



Annual Report 2024



1. Message from the Director

As we reflect on 2024, I am honored to present this comprehensive report highlighting the achievements, challenges, and progress of Greenwatch this year. It marked a transformative chapter as we celebrated 29 years of environmental advocacy and embraced a new brand identity that reflects our growth and commitment to sustainability. Through impactful activities such as launching Uganda's Air Quality Standards, planting thousands of indigenous trees, empowering mining host communities, and engaging young legal professionals, Greenwatch demonstrated its unwavering dedication to

advancing environmental rights and justice. Each milestone, achieved through collaboration and resilience, brings us closer to realizing our vision of a Uganda where all citizens enjoy their fundamental right to a clean and healthy environment.

Thank you for your continued partnership on this journey.

Warm regards,

Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa

Director, Greenwatch

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2.

Rebranding: A New Era for Greenwatch

1995



2024



In 2024, Greenwatch proudly unveiled a revitalized brand identity reflecting our evolving environmental advocacy role. This transformation includes a redesigned logo, prominently featuring vibrant green tones that symbolize renewal, growth, and sustainability—values that have always been at the heart of our work.

For nearly three decades, Greenwatch has been a steadfast champion of environmental protection and sustainability. Since our founding in 1995, our logo has served as a symbol of this commitment. However, as branding trends evolve and our organization grows in its scope and influence, we recognized that it was time for a change.

Our new brand identity is not just a cosmetic update but a reaffirmation of our mission and the principles that guide us.

The redesigned logo, with its enhanced green hues, embodies nature, growth, and renewal—furthering our core values of conservation, sustainability, and action. It is a reflection of our long-standing history of environmental stewardship, while also signaling our forward-thinking approach to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

This rebranding strengthens our visibility and helps us better connect with stakeholders. By embracing modern design trends, we aim to make our message resonate more widely and ensure that our supporters can easily engage with us. Our new look reinforces our commitment to driving positive change for Uganda's environment and enhances our ability to advocate for the causes we believe in.

3.

Greenwatch at 29: Celebrating Our Legacy

On April 25th, Greenwatch celebrated 29 years of impactful environmental advocacy. Through engaging visual content such as infographics, we showcased the highlights of our journey, emphasizing successes in Public Interest Environmental Litigation, Capacity Building, and our enduring commitment to climate justice.

From landmark legal cases challenging environmental degradation to initiatives in partnership with institutions like the Judicial Training Institute (JTI), Greenwatch's influence has been far-reaching.

4.

Welcoming New Team Members

In 2024, Greenwatch expanded its team with the addition of several talented and passionate professionals, strengthening our capacity to advance environmental justice and sustainability.

In February, we welcomed a vibrant new team that brought diverse backgrounds and fresh perspectives:



*Greenwatch staff at the recent end-of-year retreat at Explorer Ranch in Bwerenga.
From left: Nelson Byanyima, Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa, Judith
Nansubuga, Raymond Tindimwebwa, Abdun Bwana, and Joy Amanda.*

Joy Amanda, Operations Manager & Administrator, brings extensive experience in organizational management, partner relations, and community empowerment. With a deep passion for nature, Amanda is committed to enhancing environmental conservation efforts and promoting initiatives focused on volunteerism, education, and empowering female entrepreneurs. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Makerere University Business School.

Nelson Byanyima, Communications Coordinator, joined in February with over a decade of experience in environmental communications. Nelson's expertise in content creation, digital media, and stakeholder engagement is essential in driving impactful environmental campaigns. As the founder of Green Lens International, he continues to lead efforts in advocating for environmental conservation, clean energy, and climate action.

Mahad Baryamujura, Legal Project Officer, joined us with a wealth of experience in environmental law. Before joining Greenwatch, Mahad gained valuable experience through clerkships and volunteer work at Kakuru & Co. Advocates, sharpening his litigation and corporate law skills. He holds a Bachelor of Laws from Kampala International University and a Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the Law Development Centre. Mahad has since joined the LLM (Master of Laws) program at Makerere University. Greenwatch is grateful for his contributions.

Judith Nansubuga, In October, we were excited to welcome Judith Nansubuga as our new Legal Project Officer. Judith is a passionate human rights and environmental activist with a strong dedication to women rights, empowering communities and inspiring youth in the areas of social justice and environmental conservation. She holds a Bachelor of Laws from Uganda Christian University and a Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the Law Development Centre.

Raymond Tindimwebwa also joined the team as a Legal Project Officer specifically to support the establishment of Greenwatch as an environmental law clinic. Raymond brings a wealth of experience in mediation, corporate governance, and environmental law. He has a strong interest in legal innovation and public interest litigation, and his experience will play a pivotal role in advancing our advocacy work.

Abdun Bwana Bwanadi, Climate Legal Fellow, is a dedicated advocate for environmental protection and climate justice across East Africa. Abdun is a dual-licensed advocate in Kenya and Uganda, with a strong commitment to supporting pro bono legal services and empowering communities affected by climate change. His expertise and passion for climate justice are invaluable assets to our team.

5.

Key Activities and Milestones in 2024

ELAW Annual General Meeting (February 2024)

Greenwatch participated in the ELAW AGM in Eugene, Oregon, where our director reconnected with global partners, shared experiences, and strengthened collaborations on shared environmental challenges.



Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa, Director, Greenwatch Uganda, with other delegates at the ELAW AGM in Eugene Oregon, February 2024.

World Wildlife Day Campaign (March 3rd, 2024)

On March 3rd, Greenwatch Uganda joined the global community in celebrating [World Wildlife Day 2024](#) under the theme “Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation.” Collaborating with partners such as Green Lens International, [Roofings Forever](#), [Forestry](#), [The Kenneth Kakuru Afforestation and Reforestation Initiative](#), and Trip Addicts, the event was hosted at [the CTC Conservation Centre](#) in Butambala.

Together, we engaged in a range of activities to raise awareness about the importance of wildlife conservation in Uganda. Notably, during the event, we planted over 500 indigenous and fruit trees,

contributing to biodiversity enhancement and ecological restoration efforts at CTC.

Watch the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sRPr_fcVLE0&t=2s



Greenwatch, CTC, and The Kenneth Kakuru Afforestation & Reforestation Initiative members during the tree planting activity at CTC Conservation Center.

First Memorial Celebration of Hon. Justice Kenneth Kakuru (March 9th, 2024)

On March 9th, Greenwatch staff joined the family and friends of our esteemed late founder, Hon. Justice Kenneth Kakuru, at his ancestral home in Rwebishuri, Mbarara. During the memorial, the family launched The Kenneth Kakuru Afforestation & Reforestation Initiative to keep his legacy alive through afforestation and reafforestation projects in Uganda. 100 trees were planted in Kyamugorani, Mbarara where the late Justice Kakuru grew up.



Family and friends of our late founder, Hon. Justice Kenneth Kakuru, participating in a tree planting activity in Kyamugorani, Mbarara, during the launch of the Kenneth Kakuru Tree Planting Initiative.

Launch of Air Quality Standards (May 9th, 2024)

Greenwatch was invited to the official launch of the National Environment (Air Quality Standards) Regulations of 2024 by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). This marks a pivotal step in Uganda's efforts to combat air pollution and protect public health.

The regulations, developed through extensive collaboration with key stakeholders, including the U.S. Embassy and Kampala Capital City Authority, set clear standards for indoor air quality in workplaces and enclosed environments.

These regulations impose strict emission limits on industrial facilities, vehicles, and other pollution sources, backed by a robust permit and compliance program. Industries that exceed emission standards will face severe penalties, including fines and imprisonment. Local governments will play a critical

role in enforcing these regulations, as emphasized by Jennifer Kutesakwe, Senior Environment Inspector in charge of air quality.

Here is the link to the standards; <https://shorturl.at/wgiYg>



Key officials, including NEMA Managing Director Dr. Barirega Akankwasah and Hon. Beatrice Anywar, Minister of State for Environment, during the launch of Uganda's National Air Quality Standards

First Board Members Meeting (May 17th, 2024)

Greenwatch held its inaugural Board meeting, bringing together seven distinguished members with diverse expertise. The Board is expected to greatly enhance Greenwatch's mission by providing strategic guidance across

various areas, including finance, legal matters, and change management.

Read more about our Board members here; <https://greenwatch.or.ug/board>



Greenwatch Board of Directors from left to right: Ariho Kamara, Victoria Nalule, Dennis Otatina, Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa, Anne Mbonye Tumwesigye, and Daphine Namatovu, during a recent board meeting at Latitude 0 Degrees Hotel, Kampala.

Sixth Judicial Training on Climate Justice (May 20th, 2024)

In partnership with the Judicial Training Institute, Greenwatch hosted its sixth annual judicial training program in Mbale, Eastern Uganda. Themed “Enforcing Environmental Laws in the Age of Climate Crisis,” the event emphasized the judiciary’s crucial role in addressing climate change and enforcing environmental laws.

Hon. Justice Godfrey Namundi highlighted the importance of equitable decision-making and holding polluters accountable, especially in light of recent environmental disasters like the floods in Mbale.

The training featured in-depth presentations on environmental law and climate change, focusing on practical skills for handling environmental cases. The event concluded with a call for stronger collaboration among legal professionals to better protect Uganda’s natural resources.

Full article; <https://shorturl.at/hRUIld>



Participants of our recent judicial training in Mbale, Uganda, gather for a group photo.

World Environment Day Celebrations (June 5th, 2024)

Greenwatch, in collaboration with various partners, celebrated World Environment Day at Explorer Ranch in Bwerenga, Entebbe. The event focused on planting over 1,000 indigenous tree species, contributing to land restoration and biodiversity conservation. The initiative honored the legacy of the late Hon. Justice Kenneth Kakuru, a prominent environmental rights advocate and founder of Greenwatch.



Greenwatch staff, from Left to Right, Amanda Joy, Mahad Baryamujura, and Nelson Byanyima plant a tree at Explorer Ranch in Bwerenga on World Environment Day

Second National Conference on Oil and Gas Development in Uganda (18th June 2024)

Greenwatch participated in the Second Annual Joint CSO Conference on Oil and Gas Development in Uganda. The conference focused on creating a unified roadmap for Uganda's energy transition, emphasizing the importance

of collaboration among government entities, oil companies, and civil society to achieve a sustainable and socially equitable energy future.



Panelists at the Second National Conference on Oil and Gas Development in Uganda Photo: Petroleum Authority of Uganda.

International Climate Change Conference – Makerere University (25th -26th July 2024)

Mahad Baryamujura Greenwatch's legal project officer attended the International Climate Change Conference, held at Makerere University on 25th -26th July 2024. The conference brought together over 100 participants to discuss adapting global climate resilience strategies to the African context.

The conference emphasized the need for tailored climate strategies that integrate local knowledge and foster interdisciplinary collaboration to address the climate challenges facing East Africa.

More info; <https://shorturl.at/a5ssk>



Participants the International Climate Change Conference, held at Makerere University on 25th -26th July 2024

Greenwatch Empowers Young Lawyers on Climate Action, Litigation, and Justice (August 15th, 2024)

Greenwatch, in partnership with the Uganda Law Society (ULS), hosted a training session for young lawyers. The event, themed “Igniting Passion for Climate Justice,” aimed to prepare the next generation of legal professionals to tackle climate change through strategic legal action.

The training emphasized the urgent need for legal professionals to advocate for stronger environmental protections, particularly in the wake of environmental disasters like the recent Kiteezi Landslide. The training provided young lawyers with practical tools and strategies to advance climate justice in Uganda and beyond.

More info; <https://shorturl.at/BXy99>



Participants pose for a photo at our recently concluded Young Lawyers Training at Mestil Hotel Kampala.

Collaboration with CTEA: Empowering Mining Host Communities

Greenwatch partnered with the Center for Transnational Environmental Accountability (CTEA) to support the **Mawero Mining Host Community Welfare Association (MMHC-WA)** in Busia District.

Key Achievements:

1. Registration of MMHC-WA as a Community-Based Organization (CBO).
2. Leadership and governance training for MMHC-WA's Executive Committee.
3. Legal empowerment programs to simplify mining laws and enhance community participation in environmental advocacy.
4. Supported MMHC-WA to make a request to NEMA for Wagagai Mining Company's Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA).

6. | Public Interest Environmental Litigation Update

Greenwatch v Attorney General and 2ORS (Civil Suit No.11 of 2021)

Greenwatch filed a suit against the Attorney General, the National Forestry Authority (NFA), and the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) for failing to uphold citizens' right to a clean and healthy environment. Greenwatch argued that the defendants neglected their duties as public trustees, resulting in the rapid loss of forest cover in Uganda, which has triggered severe climate change impacts and environmental degradation.

The loss of forests has contributed to increased water pollution and the spread of waterborne diseases, further threatening the livelihoods and health of Ugandans, particularly indigenous communities dependent on forests.

Greenwatch sought declarations that the government holds natural resources in trust for the people and that the failure of the defendants to curtail deforestation is a violation of citizens' constitutional rights to a healthy environment and life.

The plaintiffs also requested orders for the defendants to implement effective forest management plans, increase funding for environmental agencies, and ensure the sustainable use of forest resources.

The case highlights the urgency of addressing forest cover loss and promoting sustainable environmental management practices to safeguard Uganda's natural heritage for future generations.

Case updates

- **25th June 2024:** The court granted Amicus Curiae status to the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE).
- **On 12th November 2024,** the matter came up for hearing but it was adjourned to 6th May 2025 for marking of documents and the hearing.

Tsama William & 47 Others v. Attorney General and Others (Miscellaneous Cause No. 024 Of 2020, High Court of Uganda at Mbale)

In a compelling legal battle, Tsama William and 47 others, victims of the tragic landslides that struck Bushika sub-county, Bududa district on December 3, 2019, filed a suit against the Attorney General, the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), and the Bududa Local Government Council. The landslides caused devastating loss of life, with 20 people killed, and widespread destruction of property and the environment, leaving many displaced.

The plaintiffs sought redress for the failure of the respondents to put in place effective disaster management systems, specifically for landslides, in accordance with national laws. The applicants argued that the breach of these obligations violated their fundamental

human rights, including the right to life, property, mental and physical health, and a clean and healthy environment as enshrined in Uganda's 1995 Constitution.

The court dismissed the case on a preliminary point of law that the applicants were relying on public documents that needed to be certified and since they were not certified they were not admissible and as a result they were struck off together with the affidavit of the expert witness hence Justice Godfrey Namundi stated that as a result the application stands without unsupported affidavit.

The ruling was delivered on 15th August 2024 and the applicants are yet to file for judicial review.

- **17th October 2024:** Applicants filed for a review of the ruling on preliminary points of law. Hearing date for the judicial review is yet to be set by the Mbale High Court.

Nissi Mbabazi & 4 Others v. Attorney General

(Case Brief in High Court Civil Suit No.283 of 2012 Civil Division at Kampala)

In 2012, Nisi Mbabazi, Jonathan Aruho, Matayo Natumanya, and Kind David Tandeka (all minors, suing through their next friend the late Justice Kenneth Kakuru (since his passing Samantha Atukunda Kakuru Mwesigwa has been replaced as the next friend) alongside Greenwatch, filed a lawsuit against

the Attorney General and the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA). The case was initiated on behalf of the plaintiffs, as well as for the children of Uganda, both born and unborn, and in public interest.

The plaintiffs sought redress for the government's failure to take decisive action against climate change, whose effects have been detrimental to minors and all Ugandans. The plaintiffs argued that the government had neglected its duty to implement proposed adaptation measures that would mitigate the

effects of climate change, leading to widespread harm such as loss of life, property, and livelihoods. They warned that without urgent intervention, the effects of climate change would continue to worsen, endangering the lives of present and future generations.

Case update

- **Case came up for hearing on 28th November 2024** the judge was indisposed on that date and the matter was adjourned to 31st March 2025.

7. | **Workshops and Strategic Meetings**

Greenwatch participated in multiple workshops, including discussions on the Tilenga Oil Project, NEMA's environmental management training, and access and benefit-sharing under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Tilenga Project (February 29th, 2024)

Greenwatch participated in a "Let's Talk" roundtable meeting focused on the land acquisition process for the Tilenga Project. During the meeting, TotalEnergies briefed attendees on the progress of compensation for project-affected persons. Greenwatch proposed the establishment of an independent committee to assist project-affected persons in navigating technicalities that may be delaying their compensation.

NEMA Training Workshop (March 6th-9th, 2024)

Greenwatch participated in a training on effective environmental management organized by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). During the training, Greenwatch called for stronger cooperation between NEMA and Civil Society Organizations in the pursuit of climate justice.

Access and benefit sharing (April 4th, 2024)

Greenwatch participated in a breakfast meeting focused on draft regulations for access and benefit sharing (ABS) related to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Nagoya Protocol. Specifically, the meeting considered

the National Environment (Access to Genetic Resources & Benefit Sharing) Regulations 2005 and The Guidelines for Accessing Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing, 2007. Greenwatch reviewed the draft regulations and proposed amendments to ensure equitable benefit sharing for all stakeholders.

Environment and Natural Resources Civil Society Organizations Network (April 4th, 2024)

Greenwatch also attended the Annual General Meeting of the Environment and Natural Resources Civil Society Organizations Network. The meeting focused on drafting, discussing, and approving a work plan for collaboration on advancing climate justice.

Least Developed Countries-LDC Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience project (April 18th, 2024)

Greenwatch participated in an information sharing, update, and dissemination meeting regarding the LIFE-AR project (Least Developed Countries-LDC Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience project) under the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE). This program is designed to support LDCs in strengthening their approaches to climate resilience.



8.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges:

- Limited resources for large-scale projects.
- Delays in judicial processes.

Lessons Learned:

- Community-driven approaches yield sustainable outcomes.
- Collaboration with stakeholders amplifies impact.

9.

Projecting into 2025

1. Judicial Training on Climate Justice: Regional Focus

Since 2019, Greenwatch has actively contributed to the climate justice space through impactful judicial trainings. Our ultimate goal remains to train 100% of the judiciary in climate justice by 2030. However, this goal is challenged by the frequent appointment of new judges and the retirement of others. Despite these dynamics, we are steadfast in our commitment to achieving this objective.

In 2024, Greenwatch held its first region-focused judicial training in Mbale District, targeting courts in Eastern Uganda. This region is particularly susceptible to climate-related disasters, including landslides and floods. Building on this momentum, our next regional focus will be on Western and Southwestern Uganda, where we plan to conduct judicial training on climate justice in May 2025.

2. Climate Journalist Awards

In recognition of the media's vital role in shaping public discourse and driving action on climate issues, Greenwatch is proud to introduce the Climate Journalist Awards. These awards aim to honor journalists who demonstrate exceptional commitment and excellence in reporting on climate change, environmental sustainability, and climate justice. The inaugural Climate Journalist Awards will spotlight

impactful journalism that raises awareness, educates the public, and holds stakeholders accountable for climate action. Categories will include Best Investigative Report, Outstanding Climate Feature, and Emerging Climate Journalist of the Year.

In 2022, Greenwatch, in partnership with the Uganda Media Council, conducted training on environmental and climate

reporting for journalists. The training's primary objective was to equip Ugandan journalists with knowledge and skills to advance climate change awareness and enhance the quality of environmental reporting in the country. Building on this foundation, the Climate Journalist Awards seek to further inspire and recognize excellence in climate journalism.

The award ceremony is scheduled for April 2025, and we look forward to celebrating the dedication and influence of climate journalists in Uganda and beyond. By recognizing and encouraging high-quality climate reporting, Greenwatch aims to further strengthen the climate justice movement and promote informed, solution-oriented narratives.

3. Environmental Law Clinic

Greenwatch is excited to announce the forthcoming launch of a specialized Environmental Law Clinic, aimed at advancing environmental justice through practical legal education and strategic litigation. Legal clinics provide invaluable hands-on experience for law students while serving as a vital resource for marginalized communities seeking access to justice. The Environmental Law Clinic will empower emerging legal professionals with

specialized knowledge in environmental and climate law, enhance public interest litigation, and promote sustainable development by offering free legal assistance and advocacy services. By fostering collaboration between academia, legal practitioners, and civil society, this initiative will strengthen environmental governance and build a new generation of climate-conscious lawyers.

4. Greenwatch at 30: Honoring Our Legacy and Inspiring Future Action

In 2025, Greenwatch will proudly celebrate 30 years of championing environmental rights, governance, and sustainable development in Uganda and beyond. This significant milestone will be marked by the inaugural Kenneth Kakuru Memorial Lecture on Environmental Law and Climate Justice, a tribute to our visionary founder, the late Hon. Justice Kenneth Kakuru. The lecture will bring together distinguished legal minds, policymakers, environmental

advocates, and young climate leaders to reflect on his transformative contributions to environmental jurisprudence and to inspire bold action for climate justice. This event will reaffirm Greenwatch's commitment to fostering awareness, shaping policy, and empowering communities to protect the environment. It will be a powerful reminder of our journey and a catalyst for future progress in advancing environmental justice and sustainable development.



Acknowledgments

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our fund partners, stakeholders, and supporters for their invaluable contributions throughout 2024. Your unwavering commitment and generous support have been instrumental in driving our mission to protect environmental rights, promote sustainable development, and foster climate justice in Uganda. Together, we continue to make strides in empowering communities, shaping policies, and ensuring a greener and healthier future for generations to come. Thank you for standing with us in safeguarding our environment.

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