



UGANDA WATER AND ENVIRONMENT WEEK-2021 (UWEWK-2021)

Call for Abstracts

This is a call for conference abstracts that address the theme: *“water and environment security for socio-economic transformation of Uganda.”*

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 present 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 22nd March to Friday 26th March 2021**. 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 2nd March 2021.

The UWEWK 2021 is intrinsically linked to; NPDIH which focuses on enhancing value addition in key growth opportunities; reduce environmental degradation and the adverse effects of climate change as well as improve utilization of natural resources for sustainable economic growth and livelihood security.

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

a) Valuing Water and Environment resources

Uganda’s economy will continue to depend on the available stock of water, environmental and natural resources to produce goods and deliver services. Industrialization highly relies on raw materials from the environment and natural resources. Increasing forest and wetland cover is vital for maintain water flows for hydropower generation, agriculture, fisheries, domestic water supply, industry, navigation, tourism, wildlife and ecosystems. Preserving water and environment resources is critical for human health and tourism. In addition, mitigating the climate change orchestrated impact of droughts, floods, heat waves and landslides on the livelihood of vulnerable populations is critical for reducing income inequality, improving livelihoods and ensuring energy, water, food and ecosystem security.

In Uganda water is being considered as a driving force in transforming of agriculture from subsistence to commercial farming through irrigation and other inputs. Similarly, the country relies almost entirely on hydropower generation to boost industrialization of the country to middle class economy by 2030.

This sub-theme will focus on sustainable use and value addition to water resources, forests, wetland, rangelands and other natural resources for

increased incomes and employment. It will highlight the importance of raising awareness on the value of water, environment and natural resources in transforming the socio-economic status of Ugandan population and improve livelihood. Furthermore, it will look into ensuring coordinated and sustainable national infrastructure projects considering that Uganda’s economy relies almost entirely on the stock of water, environmental and natural resources to produce goods and deliver services.

b) Water and environment in a creative economy

Creative economy also known as knowledge and innovation economy is an evolving concept which builds on the interplay between human creativity and ideas, intellectual property, knowledge and technology. Essentially it is the knowledge-based economic activities upon which the 'creative industries' are based. The creative economy cuts across the arts, business and connectivity, driving innovation and new business models. The creative economy is both fragmented and society-inclusive. Today it is strongly influenced by the growing role of social networks. These new tools, such as blogs, forums and wikis, facilitate connectivity and collaboration among creative people, products and places. Policies for the creative economy have to respond not only to economic needs but also to special demands from local communities related to education, cultural identity, social inequalities and environmental concerns. This sub-theme will focus to innovative solutions for more efficient and productive development and management of water, environment and natural resources for sustainable socio-economic transformation of Ugandan population to the mid-class citizens. The sub-theme will also focus on increasing investment in value addition to environment and natural resources products and services, promoting natural resource accounting to improve the national income measurement and marketing of the products using creative economy approach.

c) Dealing with water and environment shocks

Water and environmental disasters/shocks include among others, floods, landslides, tsunamis, storms, heat waves, cold spells, droughts, lightning, waterborne disease outbreaks, pandemics etc. These are all becoming more frequent and more intense in past few decades. The impacts and costs of these events are exacerbated by such factors as unplanned urbanization, pollution, industrialization, population growth, excessive release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and degradation of ecosystem services. Increased rainfall intensity and duration is causing more extensive flooding in both rural and urban areas.

Severe weather including heavy rainfall and lightning has been affecting parts of Uganda, resulting in fatalities and people displacement in recent decade. In 2020 alone, number of areas have / are experiencing severe effects of floods that have displaced over 300,000 people, a number of key bridges and roads have been washed away across the country making transportation a nightmare for commuters, damaged over 20,000 houses. Furthermore, the May 2020 heavy rainfall resulted in the highest water level rise in Lake Victoria (13.48m) ever recorded since May 1964 in Uganda. This, eventually cascaded into the rise water level in the other major lakes (Kyoga, Albert) within the Nile basin in Uganda which caused flooding and displacement of the communities within the shores of the lakes.

This sub-theme will discuss how societies should manage and develop their water and environment resources to address risks associated with climate change at the same time improving people’s livelihood. The sub-theme will also focus on the role of research, innovation and adoption of green appropriate technology to foster sustainable use and management of water and environment resources and reduce human and economic loss from natural hazards and disasters.

d) Ensuring water and environment security for sustainable urban growth

The national vision to transform Uganda’s economy through industrialization is dependent on the country’s capacity to strengthen fundamentals that drive socio-economic development, which include among others, urban development, land management, water and environment resources management, and innovation. By 2050, two-thirds of the 6.5 billion people will be in urban areas. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without significantly transforming the way we build and manage our urban spaces. Making cities sustainable means creating career and business opportunities, safe and affordable housing, and building resilient societies and economies

Water and environment security has emerged as a primary sustainability challenge for urban areas at national and international level since it is a key determinant for security of other vital societal aspects including the economy, food, public health, and the environment and thus has a complex political spectrum that goes far beyond the traditional water and environment sector. To achieve water and environment security, there is need for policy makers, the private sector, and civil society to create an environment which allows among other things, to enhance livelihoods of the urban poor who encroach on vital natural urban ecosystems, to mitigate and manage flood risk and damage, to efficiently use and manage water and environment resources, to reduce, treat and recycle waste and waste water, to protect and restore urban wetlands and forest ecosystems, and to make use of cross sector benefits arising from continued investment in water security.

This sub-theme will focus on innovation within the urban setting that will involve appropriate technologies in terms of: i) environmental concerns (air pollution, water and soil contamination); ii) poverty reduction and employment generation; iii) economic sustainability (cost benefit, short to long term) and iv) environmental sustainability (resource savings and reclamation, reduction in greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions) among others.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Abstract Submission: 31st January 2021

Write-shop: 16th – 17th February 2021

Deadline for Full Papers: 19th February 2021

UWEWK: Monday 22nd – Friday 26th March 2021

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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 and sub-themes of the conference should be sent to uwewk@mwe.go.ug and copied to wri.uga@gmail.com **not later than 31st January 2021**.