



NEWSLETTER

JAN - JUNE 2025

**Empowering Communities,
Advocating for Environmental Rights,
and Litigating for Justice**



Message from Our Director

In recent months, Greenwatch has actively engaged in key national and community-led initiatives that reflect our unwavering commitment to environmental justice, legal advocacy, and public interest litigation.

From restoring vital ecosystems to shaping oil spill preparedness and participating in youth-led climate forums, these experiences have reaffirmed the power of collaboration in driving real change.

Each engagement has been an opportunity to strengthen environmental governance, raise awareness on critical legal frameworks, and stand in solidarity with communities most impacted by environmental harm.

We remain steadfast in our mission to promote the rule of law in environmental protection, and to ensure that every policy and project prioritizes people, the planet, and justice. Our work continues—with purpose, with urgency, and with hope for a greener, more equitable future.

Thank you to all partners, stakeholders, and supporters who journey with us.

Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa

Director, Greenwatch

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EACOP Oil Spill Workshop: Enhancing Emergency Preparedness

Date: February 12, 2025

Venue: Golden Tulip, Kampala

Organized by: East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP)

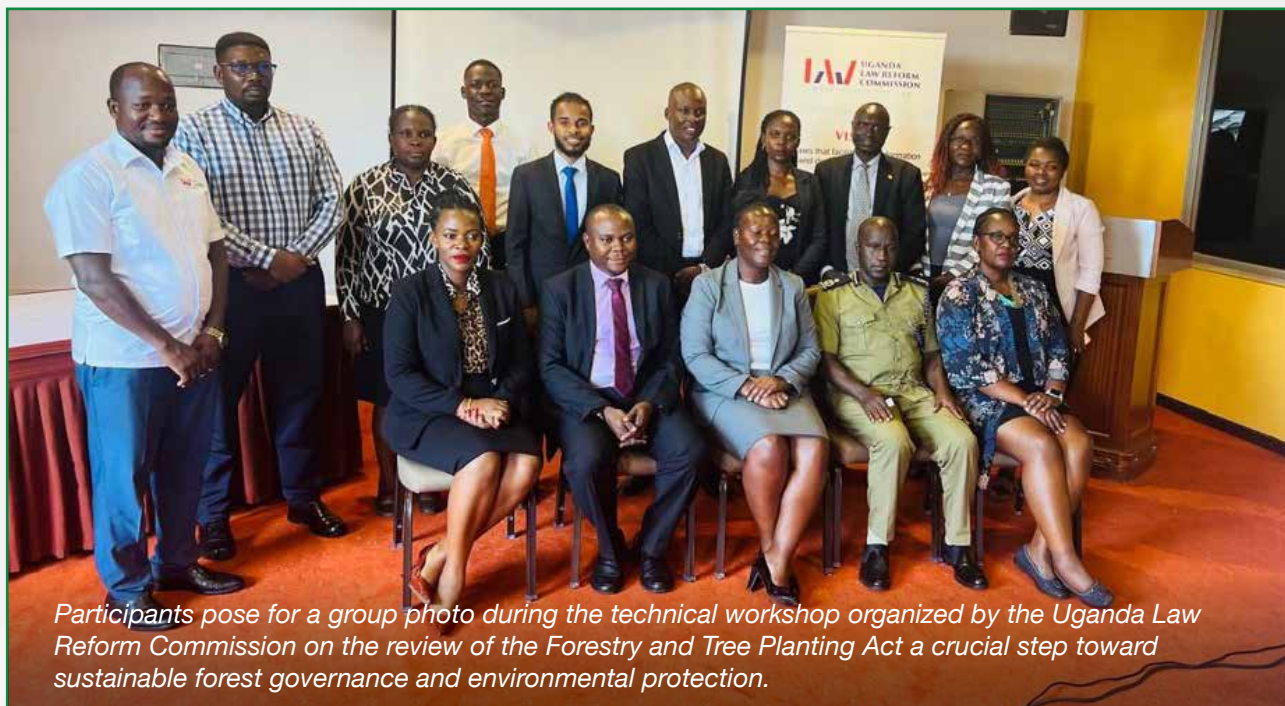
As part of our ongoing mission to empower communities, advocate for environmental rights, and litigate for justice, Greenwatch participated in the EACOP Oil Spill Workshop held in Kampala. The workshop brought together key stakeholders including representatives from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), the Ministry of Water and Environment, as well as Uganda's army and counterterrorism units.

Greenwatch was represented by our Legal Project Officer, Abdun Bwanadi, who joined national actors to examine Uganda's readiness to respond to potential oil spills along the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) corridor. The session emphasized the importance of environmental safety, accountability, and risk mitigation through open dialogue and preparedness.

EACOP shared updates on its pollution response planning efforts, including the contracting of consultants for Oil Spill Contingency Planning (OSCP). The terrestrial construction phase pollution response plan was submitted to NEMA in July 2024. Participants were informed that the crude oil transported through the pipeline is waxy, which potentially minimizes its

spread and environmental impact in the event of a spill. However, this does not eliminate the risk, particularly to biodiversity and community livelihoods.

For Greenwatch, the workshop provided a critical platform to assess existing gaps in oil spill preparedness, including limited landowner tracking, unresolved compensation disputes, inadequate research and monitoring systems, and weak community engagement structures. Abdun noted that while efforts are being made to comply with environmental obligations, civil society's role in holding project developers accountable remains vital.



Participants pose for a group photo during the technical workshop organized by the Uganda Law Reform Commission on the review of the Forestry and Tree Planting Act a crucial step toward sustainable forest governance and environmental protection.

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Technical Review of the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act

Date: February 20, 2025

Venue: Kabira Country Club, Bukoto

Organized by: Uganda Law Reform Commission

The Uganda Law Reform Commission hosted a Technical Working Group Meeting to assess and review the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act (Cap 160). Participants included stakeholders from the Ministry of Water and Environment, NEMA, NFA, UWA, Uganda Police, UNODC, and civil society organizations.

The session highlighted critical gaps in Uganda's forest governance, including unregulated private forests, the need for specialized forest courts and stronger legal frameworks for plantation farming and charcoal production.

The discussion shifted when the Assistant Commissioner (Ministry of Water) raised concerns about procedural overlaps and mandate conflicts, underscoring, coordination challenges for Greenwatch, participating in this dialogue was an honor and a strategic alignment as our ongoing climate litigation directly addresses forest cover depletion. Bridging these critical gaps marks a tangible step forward in conserving Uganda's forests ensuring their protection for future generation.

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Civil Society Roundtable on Livelihood Restoration in Tilenga Areas**Date:** February 20, 2025**Venue:** Golden Tulip, Kampala**Organized by:** TotalEnergies & Joint Venture Partners

TotalEnergies, in collaboration with CNOOC, UNOC, the Petroleum Authority of Uganda, and NGOs, hosted a roundtable discussion on Livelihood Restoration and Agricultural Development Initiatives. The session showcased progress under the Tilenga Project's Human Rights Action Plan Framework, following a comprehensive Human Rights Impact Assessment.

The six-month program focuses on restoring livelihoods, promoting food security, and facilitating environmental restoration—including large-scale tree planting projects. So far, 98% of the affected communities have been compensated, a milestone in ensuring inclusive development.

Challenges such as missing landowners, climate unpredictability, and increasing legal disputes were noted. The roundtable highlighted the importance of ongoing engagement with NGOs, local governments, and international consultants to ensure the rights and well-being of Project Affected Persons (PAPs) are upheld.

Include reason why it was important for Greenwatch to be a part of this meeting.



Judith Nansubuga, Greenwatch's Legal Project Officer, making a submission during the Civil Society Roundtable on Livelihood Restoration in Tilenga Areas

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Greenwatch Joins Effort to Restore River Rwembya in Kasese**Dates:** March 27–28, 2025**Location:** River Rwembya, Kasese District**Organized by:** Uganda Law Society, Greenwatch, Kenneth Kakuru Earth Reboot Initiative

Participating Institutions: Saint Teresa Girls Secondary School, Rafiki Justice and Environmental Organization (RAJEEL), Kisinga Town Council

As part of our project to strengthen judicial capacity in Uganda through continued education, Greenwatch joined the Uganda Law Society and the Kenneth Kakuru Earth Reboot Initiative in a powerful two-day environmental restoration campaign along River Rwembya. The initiative also featured a unique Continuing Legal Education (CLE) session for young legal practitioners, emphasizing climate advocacy and the real-world application of environmental law.

Participants—including lawyers, students, civil society groups, and local leaders—visited degraded sites, discussed the impact of climate change on local ecosystems, and took action by planting indigenous trees to restore riverbanks and prevent flooding.

This experience highlighted the critical role of legal professionals in driving environmental justice, and the importance of engaging youth in conservation.



Participants pose for a group photo after a successful two-day River Rwembya restoration campaign in Kasese District.

Read the full report on our website.



Participants hold tree seedlings during the River Rwembya restoration event



Greenwatch Director Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa and Kenneth Kakuru Earth Reboot Initiative Director Rose Kakuru Ikiriza share a moment after planting bamboo along River Rwembya

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Climate Action Summit: Empowering Youth for Climate Solutions

Date: April 22, 2025 (Earth Day)

Venue: SINA HQ, Mpigi

Organized by: HerStart Innovate, Youth Challenge International, Gejja Women, ENABLE, Jangu International

On April 22, 2025, Greenwatch joined climate scientists, youth leaders, and government officials at the Climate Action Summit held at SINA HQ in Mpigi to mark Earth Day.

Organized under the theme “Empowering Rural Innovators for Climate Action in Uganda” by HerStart Innovate, Youth Challenge International, Gejja Women, ENABLE, and Jangu International, the summit brought together diverse stakeholders to spotlight locally-led climate solutions and the role of youth in advancing sustainable change.

Greenwatch was represented by Judith Nansubuga, the organization’s Legal Project Officer, who contributed to discussions on bamboo farming, agroforestry, and policy incentives—key areas where strong legal frameworks are needed to strengthen rural climate adaptation. The summit emphasized that grassroots innovations need legal and financial support to thrive, and that collaboration between government, civil society, and youth-led initiatives is essential.

Calls for urgent policy reform resonated throughout the event, particularly the need for laws that incentivize sustainable practices and increase access to climate resources for rural communities. Greenwatch remains committed to pushing these reforms forward through litigation, policy advocacy, and community engagement—ensuring that rural innovators are empowered and that environmental justice is upheld.



Greenwatch Legal Project Officer Judith Nansubuga shares a moment with fellow participants

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Greenwatch Marks Earth Day with Clean Energy Advocacy at “The Green Zone” Launch

Date: April 22, 2025 (Earth Day)

Venue: Yujo Izakaya, Plot 36 Kyandondo Road, Nakasero, Kampala

In commemoration of World Earth Day 2025, Greenwatch participated in the launch of the Green Zone, a creative and educational event hosted by Green Lens International in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD) under the global theme, “Our Power, Our Planet.” Held at Yujo Izakaya in Kampala, the event brought together climate actors from across sectors—including youth, policymakers, environmentalists, innovators, and creatives—to explore sustainable energy solutions and raise awareness about the urgent need for climate action.

The event featured live demonstrations of climate-smart technologies, including solar cookers, modern biomass cookstoves, electric pressure cookers, and e-bikes, all designed to showcase clean, accessible alternatives for Ugandan households. Participants had the opportunity to interact with these innovations and understand their potential to support both environmental protection and improved livelihoods.

Youth voices were at the heart of the program. Ten-year-old Little Martina captured attention with her original Earth Day anthem, “Go Green,” calling on citizens to conserve nature and unite against climate change. The cultural program also included performances by artists like Naava Grey, Afromenco Band, and poets Mitch Isabirye, Loretta Kansiime, and Angel Kabera, who used storytelling and spoken word to reflect on environmental justice, resilience, and the role of women in climate leadership.

Read the full story:

[The Green Zone Launch – World Earth Day 2025](#)



Nelson Byanyima, Founder of Green Lens and Communications Officer at Greenwatch, delivers Earth Day remarks at the Green Zone launch.

Greenwatch Participates in 2025 International Corporate Accountability Roundtable (ICAR)

Theme: Corporate Accountability in the Era of Democratic Backsliding, Corporate Influence, and Civic Space Suppression

Date: 7th – 8th May 2025

Venue: George Washington University, Elliott School of International Affairs, Washington D.C.

In early May, Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa, Executive Director and Legal Counsel at Greenwatch, participated in the 2025 International Corporate Accountability Roundtable (ICAR) held at George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs in Washington D.C., USA.

Supported by Greenwatch's partner True Cost Initiative (TCI), Samantha joined over 100 participants from civil society organisations, philanthropic institutions, and accountability advocates from across the globe. The support enabled Greenwatch to be one of the Global South participants to benefit and engage in the conversation on corporate power and civic space.

Held under the theme "Corporate Accountability in the Era of Democratic Backsliding, Corporate Influence, and Suppression of Civic Space," the two-day meeting featured engaging panel discussions, in-depth breakout sessions, and a networking reception that encouraged peer exchange and collaboration.

One of the standout sessions for Samantha was "Greenpeace Trial Updates: Implications and the Fight Ahead," where parallels were drawn between Greenpeace's global advocacy efforts and Greenwatch's work in Uganda. Greenpeace's three-entity model, courtroom strategies, and media engagement tactics provided useful insights for strengthening strategic litigation and public interest advocacy. Greenwatch's participation reinforced the idea that corporate accountability is a global movement, and meaningful change requires diverse voices, especially from those closest to the harm.



Civil Society Stakeholders Join Annual Petroleum Project Monitoring in Albertine Graben

Date: April 27–30, 2025

Venue: Hoima, Albertine Graben

Participating Organization: Greenwatch and other Civil Society Coalition on Oil and Gas (CSCO) members

From April 27th to 30th, 2025, over 30 representatives from civil society organizations across Uganda convened for a critical field exercise to monitor petroleum projects within the Albertine Graben. This activity, organized under the Civil Society Coalition on Oil and Gas (CSCO), builds on the coalition's long-standing tradition of annual monitoring aimed at promoting transparency and accountability in Uganda's oil and gas sector.

The monitoring exercise kicked off on Sunday, April 27th, with participants departing from Course View Towers at 2:00 pm. Over the following days, participants conducted site visits covering upstream, midstream, and mainstream operations, assessing adherence to environmental safety and health standards.

Greenwatch was represented by our Legal Project Officer, Judith Nansubuga, who joined fellow civil society monitors in engaging with Joint Venture Partners (JVPs) and government entities such as the Petroleum Authority Uganda (PAU). The monitoring focused on evaluating compliance with environmental safeguards, waste management, and community engagement practices.



Greenwatch's Legal Project Officer, Judith Nansubuga, joins fellow participants during the petroleum project monitoring field visit in the Albertine Graben.

Key observations included best practices like CNOOC's proper waste management and TEPU's use of geo-membrane covers to reduce soil erosion. However, the team also noted challenges such as the absence of geo-membrane coverage at the Tilenga Industrial Park, poor drainage systems causing flooding, and concerns over water discoloration at Kingfisher sites, which may pose health risks if unaddressed.

The exercise highlighted the importance of continued collaboration between civil society, developers, and regulators to ensure environmental protection and community well-being in the Albertine Graben. Participants emphasized the need for more transparent access for civil society to project sites to enhance oversight and foster sustainable development.

This monitoring exercise reaffirms the commitment of CSCO and participating organizations, including Greenwatch, to advocate for responsible petroleum sector development that safeguards Uganda's environment and communities.

Celebrating Excellence in Climate Journalism at the Uganda National Journalism Awards 2025

Date: May 28, 2025

Venue: Mestil Hotel, Kampala

Organized by: African Centre for Media Excellence (ACME)

On May 28, 2025, Greenwatch had the honor of attending the prestigious Uganda National Journalism Awards hosted by the African Centre for Media Excellence (ACME) at Mestil Hotel, Kampala. This event brought together Uganda's leading journalists, media executives, civil society, and government officials to celebrate outstanding journalism that drives positive change.

Greenwatch was represented by our Director, Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa, and Legal Project Officer Abdun Bwanadi. Our team was specially invited to witness the awarding of the Climate Change Reporting category—an area close to our mission of promoting environmental awareness.

The Climate Change Reporting Award recognized journalists who bring critical climate issues to the forefront, inspiring action and informing communities. This year, Martin Amayiko of Radio Simba won the individual award for his impactful coverage on deforestation, while New Vision received the institutional award for sustained climate reporting.



New Vision editors accept the first-place Institutional Climate Change Reporting Award from representatives of the British High Commission and Climate Smart Jobs.

Keynote speaker, URA Commissioner General John Musinguzi, emphasized the vital role of accurate, responsible journalism in shaping public trust and informed decision-making. Greenwatch looks forward to strengthening partnerships that elevate environmental journalism and amplify voices tackling climate challenges in Uganda.



Our Director Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa alongside Legal Project Officer Abdun Bwanadi at the Uganda National Journalism Awards ceremony

Looking Ahead

Greenwatch continues to advocate for stronger environmental laws, inclusive policy processes, and community-centered climate solutions. Through our legal, advocacy, and capacity-building work, we remain committed to ensuring every Ugandan enjoys the right to a clean and healthy environment.



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