



The 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit

Proceedings Report

May 2023.

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Proceedings of the summit	11
Opening sessions	11
Localising decisions of COP27 and The New York Water Conference- What were the decisions, how do we relate with them and how can they be localised?	16
Climate data on our region/Case of Climate change effects on the Rwenzori Mountains- Consequences of climate Change on the Rwenzori Mountains.	20
Summary messages of outcomes 3 sessions	23
Impact of Climate Change on local Food and Water Systems.	23
Protection and Conservation of Water Resources in Uganda	25
Climate Adaptation- The role of Agroforestry + Poverty Reduction in our landscapes	26
Implementation of IWRM in Combating Climate Change in the Albertine region	27
Role of Government in implementation Climate conventions, Decisions of COPs, NDCs, Uganda Laws and Policies.	30
Outcomes of the summit	40
The summit communique	40
The Fort-Portal Climate Summit communique	40
Appreciations	47
Annexes:	48
Jese Chairperson Speech	48
Speech by the JESE Executive Director	52
Speech by the Minister of Water and Environment	55

Summary

The 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit was the first of its kind to be held in Western Uganda and it was hailed by delegates that this was a land mark event that took place in 2023.

Organised as part of the JESE@30 celebrations, the event was a joint activity of JESE and Ministry of Water and development partners. The summit that was addressed by the Minister of Water and Environment, Hon. Sam Cheptoris was also attended by 2 commissioners from Ministry of Health, and Ministry of water and the Environment and senior representatives from the AWMZ. The other delegates were local leaders, representatives of 7 local governments from across the Tooro/Rwenzori regions, farmers and the private sector.

The summit was organised on the Theme; Localizing the Global Climate and Environmental Agenda. For the very first time in history, the delegates at this Summit had the opportunity to hear about the commitments made at COP 27 and also reflected how they could be localized. The summit also reflected on region's food systems and Food Sovereignty, Current interventions on IWRM and agroforestry as a means of promoting adaptation to climate change, practical demonstration of water and conservation practices in the region and also the prevailing government policies that harness efforts towards resilience to climate Change.

The key outcomes of the Summit, were; 1) a decision to hold the Fort-Portal Climate Summit Annually, 2) a communique of the summit and 2) a petition to government on the conservation and protection of water resources in the region.

Overall, the following messages emerged from the Summit.

- a) Thinking Global, but acting locally on climate change.
- b) Climate change is a global crisis and we must act now
- c) We can't afford to act in isolation of the COPs. Therefore, enough knowledge about the COPs and the technicalities around it need to be understood but also explained to general public.
- d) Uganda has priorities in the NDCs, and there is a need to understand how these relate to us and communicate them simply at the local level.
- e) Take small steps to action by creating prototypes of climate adaptation
- f) Data and stories is urgently required to influence decisions at the global

- g) **Bankable proposals**- who decides on what should be included in the so called proposals? There is the need to make these bankable proposals inclusive of the communities' needs.
- h) **Capacity**-we need to evolve capacities across the different levels; technology, data and developing bankable proposals.
- i) NDCs- government should involve local governments and civil society to input into the NDC processes
- j) We need to create a botanical food system since most foods are starting to get extinct.
- k) Invest more in ecosystem restoration, and this will reduce the vulnerability to climate change
- l) Support the mobilisation of local financial resources that support resilience including start-ups for the youth and Women.
- m) Investing in ecosystems rehabilitation and restoration increases resilience around gender.
- n) Provide for the livelihoods of girls and boys
- o) Climate change affects the availability and quality of water and therefore the need for a holistic approach.
- p) Support women and girls as early adopters of climate actions. Therefore make them part of the co-creation processes for actions.
- q) There is an urgent need to embrace agroforestry as a sustainable farming approach to increasing acceleration to climate adaption.
- r) Integrating agroforestry in local planning and implementation.
- s) Agroforestry will help in improving water quality and security
- t) Integrated practices are necessary to restore degraded areas.
- u) Need to have multifunctional landscapes.
- v) Necessary to work with well researched agroforestry models that can respond to challenges of climate as well as livelihood needs of the people.
- w) Global imposition of homogenous food systems is responsible for the distortions in the food systems.
- x) We must have control over our food systems and have power on what we want to eat.

- y) People must be at the centre of their food systems
- z) Heritage, identity and humanity must be at the centre of our food systems.
- aa) Sustainable consumption of safe, nutritious diets.
- bb) Right and supportive policies are necessary for sustainable and inclusive food systems
- cc) Population control is necessary to have sustainable food systems- better still, that population should have the necessary capacity to contribute to the food systems.
- dd) Take care of the soil for its capability for carbon sequestration. Therefore, sustainable agriculture is part of the solution to climate change.
- ee) Cash crops bring the dollars but don't bring back nutrition.
- ff) Diversity on the farm and our ecosystems will be necessary to have sustainable food systems.
- gg) Non-contradiction in food policies is necessary to promote sustainable food systems.
- hh) Agroecology- remains fundamental in promoting sustainable food systems.
- ii) Because of land limitations, diversification and integration will help in improving food systems especially for the landless youth and women
- jj) Involvement of local level actors and local governments in the development and implementation of policies.

Conclusion: The 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit was a successful event that was well attended by a wide range of stakeholders. The summit delegates agreed that this event should be convened annually attracting even more delegates at national and international levels.

Introduction

Since her establishment three decades ago, JESE has made significant contributions towards empowering communities to attain their full potential through intervention in both humanitarian and development programming. Guided by the five-year phased strategic plans, JESSE's focus of intervention still remains in the sectors of natural resources conservation, WASH, Agriculture and enterprise development, and Youth skills development.

Over the years, JESE's interventions greatly contributed to improved livelihoods of target beneficiaries and provided opportunities for a better life especially for the rural poor households. The institution has seen significant growth in budgets and expansion in areas of operation as indicated by the current geographical scope covering the districts of; Buliisa, Kikuube, Bundibugyo, Ntoroko, Kamwenge, Kyenjojo, Kagadi, Kitagwenda, Agago, Kyegegwa, Fort portal City, Kabarole, Bunyangabu and Isingiro, in Western, South Western and Northern parts of the country.

Based on this background, JESE Board and Management organised a series of activities to celebrate the many achievements that the organisation has achieved over the past 30 years. The celebrations were organised under the theme; *"Transforming Communities through Conservation, WASH and Livelihood Improvement"*. One of the activities that was organised was the 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit held from 19-20, May 2023. This was the first of its kind to be held at regional level in Uganda and deliberating on global topics of concern on the subject of climate Change. The summit was preceded by the launching of the 1 million tree planting campaign in the region.





The 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit was organised in Joint collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Environment to reflect on decisions of the Global COPs, NDCs, the National Water Weeks and the 2023 Water conference held in New York and devise strategies of integrating those decisions in Lower Local Government planning.

The 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit was informed by reflection that Climate Change is severely ravaging social-economic activities across the world and there is an urgent need to stimulate deeper and localised conversations and evolving smart solutions to accelerate Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation. Notably, it was also based on The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports that observed that climate change had already reached unprecedented levels and suggested to global actors to limit Global warming to below 2 degrees. The global call for action by IPCC is to adopt strong and sustained reductions in emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases that would limit climate change.

Goal of the Summit

The Climate Summit was intended to gather commitment from Government, policy makers, the academia and local actors on how to respond to the effects of climatic changes at local and national levels. The following topics were discussed at the summit;

- I. Localising decisions of COP27 and The New York Water Conference- What were the decisions, how do we relate with them and how can they be localised?
- II. Examining climate data on our region/Case of Climate change effects on the Rwenzori Mountains- Consequences of climate Change on the Rwenzori Mountains.
- III. Examine the impact of Climate Change on local Food and Water Systems.
- IV. Climate Adaptation- The role of Agroforestry + Poverty Reduction in our landscapes
- V. Climate Financing + Role of Carbon Credit in Mitigating Climate Change
- VI. Role of Government in the implementation of Climate conventions, Decisions of COPs, NDCs, Uganda Laws and Policies on environment.

The 1st Fort-Portal Climate summit mobilised some of the high level participants and speakers drawn both at the local and national levels covering all the broad topics above. The key speaker of the summit was the Minister of Water and Environment represented by the Director of Environmental affairs Mr. Mugabi Steven. The minister appreciated JESE upon the attainment of 30 years and for convening the 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit for which he suggested that such an event should be convened annually. The other speakers included; Dr. Nabaasa Commissioner Ministry of Health, Dr. Callist Tindimugaya- The commissioner Natural Resources and Planning, Hon. Alex Ruhunda, MP-Fort-Portal Central, Ms. Agnes Kirabo the Director of Food Rights, Lieven Peters of Ile De Paix, Mr. Muhindo Jackson from Oxfam Uganda, Prof. Richard Taylor of Water Resources Institute, Prof. Muhumuza Moses of Mountains and Dr. Ekyaligonza from of the Moon University, Ms. Grace Waako, Baguma Patrick, BUSIINGE Christopher, Dr. Businge-Production officer, Fort-Portal City, Nyakoojo Sam and Eria Byaruhanga. In the audience were farmers and community members and representatives of Civil Society Organisations as well as the local governments in which JESE operates. During the summit, a petition on the protection of water catchment buffer zones, was also presented and received by Dr. Brian Guma of AWMZ for which he committed the ministry of water to following on the critical issues raised in the petition. Alongside the summit, there was an exhibition of JESE work by community and development partners like the Ministry of water and Environment, and Uganda Red Cross Society.



Summit participants at the Climate Summit interact with JESE staff on the Mpanga falls Model.



Interactions in the JESE@30 Exhibition arena during the 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit



Ministry of Water Partners' Exhibition



Partners viewing the exhibition items exhibited at the 1st Fort-Portal Climate summit



Some of the products by JESE beneficiaries that were exhibited at the Summit.

Proceedings of the summit

The summit lasted 2 days of presentations and discussions.

Opening sessions

This was done by the JESE executive director, Mr. Baguma Patrick, the JESE Board Chairperson, Mrs. Waako Grace and Minister of Water and Environment.

The JESE executive Director, appreciated the delegates for turning up and making the time to be at this 1st summit on climate. He used the session to introduce the JESE board and also shared the 30 years road journey that JESE had walked to date. He thanked Africa 2000 Network for the Financial and Mentoring support that helped the establishment of the organisation. He also appreciated the Mentoring support by Ms. Mary Joe Kakinda, and Charles Waraga for the mentoring support they offered to JESE. His full speech is annexed to this report.



JESE executive Director, Mr. Baguma Patrick giving his opening remarks at the Summit.

The JESE Board chairperson Ms Grace Waako thanked all the participants for making the time to attend the 1 climate summit in Fort-Portal and reiterated the timeliness for the climate summit- and that this was the best way to commemorate 30 years of JESE's existence. She said the goal of the summit was to reflect on the global agenda on Climate Change but also share practical solutions on climate adaptation, Mitigation and resilience. She also informed delegates that climate change had manifested itself in the region with so many floods that had occurred, like on River Nyamwamba and Mubuku in Kasese District. She invited the delegates to actively participate and contribute ideas in line with the theme of the summit. In her final message, she said that "together we can cause change, and together we can support our communities to become more resilient and reduce the impacts of climate change". She further noted that we need to adopt technologies that can harness the excess rain and heat that are a result of climate changes for the benefit of the local populations.



JESE Board Chairperson speaking at the opening of the Summit.

Opening remarks by the ministry of Water and Environment

These were shared at two levels, AWMZ, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Water and Environment.

Both the AWMZ team Leader and Minister appreciated the collaborations with JESE over the last 3 decades. They said that the relations have been cordial and enriching for both institutions. The relationship has harnessed available resources and there has been resilience of communities to climate change, improving water security and household incomes.

Remarks by the Ministry of Health



DR. Herbet Nabaasa, Rep. State Minister of Health.

Commissioner health- representing the Minister noted that the environmental challenges have now become national, from Mt. Elgon to now Rwenzori. He said that the ministry of Health is at the center and very involved finding solutions that promote resilience to Climate Changes. “We appreciate the effort of bringing different actors together at this Summit to reflect on climate challenges”. He said that The Ministry of Health is focusing on WASH and also developed guidelines for WASH in health care facilities and also focusing on financing constraints in the sector as well as improving resilience in the health sector by targeting WASH. “The major Challenge we have is health care and health management”. He informed the delegates that a big incinerator had been approved by the government for the Kabarole and Fort-Portal area. He called upon development partners to evolve a holistic approach- and therefore invite the government to be an active partner and mainstream actions in government planning.



The Director, Environmental Affairs, Mr. Mugabi Steven David Ministry of Water and Environment- Represented the Minister, Hon. Sam Cheptoris.

The slogan Water is life in this country is changing.

“We used to say water is life not in Bwaise- But now this is changing, it's a general case. Water is misbehaving across the country”. Mr. Mugabi Steven David, the Director Environmental Affairs- MOWE.

The minister thanked JESE for organising the big summit while celebrating 30 years of improving and transforming the lives of communities. He also expressed appreciation to JESE for the contribution to the protection and conservation of natural resources and supporting livelihoods of communities. He said that the government would wish that the Climate summit could take place annually and attract different partners. He informed delegates that the government of Uganda has designated all national holidays as tree planting days and therefore invited delegated to plant trees. The ministry noted that the country and the world were under duress and there was an urgent need to act together to prevent this problem. Finally, he informed delegates that, government had created a climate change department to institutionalise climate change and coordinate all the affairs of climate as well as prepared a climate change policy and action plan, prepared

and made its contribution on NDCs and presently reporting on the progress being made and also put in place an Act climate Change all of which should be able to guide Ugandans on how to respond to Climate Change.

Localising decisions of COP27 and The New York Water Conference-
What were the decisions, how do we relate with them and how can they be localised?

Background: From New York, Morocco, Egypt and Kampala a number of high level summits have been held on Climate and the Environment. This happens each year but these decisions are not often communicated at the lowest levels where action needs to be taken. This summit gives us the opportunity to reflect on decisions made at the most recent COP27 in Egypt. It will give us a chance to appreciate the decisions and discuss how we can act on them at the local government level.

The Summit was used to share and update delegated on the COP27 resolutions that were presented by Mr. Anthony Wolimbwa of CAN-Uganda Chapter and Jackson Muhindo from Oxfam-Uganda. Both speakers congratulated JESE for reaching 30 years. They informed members that COP is a conference of Parties where heads of states meet to deliberate on the current situation of climate and make commitments to resolve prevailing challenges. The COPs also look into the pledges that were made from previous summits. Some of the critical areas of discussion that evolved on climate financing and adaptation at the local level and therefore the need for the government of Uganda to double effort and Funds that go into adoption. The other is on Loss and damage- particularly from the impacts of climate change-namely the bursting of River Nyamwamba. However, there are challenges on proving the evidence that is required to document and provide the data on the losses. Similarly, there were calls for gender financing and representation at the COPs and local levels. The need for technology and capacity around it - there is the need for Uganda to develop a local technology capacity plan.



Session on commitments from COPs/COP27.

According to Jackson from Oxfam, climate change needs to be treated as an emergency more than anything else. It is today ravaging both the developed and developing countries. It's a global crisis and that is why the COPs have been organised since 1995. Unfortunately there is a challenge of inaction to control impacts of climate change.

The outcomes from the recent COP27 were as follows

- The establishment of the Loss and Damage fund at the UNCCC
- Adaptation funding opportunities announced by the developed countries.
- Adaptation fund- that requires a bankable proposal from the government. This requires government to develop the necessary capacity
- Uganda submitted its NDC commitments



Jackson Muhindo, Oxfam discussing Commitments from the COPs.

There was consensus in the summit hall that most of this information from all the COPs was not fully disseminated at the local levels and there was a need to involve local actors in the preparation and contributing to the content of these COPs. Further concerns were expressed on how to access to loss and damage funds and the capacity of the government to present bankable proposals as had been demand of governments at COP27.



Ms. Agnes Kirabo reacting to the conditioning of Climate financing- case of presenting Bankable Proposals.



Climate data on our region/Case of Climate change effects on the Rwenzori Mountains- Consequences of climate Change on the Rwenzori Mountains.

Background: Mountain Rwenzori is the lifeline of more than 4 million people. Most rivers in this region have their source from this mountain yet there is growing evidence that the Mountain is increasingly being impacted by climate change. This session shared the most recent data and evidence on the impacts of climatic changes on the Mountain.

This session focused on the Rwenzori Mountains- the key source for water for Rwenzori/Tooro regions. There were already concerns that the water resources from these mountains were already dwindling due to climate changes. Prof. Taylor presented evidence that indicated the warming on the mountains was responsible for the recession of glaciers on the Rwenzori Mountains. There was an observed rapid recession of ice leading to the warming/raising air temperatures in the areas of Fort-Portal and Kibale where there have been declines in rainfall. Since the 1960s there has been 1 degree of warming and this is responsible for the loss of glaciers at the summit of the Rwenzori Mountains which is having an impact on the river flow from the mountains. This particularly impacted the rivers of; Mubuku, Nyamwamba and Nyamugasani in Kasese.

Prof. Taylor noted that Global warming is causing less rain but heavier rainfalls in equatorial tropics such as the Rwenzori Mountains. There is also a high frequency and severity of wildfires in the region.



Prof. Taylor made a presentation on climate data- case of Rwenzori.

Prof. Muhumuza agreed with the data presented Prof. Taylor discussed the sociological perspective of the data and called for a mindset shift among actors. For example, he said the people who created climate change cannot be the same people who solve the problem. He suggested we need statistical data to solve the problem and this could be locally availed through collaborations with local universities. For example we need data to determine the compensations from the Loss and damage fund that was established at COP27. Government needs to pay attention to the green economy business to address these challenges of climate change and also provide tax holidays and subsidies that are climate smart and remove conditioning that prevents action across all levels.



Prof. Muhumuza discussing the presentation of Prof. Taylor.



Participants listening in to the presentation by Prof. Taylor and Prof. Muhumuza Moses.

Summary of emerging messages

The sessions brought out lots of painful realities and the need to bring out what is practically possible.

kk) Thinking Global, but acting locally.

ll) Climate change is a global crisis and we must act now

mm) We can't afford to act in isolation of the COPs. Therefore, enough knowledge about the COP and the technicalities around it need to be understood but also explained.

nn) Uganda has priorities, and there is a need to understand how these relate to us and communicate them simply at the local level.

oo) Take small steps to action by creating prototypes of climate adaptation

pp) Data and stories is urgently required to influence decisions at the global

qq) **Bankable proposals**- who decides on what should be included in the so called proposals? There is the need to make these bankable proposals inclusive of the communities' needs.

rr) **Capacity**-we need to evolve capacities across the different levels; technology, data and developing bankable proposals.

ss) NDCs- government should involve local governments and civil society to input into the NDC processes

Impact of Climate Change on local Food and Water Systems.

Background: *Our food and water systems are increasingly being impacted by climatic changes. This impact is real and is visible in our local settings. This topic helped participants to visualise this impact and provoked reflection on actions that need to be taken.*

The presentation was led by Ms. Kandole Annet, a private development consultant and Rashida Kulanyi – the SIMAVI Country Representative who both started by congratulating JESE upon the 30 years.



Ms. Annet Kandole makes a presentation at the Summit.

The following messages emerged from the session presentations and discussions;

- 1) We need to create a botanical food system since most foods are starting to get extinct.
- 2) Invest more in ecosystem restoration, and this will reduce the vulnerability to climate change
- 3) Support the mobilisation of local financial resources that support resilience including start-ups for the youth and Women.
- 4) Investing in ecosystems rehabilitation and restoration increases resilience around gender.
- 5) Provide for the livelihoods of girls and boys
- 6) Climate change affects the availability and quality of water and therefore the need for a holistic approach.
- 7) Support women and girls as early adopters of climate actions. Therefore make them part of the co-creation processes for actions.



Ms.Rashida Kulanyi from SIMAVI- makes a presentation at the summit.

Protection and Conservation of Water Resources in Uganda

This session shared programme interventions by a JESE partner- Join for water that is currently being implemented in the Mpanga and Semuliki River catchments. These interventions gave an idea of the possible actions that could be undertaken to promote climate resilience and sustainable management of ecosystems services.

The session was led by the Country Representative, Mr. Isaiah Ndungo who shared the current interventions that J4W is undertaking together with JESE, NRD and KFF. Some of the activities mentioned included; WASH, river bank stabilisation and soil and water conservation in the Mpanga river catchment.



Isaiah Ndugo- J4W country representative

Climate Adaptation- The role of Agroforestry + Poverty Reduction in our landscapes

This session used to share some of the practical actions and share experiences on agroforestry, livelihood improvement and the contributions to climate adaptation and mitigation by JESE and AWMZ. The discussion was done by Dr. Busiinge, the Production officer, Fort-Portal City. The lead presentation was done by Mr. BUSIINGE Christopher, ATUHAIRE from the Ministry of AWMZ , KFF and Fort-Portal City.

The key messages from this session were that;

- There is an urgent need to embrace agroforestry as a sustainable farming approach to increasing acceleration to climate adaption.
- Integrating agroforestry in local planning and implementation.

- Agroforestry will help in improving water quality and security
- Integrated practices are necessary to restore degraded areas.
- Need to have multifunctional landscapes.
- Necessary to work with well researched agroforestry models that can respond to challenges of climate as well as livelihood needs of the people.

Implementation of IWRM in Combating Climate Change in the Albertine region

This session was used to share IWRM interventions currently being implemented by AWMZ to combat climate change. It was complemented by interventions that were being implemented by Join for Water. The session was therefore led by Dr. Brian Guma, Dr. EKyaligonza and George Bwambale

The messages from this session were;

- *Research is needed on trees that can survive in water.*
- *Create awareness to prevent contamination of waterways/systems with waste water from wash bays + plus plastics.*



Dr. Brian Guma and Mr. Bwambale George Made a presentation on current IWRM Interventions.

Impact of Uganda's Agricultural Policies on Climate Change and Food Sovereignty; role of ecological farming practices and indigenous species in the food system.

Background: *Uganda has put in place a number of agricultural policies. Some of these policies contradict sustainable practices like agroecology and organic farming practices. The end result is conflicting messages by government and CSOs. The latter is pro-sustainable and climate resilient practices while the government is not. This session will offer a reflection on these policies and evolve advocacy messages that seek to promote sustainable practices. The topic was led by Ms. Agnes Kirabo from Food Rights Alliance, and discussed by Amanyā William and Lieven Petters.*



The messages from this presentation and discussions were as follows;

- *Global imposition of homogenous food systems is responsible for the distortions in the food systems.*
- *We must have control over our food systems and have power on what we want to eat.*
- *People must be at the centre of their food systems*
- *Heritage, identity and humanity must be at the centre of our food systems.*
- *Sustainable consumption of safe, nutritious diets.*
- *Right and supportive policies are necessary for sustainable and inclusive food systems*
- *Population control is necessary to have sustainable food systems- better still, that population should have the necessary capacity to contribute to the food systems.*
- *Take care of the soil for its capability for carbon sequestration. Therefore, sustainable agriculture is part of the solution to climate change.*
- *Cash crops bring the dollars but don't bring back nutrition.*

- *Diversity on the farm and our ecosystems will be necessary to have sustainable food systems.*
- *Non-contradiction in food policies is necessary to promote sustainable food systems.*
- *Agroecology- remains fundamental in promoting sustainable food systems.*
- *Because of land limitations, diversification and integration will help in improving food systems especially for the landless youth.*

Role of Government in implementation Climate conventions, Decisions of COPs, NDCs, Uganda Laws and Policies.

Background: The Government of Uganda has put in place many good policies and has also committed to implement many of the decisions made at the global level. There are challenges of implementation of these policies and decisions and there is an urgent need to reflect on these challenges and how we can take action. This session was led by Dr. Callist Tindimugaya, Commissioner Climate and planning at the Ministry of Water and the Environment. The session was used to provide both updates and commitments from recent global deliberations at the Water conference in New York and COP 27.

The messages from this presentation were as follows;

- Involvement of local level actors and local governments in the development and implementation of policies.



A teacher from Buhinga Primary School makes a submission at the Summit.



Mr. Lieven Peters from Ile De Paix making a comment on one of the presentations.



Hon. Alex RUHUNDA Speaking on behalf of all the regional MPs.

Pictorial of JESE@30 Awards



SIIMA Salome, a JESE Staff being awarded.



JESE staff at the Summit



Former JESE Board Member, Ms Jane Nabunya being awarded.



MURUNGI Samuel, a JESE staff being awarded.



Participants at the Summit view the Model for one of the implementation areas.



The JESE@30 Celebration Cake.

Outcomes of the summit

The summit communique

The 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit was organised in Joint Collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Environment as an event to commemorate the 30 years' anniversary of Joint Effort to Save the Environment (JESE). The summit was attended by Government, development partners, Civil society Organisations drawn from across the country, women, men and youth, and children from Primary Schools around Fort-Portal City.

The summit was hybrid in nature with participants both online and in physical attendance. The two days' event was attended by over 1000 participants.

The Fort-Portal Climate Summit communique

Well aware of the rampaging and catastrophic impacts of climate change such as flooding, prolonged droughts, food insecurity and likely threats on humankind, infrastructure and the environment,

While the global effects of climate change are affecting us all, some communities have and continue to suffer more than others. Paradoxically and painfully so, these climate injustices have been imposed by the developed countries that continue to set stringent conditions on accessing climate financing. It's the people in low developing countries in Africa and Uganda in particular who have contributed very little to global warming that are suffering the most.

Recognizing the high poverty levels in Uganda, and high population growth rates at 3% per annum, natural resources across the country remain at risk of being depleted at a supersonic speed.

Recognizing that Uganda has many good policies and laws, some of these policies particularly in the agricultural sector contradict globally acceptable and eco-friendly practices like agroecology and organic agriculture- that seek to promote climate resilience.

That; the risks posed by climate change to people and ecosystems are not limited to aggravating existing economic, environmental, geopolitical, health and societal threats, but they are equally generating new ones. These risks increase disproportionately as the temperature increases; thus many systems are already at risk from climate change.

That; responding to these climatic challenges will require deploying the full breadth of human talent and innovations. In this regard, creative policy interventions and novel eco-technological solutions need to be fostered and applied across government, Universities and at civil society organisation levels. This will require a sustained commitment and providing resources into

research, green development, and promotion of eco-entrepreneurship, education, and good management of public resources.

That; to safeguard the legitimacy of our ecosystems and the services they provide, requires collective action to be taken now, by governments, private sector players, individuals, businesses, local communities, NGOs and public institutions to tackle this global challenge, deliver the required cuts in emissions, and take maximum advantage of the available opportunities and additional benefits.

The 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit therefore agreed as follows;

- 1) This summit made an urgent call to the government of Uganda to localise COP decisions and simplify them for local level implementation and action.
- 2) The Summit further made an urgent call to the international actors to ease the conditions on climate financing and carbon credit.
- 3) The summit made an urgent call to the government of Uganda to involve local governments in development of proposals to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) before they are submitted to the UN.
- 4) The summit called on the Government of Uganda to fast track the concerns of her citizens on Loss and damage, and climate financing to support local initiatives on climate adaptation and mitigation.
- 5) The summit called upon the government of Uganda to support the Green Economy initiatives and prototypes by giving subsidies and incentives to green development models being developed at the local levels.
- 6) The summit appealed to the government of Uganda to urgently boost Investment in Research, data management infrastructure and training local personnel to collect, retrieve, interpret and use climate data for decision making and local actions.
- 7) The summit appealed for increased partnership with local Universities like the Mountains of the Moon University to enhance context specific research and knowledge generation for local level decision making.
- 8) The summit further appealed for the urgent need for mass mobilisation of Ugandans to adopt climate smart interventions at the local and household levels.
- 9) The summit made an urgent call for the regulation of harmful agrochemicals that are currently on the Ugandan Markets.
- 10) The climate summit appealed for behavioural change in regard to environmental protection and adoption of Climate Smart lifestyles among Ugandans.

- 11) The summit called upon the Government, Civil Society and the private sector to tap into indigenous knowledge as one way to contribute to the adaptation and mitigation efforts on climate change.
- 12) The summit called upon the government of Uganda and all the local governments to strictly enforce the existing laws and ordinances on environmental protection.
- 13) The summit appealed for the development of prototypes on adaptation and mitigation to climate change effects.
- 14) The summit further appealed to the Government of Uganda to resolve policy contradictions in the agricultural and Environment sector.
- 15) The summit Urged government and private sector players to develop gender- sensitive Climate smart agricultural models for equity and equality at household level.
- 16) The summit appealed for the involvement of learners in the fight for climate adaptation and mitigation at all levels- Primary, secondary and Tertiary institutions.
- 17) Last but not least, the summit appreciated the urgent need to generate agro-ecological business models that can spark off economic opportunities and are attractive to the young generation.
- 18) Finally, participants at climate summit agreed to Convene the Fort-Portal Climate Summit each year to continue deliberating on Climate change and possible solutions.

The Petition

The summit was such a great avenue for advocacy. In order to push the advocacy issues to reach the right decision makers, a petition was prepared by JESE and partners (Natural Resources Defence Initiative (NRDI), Kyaninga Forest Foundation (KFF) and Join For Water (JFW) and read on the second day of the Summit. It was also delivered to the decision makers who were present and commitments on issues raised in the petition secured. It read as follows;

It is in this regard that we take this honour and privilege to present to you this petition which outlines the key problems in the bid to Protect and Conserve Water Resources and our own proposals on what the Ministry of Water and Environment, the Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources and the District Local Governments of Kamwenge, Kitagwenda, Kabarole, Ntoroko and Fort Portal Tourism City, need to do to address the environmental issues as matters of national importance.

Natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable resources, and ecosystem services are part of the real wealth of nations. Uganda's Natural resource base is among the richest in Africa, and fetches the country billions of shillings per year in addition to the employment opportunities provided by the sector and a livelihood source for poorer communities. As such environmental resources, if used properly, can contribute to Uganda's national development. Owing to this fundamental importance of natural resources, they must be managed sustainably.

As part of efforts to ensure proper and effective management of Uganda's environment and natural resources, several policies and institutions have been put in place. Despite these efforts, rivers and wetlands in Kamwenge, Kabarole, Kitagwenda, Fort Portal and Ntoroko continue to be degraded and this jeopardises both individual development and the region's economic development.

It should be remembered that people's livelihoods in Tooro Sub-region and the country at large are directly linked to sound natural resources management. It's therefore essential that the parliamentary committee on Natural Resources, Ministry of Water and Environment, and district local governments in Kabarole, Kamwenge, Kitagwenda, Ntoroko and Fort Portal Tourism City play their roles to ensure that natural resources management is at the centre of good governance and economic development.

The issues

There is immense encroachment on Tooro Sub-region's remaining wetlands due to inadequate enforcement of wetland regulations, failure to take a regional and national-wide inventory of wetlands and gazettelement of the available wetlands by the Ministry of Water and Environment in partnership with the respective Local Governments where they are found. Wetlands act as a holding area for large quantities of surface water which can be slowly released into the watershed.

Destroying a wetland area equivalent to 1 acre, 1 foot deep means destroying its equivalent capacity to absorb 330,000 gallons of water which will directly run into the watershed as storm water causing flooding. Destruction of wetlands has resulted in flooding in almost all the regions of this country, causing loss of lives, property, infrastructure and triggered a decline in wildlife population.

Additionally, pollutants running off from agricultural fields and other human activities are seriously decreasing the quality and quantity of water in rivers in Tooro Sub-region and the country at large. One of the tested and trusted methods of protecting water resources is through the use of buffer zones. Unfortunately, there is inadequate enforcement of laws and regulations aimed at protecting buffer zones, even when protection of freshwater resources is embedded in a broad set of policy and legislative documents. For instance, under the National Environment Act 2019, rivers, wetlands and lakes are required to have a bufferzone, where human activities are strictly limited.

But we still see some dangerous human activities which are against this. Despite our intervention to reverse the situation, there is still intensive livestock grazing around wetlands and rivers, unsustainable agriculture on steep slopes and sand/gravel mining, among others, which have led to destruction of these rivers and wetlands in Tooro Sub-region. A case in point is of River Mpanga in Kamwenge where the buffer zone has been partly turned into a farm land and at other points, there are eucalyptus trees planted within the buffer zones, yet these tree species are known to have high consumption of water. Additionally, some spots along the River's buffer like at the border of Kyenjojo and Kamwenge have been turned into washing bays, which is causing serious contamination of water, even when this is risky to aquatic life and poses health risks to the communities around it. In Ntoroko, there is high degradation of R. Semliki buffer zone by cattle keepers who graze up to the river itself

Nyabukara wetland in Fort Portal Tourism City and Nyakasura Wetland in Kabarole district are prone to seasonal burning to turn them into agricultural land, cattle farms and eucalyptus plantations. These wetlands have shrunk by 56% since 1992 and the threat is increasing due to population pressure.

What we demand: -

1. The Ministry of Water and Environment through the Local Governments and City structures Countrywide urgently consider conducting an inventory of the wetlands in their respective areas, develop sustainable utilisation and management plans in addition to prioritising gazetted wetlands that are not yet gazetted.

2. The Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources should ensure reinstatement of the local environment committee at Sub County, Parish and Village levels since the National Environment Act 2019 as amended does not cater for this.
3. The Ministry of Water and Environment should work with the said district local governments and other relevant bodies to build capacities of district and sub county environment committees on their roles and responsibilities on buffer zone protection based on the existing legal and policy frameworks .
4. The Ministry of Water and Environment should enhance stakeholder coordination on buffer zone protection, especially transboundary resources like R. Mpanga.
5. The district local governments of Kabarole, Ntoroko, Kitagwenda, Kamwenge, and Fort Portal Tourism City should effectively fulfil their mandate of ensuring restoration and conservation of degraded water resources in their areas of jurisdiction. For instance, R. Mpanga flows through all of them, Nyakasura wetland in Kabarole district, Nyabukara wetland in Fort Portal City and R. Semliki in Ntoroko district.
6. The Parliamentary committee on Environment and Natural Resources should do its monitoring role to ensure strengthened enforcement of laws and regulation on buffer zone protection.
7. The Parliamentary Committee on Natural Resources should ensure increased budget allocation to the Environment and Natural Resources Sector from 1% to at least 5% per year to ensure proper implementation of environmental conservation activities.

We believe that by taking action now, we can build a more sustainable future for ourselves and for future generations. We urge all those in positions of power and influence to prioritise environmental protection and conservation, and work together to create a healthier and more sustainable planet.



Christopher Tusiime, the JESE Communications and Advocacy Officer reading the petition during the summit.

Appreciations

We appreciate our donors especially, Oxfam Uganda, Simavi, Join For Water, Welthungerhilfe, Ilex de Paix (IDP), Care, among others for the support they gave us during the celebration. We also appreciate the Government of Uganda through the Ministry of Water and Environment, and other partners and stakeholders including KRC, Kyaninga Forest Foundation (KFF), KCB Bank, UBA, Natural Resources Defence Initiative (NRDI), Nyaika Hotel and many others for the support they rendered during the celebration.

Annexes:

Jese Chairperson Speech

OPENING REMARKS AT THE 1st FORT PORTAL CLIMATE SUMMIT BY THE CHAIRPERSON BOARD OF DIRECTORS- JOINT EFFORT TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT (JESE)

HELD AT KALYA COURTS HOTEL, FORT PORTAL CITY

Date:

18th/05/2023

Protocols

Honorable ministers,
Honorable members of parliament,
Local government officials,
Civil Society and Private Sector Representatives
Religious leaders present
Cultural institutional representatives
The media
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Day to you all.

It's with great honor to welcome you today, at the 1st Fort portal climate summit, an event organized as part of celebrating the 30 years of JESE. I believe that this summit will give mileage and significantly build a wealth of knowledge to proving practical approaches towards adaptive and appropriate measures to the increasing effects of global climate change.

The effects of climate change have affected us all in one way or the other and across sectors of the economy, including agriculture, trade and Industry production, thus the need for us all to act now and save the environment for the future generation.

The rising temperatures and variable rainfall patterns are expected to negatively affect sources of livelihoods and economic activity, including commercial and subsistence crop production, livestock, forestry and fisheries. These changes are of particular concern for Uganda's economic wellbeing, particularly for the Western, North Eastern region and the cattle corridor districts of

Uganda. In this respect, collective effort is required for adaptation and poverty reduction to build resilience to climate change in such areas.

Most of government support for adaptation is concentrated in the agricultural and water sectors and is yet to be more amplified. There still remain gaps in mainstreaming adaptation into sectoral strategies and plans, as well as decision-making at district and national levels. Greater investment could also be made to improve adaptive capacity in the fisheries, forestry, energy sectors and disaster risk reduction at the local level.

Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to inform you that JESE has for the last 30 years supplemented on the work of government through her interventions and provided practical and sustainable solutions to adapting to the impact of climate change. In terms of her programming, JESE complements government work through provision of services in agriculture, Water sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Natural resources governance and energy, and skills development for descent employability for the youth, which falls in the current government programs at the moment.

As a reflection on our growth, JESE has expanded her scope of operation nationally, from one district (Kabarole) at the time of her establishment. Currently, JESE operations cover among other districts; Isingiro, Buliisa, Agago, Kamwenge, Kitagwenda, Kyenjojo, Ntoroko, Kabarole, Kyegegwa, Bunyangabu, and Fort Portal city. Our plan is to extend our operation to the greater North and Eastern Uganda.

In our scope of work, we have greatly contributed to the restoration of water catchment areas in the districts where we work. These include Mpanga catchment in Kamwenge, Kitagwenda, Kabarole districts and now Fort Portal city, Semuliki catchment in Ntoroko district, Kakoni and Sweswe water catchments in Kyegegwa district, Rushango in Kamwenge and Kyerenga in Kyenjojo.

JESE has operationalized its growth and consolidation efforts through the development of 5 year strategic plans for the period 2021 -2026. Going forward, our focus shall be on developing 10 years' strategic plans and consolidation of present achievements, building strong financial systems and focusing on institutional sustainability.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to most sincerely thank our donors and partners who have walked with us for the last 30 years of our work. It would not have been possible to come this far without your overwhelming support. On behalf of JESE as an institution and on my own behalf, I appreciate you so much and pledge to continue partnering with you for sustainable development of our communities and our country Uganda.

On a special note, allow me to appreciate all our partners who have supported us in organising this summit. Special thanks go to Oxfam Uganda who are the main sponsors of this climate summit. We again express our most sincere appreciation to all the organisations and corporate companies who have supported us to organize this 30 years' celebration. On behalf of JESE, I am truly humbled. I wish you all fruitful deliberations at this SAMMIT.

Sign:.....

Mrs. Grace Waako Katuramu

Chairperson Board of Directors - JESE

Speech by the JESE Executive Director

OPENING REMARKS AT THE 1st FORT PORTAL CLIMATE SUMMIT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR- JOINT
EFFORT TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT (JESE)

HELD AT KALYA COURTS HOTEL, FORT PORTAL CITY

Date:

18th/05/2023

Protocols

Honourable ministers,
Honourable members of parliament,
Local government officials,
Civil Society and Private Sector Representatives
Donor representatives
Religious leaders present
Cultural institutional representatives
Members of the press
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning to you all

It is my great pleasure to speak to you on this day at the opening of the 1st Fort portal climate summit" 2023. This summit is one of the many activities that we as JESE have organized to celebrate the 30 of our existence. These activities started in May 2022 by mainstreaming the celebrations in all our field activities and programmes.

We started by setting a goal of planting 1 Million trees, that was officially launched with support of partners on the 13th of May 2023. By the time of the launch, a quarter of this goal had been met through our existing programmes and with support of our development partners and the private sector. We will continue to pursue this goal by setting up a 1 million tree fund that we hope the partners, government and the private sector will support in order to replenish the fast degrading environment in this region and other parts of Uganda.

We have also used this celebration to mobilise support for the Tooro Babies home here in Fort Portal. We found it necessary to support this home, not only as part of our corporate social responsibility, but also because it supports many neglected and under-privileged children from around the region and in areas where we work. Currently, the home requires urgent support from all well-wishers in this region and beyond. I appeal to you to provide your support in whichever way that you can. We shall be delivering our package in the coming days to the home and we pray that some of you will join us during this event. It's on this note that I would like to thank all those who have contributed to this noble cause especially the bikers and corporate companies who participated in the corporate games that were the key fundraiser activities for the home.

Ladies and gentlemen, today we are gathered here for yet another important activity- the 1st Fort portal climate summit. Why this summit? We found it necessary that at this point in time when we are celebrating 30 years, to use this opportunity and rally all of us the stakeholders gathered here, to reflect on what is now the biggest global challenge threatening mankind and to appeal to all of us to take all the necessary action to mitigate climate change. For us as JESE, we can only try our best to do what is within our means well knowing that we are donor dependent, and what we do can only remain a drop in the ocean. This is why we think that it's very necessary to join hands – Just like our name suggests "Joint Effort to save the Environment " to secure our own future by taking all possible actions to mitigate climatic changes.

As I conclude, I would like to invite all of you here present, to visit the exhibition outside this conference hall and see with your own eyes some of the work that pre - occupies us at JESE, some of which directly contributes to climate change adaptation and mitigation and to the United Nations sustainable development goal (SDG) agenda 2030. I would also like to appeal to you to support the exhibitors by the way of buying products being exhibited.

I would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all our dear partners who have been supporting us since 1993 to date. Among you are two individuals that we would like to pay special tribute to for mentoring and nurturing JESE from its early days of establishment. These two individuals are; Ms. Mary Jo Kakinda and Mr. Charles Waraga, who used to work with UNDP Africa 2000 Network. These two are like parents to JESE and we thank them very much for their selfless efforts towards the development of JESE.

I also wish to appreciate our longest serving partners; Join for Water, Simavi, Care international in Uganda, BD, IDP and Oxfam Uganda.

I thank all once again and wish you successful deliberations during this one and half days of discussions.

I thank you.

Sign:.....

Patrick Baguma

Executive Director- JESE

Speech by the Minister of Water and Environment

TALKING NOTES

MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIROMENT

AT

OPENING OF THE FORT-PORTAL CLIMATE SUMMIT

AN EVENT

TO

CELEBRATE

THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY

OF

JOINT EFFORT TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT - JESE

18/05/2023

Protocol

The Hon. Ministers and their Representatives,

The Hon Members of Parliament,

The Resident Commissioners (City / District)

The Central Government Officials (MDAs)

The Local Government Officials and Political Representative,

The Board members of JESE,

The Cultural Institutions Representatives,

The Religious leaders,

The Civil Society and Private Sector Representatives,

The Media,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

It's an honour to be here in Fort-Portal Tourism City speaking to you on the invitation by the ED - JESA to officiate the opening of the 1st Fort-Portal Climate Summit under the theme – Localizing the global Climate and Environmental agenda

Let me express my appreciation to JESA for organising this big event “Fort-Portal Climate Summit” “Celebrating the 30 years of transforming communities through conservation, WASH, and Livelihood improvement”

Let me also congratulate JESA for reaching 30 years contributing to protection and conservation of our ENRs including supporting community livelihood enhancement.

We are aware, that JESE in the 30 years of existence you have covered several districts in western and northern Uganda. Your presence the regions has touched and served several communities complimenting government efforts.

A TIMELY CELEBRATION SUMMIT

This is a month for celebrating Workers' Day - a day of celebration of labourers and Workers to recognize and celebrate individuals that make a contribution to society while also bringing issues to light of some of the hardships they face in the process. JESE as an organization serving for the last 30 years is worthy to celebrate all the achievement (work covered)

The Fort-Portal Climate Summit is an opportunity for us to reflect on our contributions to society and the planet, which is our home. This underpins the need to care and protect the resources that God placed under our care so that they can persist for future generations.

In Genesis 1: 26-28 God made man and commands him to be a steward of the earth by looking after the environment and natural resources. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda also gives every person a duty to create, maintain and enhance the environment, including the duty to prevent pollution, damage, land degradation, etc - TO ENSURE A CLEAN, SAFE, HEALTHY, AND PRODUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT.

Today we are celebrating 30 years of JESE that was created to support conservation of the Environment and promotion of human development. Considering the agenda of the summit today, JESE is another platform that can go into partnership with my ministry to escalate the best practices to ensure sustainable management of water and environment resources in the country.

Therefore, the Ministry applauds JESE for all the initiatives to address the environment, human and social degradation as a way of attending to vulnerable people and taking care of the planet. The platform can be used for awareness creation and sensitization, information sharing and accountability regarding management of Water and Environment in the Uganda.

The Government of Uganda designated all the national holidays as national tree planting days in order to increase on the tree cover in the country which is declining at a significant rate. Therefore, I encourage each and every one of us today to go and plant a tree in recognition of all the great workers.

A WORLD IN DURESS

Our planet is under duress. The human race faces enormous challenges. Our common future is filled with hope, but it is also riddled with questions. Big questions.

According to the United Nations Report - the world's population reached 8 billion people on 15/11/2022. The historical milestone of unprecedented growth is attributed to improvements in public health, nutrition, personal hygiene and medicine that have extended lifespans and dramatically reduced maternal and child mortality.

According to the National Population Council projections, the population of Uganda was estimated at 47,249,585 Million people in 2022 and is expected to nearly double by mid-century (2050)

While the 8 billion mark is an occasion to celebrate, A LOT will happen between now and 2050. The continued growing population presents very serious challenges. There will be major economic, environmental, social and development changes at country, regional and global levels.

The problem is : Our natural ecosystems and regenerating bio-capacity are being severely degraded, therefore compromising the ability of the planet to sustain life. Our natural resources are depleting, some rapidly. Natural ecosystems are threatened. Water, land and air are getting increasingly polluted. Water reserves are falling. Soil erosion is leading to low fertility and desertification. Escalating effects of Climate Change causing global warming, biodiversity loss and species extinction.

A COUNTRY OF PARADOX / CONTRADICTIONS

We are living in a country of painful paradox.

It is a country of plenty, but it is also a country of growing scarcity. It is a country marked by a lot of opportunity, but it is also a county of rising inequity / discrimination.

We are already seeing a worrying rise in resources competition, some of which have turned into conflict.

This dangerous paradox cannot be addressed by wishing it away.

It cannot be resolved by ad hoc policy fixes here and there.

It cannot be resolved just by allocating more resources to those issues. How many supplementary budgets have we seen?

What is required is a fundamental re-invention and re-organization of communities and societies throughout the country. It also requires the established national systems to work more coherently and more purposely to address what is inherently a universal problem from the village level.

TIME and CHOICE of Approach:

I believe we CAN achieve all this, by choosing the right time. And the time to Act is NOW.

What are our choices ? There are 2 approaches to choose from;

Maintaining the same course / approach/ Actions

We can choose to continue to use the present course, the same course that has been in place for decades and centuries characterized by;

Ø A world / country where we obsessively chase after economic growth without regard for ethics for the environment.

Ø A world / country of excessive exploitation of resources, and insatiable consumerism.

Ø A world / country driven by "greed" rather than "need".

If we go down this path, we will only find more of the same. It will lead us to more environmental degradation. More deforestation. More pollution. More global warming. More endangered species. More conflict between man and nature. And ultimately, more desperation for the human race.

Introducing New Approaches / Actions

The other option is to choose a different course, and to break from the practice of the past where we can opt for a different way. A new way that would guarantee a better future for our economy and citizens.

For this 'new way' to succeed, participation must be top bottom and bottom up. We are encouraged by the high-level of environmental activism among different levels of government, international organizations and NGOs in recent years.

However, we need participation from the smallest unit in society, which is the individual. It is the individual who will ultimately have to make the choice of what he or she will buy, eat, drink, waste or burn. And it will not be an easy choice because more and more individuals will have greater purchasing power and can afford a luxury of options in life. We have to change the excessive consumption habit of citizens, through mindset change.

Now is the time to promote "sustainable growth with equity". Many refer to sustainable development with equity as "development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs."

A key part of sustainable growth with equity is recognizing that the serious climate and environmental problems that planet Earth faces are not imagined – it is REAL. Climate change is man-made, and its solutions are also man-made. We must arrest the growing trend of “ecological footprint” deficit at country, regional and global levels.

To be sure, we cannot achieve “sustainable growth with equity” without addressing climate change. In Uganda, many of our districts and their inhabitants are already threatened by Climate Change effects (including drought, landslides, floods, Heat-waves). And rising temperatures and extreme weather patterns have already affected crop yields and livestock production, destroyed infrastructure, and caused loss of lives; a phenomenon that is expected to continue in the years to come. That is why sustainable land management (SLM) including forestry and related interventions are critical to our efforts at sustainable development as well as to our climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.

We can use policy measures.

Governments can pass laws and regulations that would place sustainability at the heart of social activities; and also incentivize and reward activities that reinforces sustainability. Government can take; lead in raising public awareness, undertake measures to help spread opportunity, and provide support to those at the bottom of economic ladder – for example by promoting micro-credit.

We can also do more to alter our lifestyle:

So that it becomes climate and eco-friendly, and fits harmoniously with our green growth agenda. In an era of hyper consumerism, this will require a great deal of public education – in our home, in our schools, and in our work place.

We can also use more technology.

Whether we are talking about food security, energy shortage, or climate security, a great deal of our problems can be resolved with technological innovation. I believe that, more than ever, technology will be the greatest driver of change in this century. I am pleased that we are now seeing a new trend where emerging economies too are becoming centers of new innovation, and are spending more on Research and Development. The important thing is that, where possible, all this innovation is not only invented but shared with others for mutual benefit. Government, the private sector and NGOs can all do their part in making this happen.

We also need political will

Today, environmental sustainability is at the heart of all long-term development plans, both at the national and local levels.

In all this, political will was crucial and remains crucial. It was not always easy to ensure environmentally sound policies. But it was necessary, and it was the right thing to do. So we pushed hard at it despite some resistance.

Why is political will important?

In most cases, the solutions are actually simple, but they are hard to achieve. For example- Reduce emissions; Consume less; Shift to renewables; Conserve forests; Save energy; Share technology; Take global action.

These prescriptions are all known to us. They are part of the global conscience. They are supported by public opinion. But too often the solutions become stuck in narrow self-interests, short-sighted politics and rigid diplomacy – or a combination of them.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Enabling environment;

- Ø Established a Climate Change Department
- Ø Prepared a National Climate Change Policy and Action Plan
- Ø Passed a national Climate Change Act
- Ø Prepared climate change mainstreaming guidelines
- Ø Set nation targets for reducing carbon emission – NDCs
- Ø Prepared a national Adaptation Plan of Action – NAPA
- Ø Prepared a National green growth Strategy

Investments;

- Ø Promoting Irrigation – including establishing micro irrigation Schemes
- Ø Promoting Rain Water harvesting

Ø Construction of Bulky storm water storage facilities – dams, Valley tanks

Ø Promoting drought resistant crops

Ø Promoting Early maturing crops

Ø Implementing Tree planting programs – ROOTs program

Ø Implementing Catchment management planning

Note that GoU efforts are being complimented by other efforts from civil society, private sector, religious institutions, development partners and individuals

THE WAY FORWARD

All citizens of this country; International, regional and local organizations; Private sector; Environmentalist; Labourers; and all stake-holders take responsibility for ensuring the safety of the future of human race and for mother earth. .

We must avoid the dangerous trap of a waiting game. Consensus building – especially on issues regarding management of our environment and natural resources – will take time to build. We know the problems. We know the solutions. We must act now.

when faced with growing economic and environmental pressures, we must respond by adopting the national policy of “sustainable growth with equity”.

With those remarks, I now Officially Open the 1st Fort Portal Climate Summit here in Fort Portal Tourism City.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY

HON. SAM CHEPTORIS (MP)

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT