector coordination with regards to continued issuance of land titles in wetlands, sand mining and industrialization with some of the demarcated business/industrial parks located in wetlands. This sub-theme will therefore explore the impacts of degradation of environment and natural resources on achievement of NDPIII targets and what needs to be done to ensure environmental security for inclusive growth.

1. Water and Environment for Employment and Wealth Creation

The contribution of water, environment and natural resources to employment and wealth creation has already been recognised by the country although a lot more still needs to be done to exploit this potential. For example, Uganda’s forests supply 88 % of all its energy needs, provide 61% of Uganda’s tourism income and provides jobs for about 1 million people. Over the last five years, private commercial plantations have been promoted together with tree planting campaigns and distribution of about 62 million seedlings out of 88 million produced. About 3,500 ha of degraded natural forests have been restored and 60,000 ha were allocated to private developers for commercial tree plantation development, out of which 5,400 ha of new plantations have been established. However, the restoration of forests and tree cover by natural regeneration or by plantation or by agroforestry has not kept pace with the annual loss of forest cover and loss of individual trees. This trend is likely to affect employment and wealth creation of especially the youth in Uganda. The same situation can be said of wetlands and other natural resources.

This sub-theme will also give focus to innovative solutions for more efficient and productive development and management of water, environment and natural resources; case studies of integrated water development and management schemes that account for the water demand and supply as well as land and the environment. It will also address the new approaches to achieving Water-Food-Energy nexus as well as approaches for addressing environmental degradation and water scarcity and through non-conventional water and environment resources management approaches. Thus, ensuring sound management and sustainable utilization

of water, environment and natural resources, and mitigation of impact of climate variability and climate change will be key for employment and wealth creation and general economic growth. The sub-theme will therefore explore opportunities for increasing incomes and employment through sustainable use and value addition to water, forests and other natural resources

2. Climate change and achievement of NDP III goals

Uganda is experiencing changes in the climatic conditions and this has been exacerbated by anthropogenic activities related to degradation of natural resources. This is having devastating impacts on the society and undermining Uganda’s social and economic growth. The changes in climatic conditions have caused floods, droughts and landslides in various parts of the country resulting in destruction of infrastructure, crops and settlement structures and general destruction of peoples’ livelihoods. The key impacts have been on agriculture (crop failures due to drought and destruction by flooding), energy (especially hydropower generation), transport (destruction of roads and bridges), water supply (affecting quantity and quality), livestock production (affecting pasture production, water supply and many other negative impacts).

If the NDP III focus of investing in critical national infrastructure projects to lower production costs, enhance international competitiveness and facilitate the sustainable exploitation of developmental opportunities in agriculture, tourism, minerals, and oil/gas is to be realized there will need to address impacts of climate change. There is therefore a need to enhance the resilience of the various sectors of the economy and the communities to climate related shocks through implementing appropriate climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Full papers and poster presentations will be submitted upon successful review and acceptance of abstracts. Abstracts (**not exceeding 300 words**) that are in line with the theme of the event should be sent to wri-ugat@gmail.com after the deadline for abstract submission.

IMPORTANT DATES

Abstract Submission: 14th February 2020

Write-shop: 27th – 28th February 2020

Deadline for Full Papers: 10th March 2020

UWEWK: Monday 23rd – Friday 27th 2020

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