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Promoting Environmental Protection and Climate Justice in Uganda

From the Director's desk

Dear Reader

I am delighted to present to you our newsletter that covers the second half of 2023! It is that time of the year when we applaud and commend the achievements made in 2023 while assessing ourselves in areas where we might have fallen short of our set goals as well as laying strategies to improve in the coming year. This newsletter gives you an insight into the strides that Greenwatch has taken from June- December 2023 in advancing environmental protection in Uganda.

In this edition, we bring you the activities of the second half of 2023. During this period, we dedicated most of our time to;

1. Environmental & and climate litigation to enhance ambition and resilience and.
2. Networking through engagements with government and civil society organizations
3. Structure and governance of the organization.

PublicInterest Litigation (PIL)

➡ Civil Suit No.11 of 2021 Greenwatch Vs. Attorney General(A.G) and 2 ORS.

In 2021, Greenwatch filed a Public Interest Litigationcase against the Attorney General, the National Environment ManagementAuthority (NEMA), and the National Forestry Authority (NFA). Greenwatch claimsthat the Government of Uganda (represented by the Attorney General) and themandated agencies (NEMA and NFA) have failed to discharge their obligations incurring forest cover loss in Uganda hence violating the citizen's right to a clean and healthy environment as is stipulated in the law. We are asking thedefendants to put in place measures to curb the loss of forest cover in Uganda.With the recent developments in law and science, Greenwatch amended and filedits pleadings to include new scientific evidence on climate change to buttressour case. An amicus curie application was filed by the National Association of Professional Environmentalists(NAPE) and the court has since set 25th June 2024 as thenew date for the hearing of the amicus application.

➡ Civil Suit No.283 of 2012, Nissi Mbabazi VA.G & 2 Ors

In 2012, four (4) minors and Greenwatch filed a lawsuit against the Attorney General and the National Environment Management Authority in the High Court of Uganda. The complaint invokes the government's public trust duty under Articles 39 and 237 of the Uganda Constitution to protect the country's atmospheric resources from climate change for the benefit of current and future generations. The lawsuit asks the defendants to develop a climate change mitigation plan per the best science and protect children from the adverse impacts of climate change. Parties have filed the witness statements and the court has set the 13th of May 2024 as the date to hear the evidence.

➡ Networking and Civil Society engagements

During the last half of 2023, Greenwatch has been vigorously involved in networking with government, and sister Civil Society Organisations to scale up collaboration and harness our efforts for environmental action and resilience. On 4th August 2023, Greenwatch represented by Ms. Ampurira Bridget attended the Women in Nature Conservation WINN is a network of women across the world who are working to conserve natural ecosystems and species to strengthen the role of women in conservation leadership and enhance conservation impact. The goal of the conference was to build a stronger network, empower young mentees, proliferation of additional chapters from the global south among others. This 3-day networking event comprised different activities including presentations, a trip to the Nairobi National Park, and the Giraffe Center, and presentations from different women in WINN doing tremendous work in communities, and animal conservation.



The WINN team poses for a photo moment in Nairobi, Kenya

Ms. Ampurira also attended the Training on environmental defenders on environmental advocacy Organized/convened by the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) from the 14th of September- to the 15th of September 2023. The two-day event discussed regional and international advocacy mechanisms that can be utilized by environmental human rights defenders, some of which included urgent letters of appeal, engagement with the Commission on Human Rights, and state/shadow reporting.



Participants pose for a picture at Sheraton Hotel Kampala

On 13th October 2023, our legal officer Nuwasiima Daphine, represented at the panel of Uganda's 2nd local Conference of the Youth organized by TARD Foundation. She educated the youth about the right to a clean and healthy environment, climate justice, and strategies environmental youth defenders can adopt to advocate for their environmental rights.



Ms. Nuwasiima speaking at the Local Youths Conference at Silver Springs Hotel.

Other CSO engagements attended;

- The Green Cities Initiative Stakeholder Workshop organized by KCCA in partnership with FAO on the 25th of October 2023
- Hybrid review meeting on the issue paper on nature-based solutions (NBS) and rights and the Advocacy plans organized by EMLI in partnership with WWF on 27 October 2023.
- The Land Justice sub-committee meeting organized by the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.
- The Consultative Stakeholder Engagement on Research and Innovation on 9th November 2023, organized by Makerere University.
- The Civil Society Coalition on Oil and Gas (CSCO) learning event, organized by ACODE on 14th November 2023, among others.

With these engagements, we have been able to advocate for environmental protection by providing input and recommendations to the government, creating spaces for policy influencing, and promoting citizens' participation in decision-making processes.

Participants pose for aphoto moment at the fifth Judicial Training on Climate Justice

Structure and Governance

We warmly welcome the following who have joined Greenwatch'sBoard of Directors

1. Dennis Otatiina
2. Ariho Kamara
3. Anne Tumwesigye Mbonye
4. Dr. Victoria Nalule

Greenwatch is recruiting for an operations manager and administrator, a legal project officer, and a communication coordinator. The calls for these vacancies are out, the recruits will start on 1st February 2024. Applications are available here <http://greenwatch.or.ug/careers>

Immense gratitude to our partners; the Judicial Training Institute (JTI), Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (ELAW), True Cost Initiative (TCI), and Our Children's Trust (OCT), for their continued support to us in realizing our vision of ensuring that every Ugandan enjoys the right to a clean and healthy environment.



If we all did little, we would do much

